

O.S.S.T.A.
Ontario Select Softball Tournament Association



2026 Rules of Play

1. The **Softball Canada rules** and the **Host Association Rules** of Play govern this tournament.
2. No protests are allowed: the **umpires' decision is final**.
3. OSSTA does not permit any team or individual of a team to Live Stream, videotaping etc, any game or any portion of a game. A warning will be issued. Failure to adhere to this rule and the warning will result in the forfeit of the game..
4. No rulebooks or rule papers allowed on the field during the game.

5. Players

- Players who are carded or play for a representative team are not eligible to play.
- All players must be registered and Photo ID or Birth Certificates or Health Cards must be available upon request.
- The penalty for ineligible players is expulsion of the player/ team from the tournament.
- Unlimited defensive substitution of all the players is permitted.
- Player may enter and exit the game defensively at any time and in any position.
- No metal spikes permitted. Steel and Plastic toecaps must be removed for base running
- All registered players will bat in rotation every game
- Teams must start each game with 9 players and cannot play with fewer than 8
- For the U11Division only: A team is allowed to start with 10 players, having Four players playing the outfield. All outfielders must have both feet on the grass prior to the ball being hit. Infractions will be ruled as a "No Pitch".
- If a player arrives late, they may be added to the bottom of the line up provided you have not gone through the complete batting order.
- In the event of an injury or illness resulting in a player being removed from the game, there shall be no "out" when the player is due to bat and they are skipped over. If the player later recovers to the point they can play, they can re-enter the game and bat in their original spot in the order.
- In the event a player is ejected from a game, OR leaves the game with No explanation an "out" shall be recorded each and every time the player's spot in the batting rotation comes up.
- A Courtesy runner will only be granted to the base runner as a result of an injury at the time of the play. The Courtesy runner will be the player that is deemed to be furthest away in the lineup.
- A coach may use a Courtesy runner for the catcher to allow the catcher to suit up for the next inning upon 2 outs being recorded.
- A coach will not be allowed to use a Courtesy runner for the Pitcher to allow her to get ready for the Next inning upon 2 outs being recorded.
- Players will play in the defensive spots that are assigned to them by the coach. Coaches are encouraged to play all players as equally as possible over the course of the season.

6. Ejections:

Any coach and or player ejected from a game as a result of their conduct must leave the ball park within five minutes. Failure to leave within 5 minutes will result in the disqualification of the entire team.

The ejected coach or player will automatically be required to sit out of their next scheduled game.

If a coach or player is ejected from a game they may seek the Tournament Convenors approval in order to coach or play in the next scheduled game. The convener has the right to apply a one game suspension or a tournament suspension depending on the reason why the coach or player were ejected in the first place.

Fans may or may not be allowed to be ejected by an umpire (depending on the Assoc.'s policy) If fans are not allowed to be ejected they are the responsibility of the Head Coach. Harassment and / or misconduct by fans will result in a warning followed by the ejection of the Head Coach, if the warning is not heeded. If a coach is ejected they may seek the Tournament Convenors approval in order to coach the next. scheduled game

7. Game

Please note the new Age categories, Pitching Distances and running Distances

Division	Girls	Girls	Boys	Boys
	Pitching	Bases	Pitching	Bases
U11	35'	45'	35'	45'
U13	38'	55'	38'	55'
U15	40'	60'	42'	60'
U17	43'	60'	46'	60'
U21	43'	60'	46'	60'

- The plate umpire will keep the official time and will call out the official start time with the first pitch.
- **Round Robin Game duration: No new inning after 90 Minutes or 7 innings, whichever comes first for U15 thru U21.**
- **Round Robin games for U11 and U13 duration: No new inning after 80 Minutes or 7 innings, whichever comes first**
- A game suspended by the umpire because of rain or darkness will be considered a regulation game if 3 innings (or 2 ½ if the Home Team is ahead) have been completed in round robin play. For championship or consolation games a regulation game will be 4 complete innings (or 3 ½ if the Home Team is ahead).
- **All Semi Final and Final championship games will be No new inning after 90 Minutes or 7 innings, whichever comes first .**
- An infield ball is permitted only while the pitcher is warming up.
- Home team is to be decided by a flip of a coin with the umpire presiding. The team that is the farthest away will make the call.
- The official score will be that of the home team and the score sheet turned into the tournament convenor at the end of each game.
- Each team is responsible for supplying a score keeper for each game.
- Blood Rule: All cuts must be covered and a change of clothes made if necessary.
- **The mercy rule is in effect for all games (15 runs after 4 complete innings, 10 runs after 5 complete innings).**
- **A mercy rule will apply to U11 and U13 games where a team can only score a maximum of 5 runs per half inning, for the first 4 innings. All innings after the 4th inning, will be open.**

- A mercy rule will apply to U15 - U21 games where a team can only score a maximum of 7 runs per half inning, for the first 4 innings. All innings after the 4th inning, will be open
- The Tiebreaker rule is in effect if the Championship game is tied at the end of 7 innings or after the time limit has expired

8. Pitching Rule

Pitchers in all age categories may start with one foot on the pitching plate, Pitchers of all age categories may leap in the air, land and then release the ball provided they do not establish a second push point also known as a "crow hop".

