

NECIS Softball Rules

Teams: are comprised of 5 girls and 5 boys in the field with the following positioning requirements: 3 male and 3 female in the infield, and 2 male and 2 female in the outfield. In case of an injury, 8 players will make up the batting order, keeping to the equal boy/girl ratio.

1. Playing Positions: Coaches must take into account the experience of the players when determining field positions especially the catcher's position.
2. Uniforms/Helmets/Shoes: Teams should make an effort to wear jerseys with numbers so that the scorekeeper/umpire can keep track of the batting order. Helmets are required for all batters and base runners. Shoes with plastic spikes are allowed only if spikes extend no longer than 1.9 cm. No metal spikes are allowed.
3. Turn at bat and Batting Order: The choice for the turn at bat for each inning is decided before the tournament. For the final games a toss of a coin will be used to decide. The batting order is up to the discretion of the coach providing that sexes alternate in the order. Note: If a team does not have enough male or female players, an out must be taken when two players of the same sex bat back to back (rule 7, sec. 2.b and 6. j). Players who are not fielding are permitted in the batting order providing that an equal number of boys and girls is always maintained and players only bat once in the batting order.
4. Substitution: Allowed once per game for each player. A player substituted may re-enter the game in the same batting position of the batting order. Substitution of boy for girl and vice versa in batting order is not allowed.
5. Balls, Bats and Batting: Balls are 12" and should be as official as possible (red stitch ball, with a COR .47 and have a marking of MSP-47 and ISF logo). Minimum weight is 178 grams and maximum of 198.4. Bats shall be a smooth cylinder with a knob. No more than 5.7 cm (2.25 in.) in diameter. No more than 86.4 cm (34in) in length. No devices or attachments shall become flush with the knob. Bats that are broken, dented or altered are illegal. Umpires should check all bats to make sure no illegal bats are used. No bunts are allowed in slow pitch softball.
6. Pitching: The pitcher may be a boy or a girl and do not need to alternate each inning. There is no limit to the number of innings a pitcher may pitch. Before each half inning the pitcher is allowed one minute to deliver ONLY 5 practice pitches. The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitchers plate until the pitched ball leaves the hand. The pitcher has 10 seconds to deliver the pitch.
7. Pitching distance and arc: The distance from pitching mound to home plate is 14.02 meters. The pitch must be delivered at a moderate speed underhand, below the hip, with a perceptible arch of at least 6 feet (180 cm) and not more than 12 feet (360 cm) at its highest point from the ground. The speed of the pitch is left entirely to the judgment of the umpire.
8. Strikes and Home Plate Mat Dimensions: A foul on a two strike count will be called a strike (third strike) and the batter is out. A strike is also called anytime the ball strikes the approved strike mat. The Mat extension is placed over the triangle section of the home plate. The home plate extension mat dimension will be 92cm length, 61cm width. The rectangular part of the plate that extends away from the mat is 17 x 8.5 inches (43cm by 22cm). (see diagram)
9. Pitching Mound, Base and Field Distances: Pitching distance is 46' (14cm) measured from the front edge of pitcher's plate to apex of home plate. 60' (18.2cm) is measured between bases, from outside edge to outside edge or outside edge to apex. The field length for the JV division should be 70 meters from home plate, with a retaining fence if possible.

10. Base running: Sliding, leadoffs and stealing are prohibited. Runners may leave their base only when the ball is hit. The home plate or the extension mat must be touched by runners and fielders in order for the run to count.

11. Scoring runs: Any ball rolling, hitting or going over/under a fence or line in the outfield will be called a “ground rule double”. A ball bouncing off a fence and staying in sight is “playable”. In order to provide safety for the running and fielding players at the home plate, a Commitment Line and Safety Line will be drawn and the safety scoring line is in effect. (see diagram).

12. Playing Rules for Scoring Runs: a. Commitment Line: A 3-foot long (1 meter), 3-inch (10 cm) wide commitment line shall be marked perpendicular to the foul line and placed 20 feet (6.1 meters) from home plate. Once a runner’s foot touches the ground on or past the commitment line, the runner may not return to third base; the runner must continue toward the scoring line. Violations will result in an out. b. Scoring Line: A safety scoring line shall extend from first base toward the backstop. The scoring line is for use by the offensive player only and need only be touched or crossed to score a run. A portion of the foot must touch the ground before the home plate is touched by the defending team. c. All plays at the plate shall be force plays. A defender shall record an “out at the plate” by having possession of the ball and tagging home plate prior to the runner touching or crossing the scoring line. If a defender attempts to tag an offensive player at the scoring line the runner shall be called safe. A runner who attempts to score by touching or crossing other than the scoring line shall be called out.

