JT's SOFTBALL LEAGUE
2026 SOFTBALL GAME PLAY RULES AND REGULATIONS

A. THE PLAYING FIELD AND GAME PLAY:

1. Base lines shall be approximately sixty five feet (as of 6-6-12) The umpire shall walk measure to the back portion of the base.
2. Pitching distance is about forty-six feet.
3. Ground rules will be explained to the team managers by umpire at least five minutes prior to game time.
4. Managers will exchange line-ups if requested to do so.
5. Bases shall be placed on field by the home team.
6. The pitcher may pitch off a line in the field designated by the umpire.
7. The bases will not be fastened in position. If a base if moved out of position by a sliding runner, he or any runner to follow shall not be required to retouch the moving base or run out of the baseline to touch the base.
8. Runner is out if he leaves the base before the batter swings his bat, or before ball crosses Home Plate.
9. Stealing a based is not permitted.
10. When runner is obstructed, runner is awarded bases they would have reached.
11. An offensive player who is running to a base must slide or give himself up on any close play.
12. Any defensive player (including the catcher) cannot block a base including home plate without a ball or a ball in transit.
13. The base runner needs to avoid contact or give himself up on a play at a base causing a collision, the runner is immediately thrown out of the game and suspended for a minimum of one game. Each time the player was to bat only in the game he was ejected shall be recorded as an out.
14. When a fair ball is thrown into dead ball area, the runners are awarded one base from the time of the throw.
15. In addition to a regular white first base, which the defense must use, there will be an orange base in foul territory which the base runner MUST touch.
16. If a runner is hit by a batted ball in fair territory, he is out and the ball is dead. Runner is not out if hit by a batted ball when on base. Ball is dead and batter is awarded first base except when infield fly rule is called.
17. A fake tag (tag without ball) is unacceptable and is subject to discipline at the sole discretion of the umpire.
18. Appeal play? An appeal may be made to an umpire without calling time out (live ball). Indicate to the umpire exactly what you are appealing, (e.g.; missed second base) tag runner of base, and the umpire will make his call. During the appeal the runners may advance at their own risk.
19. When time is called (dead ball), the umpire must signal time-in (play ball, etc.) before appeal is made. The pitcher may be on or off the rubber while making throw to the base of appeal. Again you must state what you are appealing (e.g.; first runner missed third base).
20. A dead ball is put in play when the pitcher has the ball on the rubber and the umpire signals play to begin.
21. If a team is leading by 15 runs after 7 complete innings the game is over.
22. A team will be awarded two points for a win, 1 point for a tie, and zero points for a loss.
23. Seeds and/or gum isn't permitted at the Germonds field or dugout. Any player caught will be ejected and suspended one game.

23a. Referring to Rule 23 – the team that is caught with seeds or gum jeopardizes the opportunity to play at Germonds.

24. There will be no refunds, only a credit to the next season.

B. PITCHING REGULATIONS (slow pitch)

1. The league is a slow pitch league. Arc is NOT an acceptable pitch. All pitches must have a "tail".
2. The pitcher shall not take the pitching position or near pitching rubber without the ball.
3. During delivery of the pitch, the pitcher shall not take more than one stride forward toward the batter. The pitcher is only required to have one foot on the pitching rubber.
4. A legal delivery shall be a ball which is delivered to the batter with an underhand motion that does not result in a fast pitch.
5. Conferences with pitchers are limited by umpire's discretion.
6. Windmill, shotgun, Side Arm, Slingshot, and Whip Pitching is ILLEGAL. A pitcher shall be given 2 warnings. The next fast pitch will result in the pitcher being ejected from the game. As a clarification the pitchers turn in the batting order will be an automatic out.
7. The ejected pitcher shall not be eligible to pitch for 3 games following the ejection. No exceptions.

C. BATTING

1. There will be three (3) strikes for each batter. There will be four (4) balls. The third strike will be either called by the umpire, a missed swing, or foul tip caught by the catcher.
2. Dead ball: a batter is out when he hits the ball with the entire foot touching ground outside of the batters box or part of foot touching home plate.
3. When hit by a pitch, first base is not awarded to the batter.
4. No bunting or chopping motion of bat is permitted. If batter bunts the ball, the ball is dead and batter is out.
5. Foul tip caught by catcher on third strike is an out. A foul pop-up must be six (6) feet over batters head to be an out.
6. Batter is awarded a home run or triple (as decided by the umpires depending on the hit) if any fielder throws his glove in an attempt to stop the ball in progress. Runner is awarded two (2) bases if fielder throws a glove at a thrown ball.

D. BALLS:

1. The official softball shall be a de Beer & Son official Clincher No. F12-12". Prior to the start of a game **the home team will provide 3 new balls.**
2. A new ball shall enter a game in the top and bottom of the first inning, the bottom of the 5th inning. The third ball can't be used until the bottom of the 5th.
3. Upon completion of the 1st inning, the umpire shall keep an official ball in play that in his sole judgment is the least used.
4. If all game balls and provisional balls are lost during game play the umpire shall select at his sole discretion 2 additional provisional balls from the home team supply of used balls.

WARNING: Any team caught entering an illegal ball shall forfeit (lose) the game being played. No exceptions. If an umpire selects a ball from a teams supply the ball must be mutually agreed to by both teams. The deBeer F12 designation must be clearly visible for the ball to enter play.