The ball maybe in the pitchers hand or glove while the sign is taken. With the pivot foot in contact with the pitching plate, the pitcher is required to pause between 2 - 5 seconds before the pitch. A pitcher cannot step backwards after the pause.

- All Pitchers at the U11 - U15 Divisions must wear a pitcher's Protective mask or helmet with protective mask
- A pitcher or coach will not be allowed to ask for an Intentional walk. All batters must receive the required number of pitches to receive a walk
- No limit to the number of innings pitched or batters pitched to by a pitcher in any division..
- **New for 2026 - If the pitcher in the U11 or U13 division hits 3 batters in one inning, she must be replaced for that inning.**
- **Upon returning if the same pitcher hits 2 batters in another inning, she must be removed from the Pitching Position for the remainder of the game**
- **For all other divisions Pitchers will not be removed for hitting batters**

9. Stealing

- **U13 Division and up.** Stealing is allowed, after the ball leaves the hand of the pitcher. Runners are allowed to steal Home on a passed ball or wild pitch.
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- **U11 Division** - Stealing is allowed after the ball crosses the plate.
- Runners are not allowed to steal Home on a passed ball, wild pitch or a throwback to the pitcher. However, if the catches decides to make a play at 3rd, 2nd or 1st base the ball is considered to be live and the base runner at 3rd may proceed to home at their own risk.

A runner on 3rd base will be allowed to lead off when the ball crosses the plate. The runner cannot steal home on a wild pitch pass ball or a throwback to the pitcher.

Each Host of a U11 tournament will draw a LEAD Off line TEN feet down the foul line from 3rd base. Any runner that touches the LEAD OFF Line if the ball is not hit will be called OUT for a lead off violation.

10. Lead Off Rule

- Runners may leave the base when the ball leaves the pitcher's hand for U13 and up.

- Runners may leave the base when the ball crosses the plate for the U11 Division
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11. Dropped third strike

- U11 and U13 divisions: dropped 3rd strike, the batter is out and the ball remains alive.

12. Infield Fly Rule

- Rule is in effect for U13 Divisions and up.

13. Charged Conferences

- A Team is permitted 2 defensive conferences per inning. Upon the second defensive conference the pitcher must be removed from the pitching position for the balance of that inning.

14. Equipment / Batting Helmets / Ball / Home Plate

- All batters will wear a batting helmet with straps done up while at bat and on base.
- All teams must adhere to their Insurance Carriers policy regarding Batting Helmets with Cages.
- All bats must meet Softball Canada requirements.
- OSSTA Tournaments will use the 11" Ball - Softball Canada Standard (Cor .47) for the U11 and U13 Divisions and a 12" Ball - Softball Canada Standard (Cor .47) for the U15, U17 and U21 Divisions.
- The regular 17 inch Home Plate will be used for all divisions.

15. Bunting

- Bunting is allowed in all Divisions.

16. Base Runner Advancement

- After a fairly hit ball, the advancing of runners is not considered over when the ball returns to the infield.

17. Overthrows - Out of Play

- All runners, including the batter-runner, will be award 2 bases based on the position of the runners when the ball is thrown.

18. Scores / Standings

- Scores / Standings will be kept for each game for all divisions.
- 2 points per win. 1 point for a tie
- Plus / Minus run differential to a maximum of 7 runs.
- If the Home team is leading or goes ahead in the bottom of the 7th the inning or the last inning the game is over.
- Tournament standings will be determined by points. Ties will be broken based on head to head (in a full round robin), then run differential and then. Runs against divided by innings played, and then Runs for divided by innings played and then if necessary, Flip a Coin.

19. Awards

- Awards will be given to the top four finishing teams. A maximum of 15 awards will be provided per team.

20. Cheering

- Positive cheering only. The conduct of the team, its spectators and the coaches are the responsibility of the team coaches. In the event of harassment or derogatory remarks originating from the players, coaches or fans, the umpires will issue warnings. If these warnings are not

heeded, it will lead to the ejection of the individual(s) involved, and the umpire may call the game awarding the non-offending team with a default win.