13. Runs allowed: A maximum of 15 runs will be allowed for each inning half, except for the last inning. The game will not continue, if:

- i. after 3 innings, one team is leading by 25 or more runs.
- ii. after 4 innings, one team is leading by 15 or more runs.
- iii. after 5 innings, one team is leading by 10 or more runs.

14. Time Limit: 60 minutes or 7 innings is the limit of innings played. The last inning in which each team shall be allowed to bat, shall be announced before the inning starts by the umpire around the 45 minute mark. Time starts from the moment of the first pitch and stops at the moment of the last out. Complete innings must be played in the league games (knock out stages) and round-robin play. Note: This rule is important for Breaking Ties. Each team has equal opportunity to score runs which may determine who advances in league play when the standings are tied.

Group Stage Scoring and Tie Break Procedure

During the initial league stage or in a round-robin, 2 points are awarded for a win, 1 point for a draw and 0 points for a loss. A tie (draw) in a league game or in a round-robin will be allowed to stand.

A tie will stand DURING league play or in a round-robin tournament.

In the case of a tie in the league standings AFTER the league play or round-robin, the mutual game result will determine the outcome.

In the case of a tied game (a game reaches the time limit or is tied after 7 innings) DURING cross-over and final play, the individual tie break will come into place: Starting with the top of the extra inning, and each half inning thereafter, the offensive team shall begin it’s turn at bat with the player who batted last in the previous inning is placed at 2nd base (in scoring position). The player who is running can be substituted in accordance with the substitution rules.

Three-Team Tie: In the event of a THREE-TEAM TIE at the end of the round-robin or league stage, the following steps are to be followed (in order) to determine which team advances to the next stage of the competition:

- a) Runs for MINUS runs against from mutual games.
- b) Most runs for from mutual games.
- c) Run Difference: Runs scored for MINUS runs against from all group games.
- d) Most runs for from all games.

A maximum of + or –10 runs per game will count toward a team’s point difference total.

ISF Rules for Coaches review prior to Tournament:

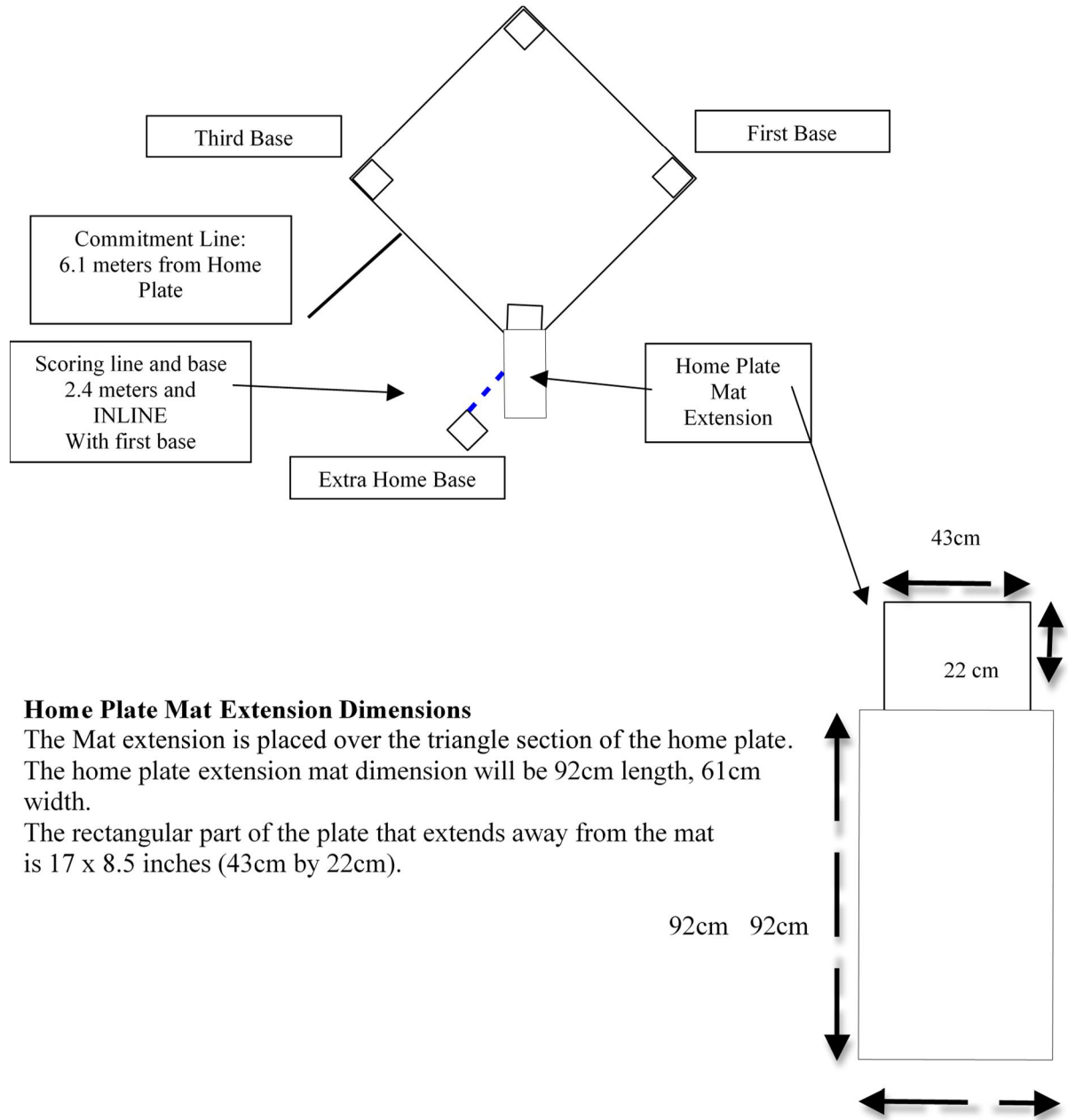
I. **INFIELD FLY** (rule 1- sec. 45) An Infield Fly is a fair fly ball (not including a line drive or an attempted bunt) that can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort when first and second, or first, second, and third bases are occupied, before two are out. The pitcher, catcher, and any outfielder that positions himself in the infield on the play shall be considered infielders for the purpose of this rule. NOTE: When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an infield fly, the umpire shall immediately declare, "INFIELD FLY, IF FAIR-THE BATTER IS OUT," for the benefit of the runners. The ball is alive and runners may advance at the risk of the ball being caught, or retouch and advance after the ball is touched, the same as on any flyball. If the hit becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul. If a declared infield fly is allowed to fall untouched to the ground, and bounces foul before passing first or third base, it is a foul ball. If a declared infield fly falls untouched to the ground outside the baseline, and bounces fair before passing first or third base, it is an infield fly.

II. **SCORING OF RUNS** (rule 5- sec. 7) a. One run shall be scored each time a runner legally touches first, second, third bases and home plate (line) before the third out of the inning. b. A run shall not be scored if the third out of the inning is a result of 1. The batter-runner being put out before legally touching first base. 2. A runner being forced out (including on an appeal play) due to the batter becoming a batter-runner. 3. The runner fails to keep contact with the base to which he is entitled until a pitch is batted or reached home plate. 4. A preceding runner being declared out.

III. **LEGAL DELIVERY** (Rule 6- sec. 3)

- a) The pitcher must not make any motion to pitch without immediately delivering the ball to the batter.
- b) The pitcher must not use a pitching motion in which, after having the ball in both hands in the pitching position, he removes one hand from the ball, takes a backward and forward swing, and returns the ball to both hands in front of the body.
- c) The pitcher must not use a windup in which there is a stop or reversal of the forward motion.
- d) The pitcher may take the ball behind his back on the back swing.
- e) The pitcher must not use a windmill or slingshot-type pitch, or make a complete revolution in the delivery.
- f) The ball must not be outside the pitcher's wrist on the downward motion and during the complete delivery.
- g) The delivery must be an underhanded motion with the hand below the hip, and the palm may be pointing downward.
- h) On the forward swing of the pitching arm 1. The elbow must be locked at the point of release, and 2. The shoulders and driving hip must be squared to home plate when the ball is released.
- i) The release of the ball must be on the first forward swing of the pitching arm must past the hip. The release must have a complete, smooth follow-through with no abrupt stop of the arm near the hip.
- j) Both feet must remain in contact with the pitching plate at all times prior to the forward step.
- k) In the act of delivering the ball, the pitcher must take one step simultaneous with the release of the ball. The step must be forward toward the batter and within the 61.0cm (24 in) length of the pitcher's plate. NOTE: It is not a step if the pitcher slides his foot across the pitcher's plate, provided contact is maintained with the plate. Lifting the pivot foot off the pitcher's plate and returning it to the plate, creating a rocking motion, is an illegal act.
- l) Pushing off with the pivot foot from a place other than the pitcher's plate before the stepping foot has left the plate is considered a crow hop and is illegal.
- m) The pitcher must not continue to wind-up after releasing the ball.
- n) The pitcher shall not deliberately drop, roll or bounce the ball in order to prevent the batter from hitting it.
- o) The pitcher has 20 seconds to release the next pitch after receiving the ball, or after the umpire indicates "Play Ball." NOTE: An additional ball is awarded the batter.

Diagram of Commitment and Safety Lines



Home Plate Mat Extension Dimensions

The Mat extension is placed over the triangle section of the home plate. The home plate extension mat dimension will be 92cm length, 61cm width.

The rectangular part of the plate that extends away from the mat is 17 x 8.5 inches (43cm by 22cm).