E. BATS:

1. All bats must be USA Approved or Certified – No wood bats.
2. All bats must clearly show the USA Approved designation on the bat.
3. All bats shall be inspected by umpires prior to the start of a game.

WARNING: Any player caught using an illegal bat shall be ejected from the game and suspended for one game. Upon the second infraction, the player will be ejected and suspended the first two games of the playoffs.

F. UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

1. FOOTWEAR: Only Rubber cleats or sneakers are permitted during game play. Metal spiked shoes will not be permitted. If discovered by the opposing team or umpire, the player may not continue in the game until he has changed to a legal shoe.
2. Masks must be worn by the catcher. Game play shall not commence if a catchers mask is not available for use.
3. Gloves, Bats or Equipment shall not be left in fair or playable foul territory.

G. PLAYERS

1. Teams shall consist of 10 players in the field.
2. All players who show up to play must bat.
3. Each player except the designated hitter must take the field for at least 4 innings.
4. Injured players shall not bat or take the field.
5. One player per game may be designated as a hitter only or "Designated Hitter". If the DH gets hurt the person they were hitting for doesn't have to hit and it will be a skip over in the batting order.
6. One player per game may be designated as an extra hitter or "EH".
7. Players not listed on a league roster cannot play.
8. Any player thrown out by an umpire during a game, will result in an automatic out in the lineup for the remainder of that game, and will be suspended for x number of games pending the commissioners decision.

9a. All players on the active roster must be at least 40 years old to play in the league by November 1st, 2026.

9b. Each team is allowed to add one new player that is between 35-39 years old per year. That player must turn 35 years old by July 1st, 2026.

10. All players listed on a team roster may not play for another team without the consent and approval of the commissioner.
11. Those who need a pinch runner must be declared at the start of the game. The last batted out will run. If the last batted out cannot run, a pinch runner can only run once in an inning.
12. Any player that leaves the game before its completion will be an out in the batting order; If they leave for an injury, family emergency or work related issue, this will not apply.
13. A team must start at the scheduled game time if 9 players are available. Any player that arrives after the 1st pitch regardless of whether they are home or away, must be added to the bottom of the batting order.
14. If a player arrives late and can't play 4 innings in the field they can't play in that game. They also can't pinch hit or be inserted as a DH or EH.
15. Splitting games in the Regular Season;
    A team that would like to split players would need the following:
    1) You can only split 4 players into 2. Splits have to play either 4 or 5 innings consecutively and can't be on the field together.
    2) Each team that is going to implement this rule will need to meet with their players. The manager needs to communicate that when the players who will be part of that split will be playing half a game and then sit the other half completely.
    3) DH & EH cannot be split.
16. One player doesn't have to hit, but must play the field for a minimum of 4 innings. Teams can't bat less than 9 players, if you only have 8, the 9th spot in the order will be an out. If you have 10 or more players at a game, the minimum you can hit is 10.

WARNING: Any team caught using a non roster player shall automatically forfeit the game in which the non roster player was used and the managers will be thrown out of the league.

H. ETHICS AND SPORTSMANSHIP

1. Game time is 8:00 PM. Forfeit time is 8:30 PM
2. Warm up time is 7:15. Get to the field early so the game can start on time.
3. A team can start and play a game with 8 players. Anything short of 8 players is a forfeit.
4. A regulation game will consist of 9 innings.
5. A game which is tied at the end of 9 innings shall continue until completion.
6. A game "called" because of inclement weather is an official game when the 5th inning has been completed. If the home team is winning only the visiting team shall be required to complete the 5th inning.
7. Any team that forfeits 3 games will be excluded from the playoffs, no exceptions!!! No money shall be refunded to the team that forfeits. If a team is out of the league, the league will put together a team to play the remaining games of the teams schedule.
8. If a game is stopped by the lights going out, the game will continue from the point it was stopped.
9. The league reserves the right to suspend or ban a player from the league and no fee will be refunded for behavior detrimental to the league.

I. ETHICS AND SPORTSMANSHIP

1. Every person who plays in this league shall make every effort to play the game with honor, dignity and sportsmanship.
2. Cursing / Foul Language is not acceptable. Umpires have been instructed to enforce clean language rules through stern warning and ejection.
3. Physical altercation including fights between players shall not be tolerated. All players involved in a physical altercation shall be ejected from the game and subject to further league discipline including league ejection.
4. The Umpire has sole authority to remove any players from the game. Any player thrown out of the game must be reported to the Commissioner and will be suspended for at least one game
5. Any player that is ejected from the game must leave the park. Refusal to do so could lead to a forfeit and further discipline from the League. The player who was ejected will become an automatic out in the batting order and can't be replaced with another player
6. Only the manager may question and discuss a disputed call or weather issues with the umpires.
7. Any manager, player or team that receives three letters from the league regarding rule violations or unsportsmanlike behavior will be expelled from the league.

J. PLAYOFFS

1. Players added after the 9th week of the season are not eligible to play in the post season.
2. All players must play one more game than half of the games their team played during the season. For example, 15 games played – 8 games required, 14 games played – 8 games required, etc.
3. Substitutions are allowed in the playoffs. Players can split games either playing 4 or 5 consecutive innings. The EH & DH can't be split. Also, the substitutions need to be announced at the time of ground rules.
4. Teams can't DH for 2 players that are splitting a game.
5. There is no minimum amount of players needed to do a split.
6. Games can't be shortened by weather. If a game is started and the weather causes the game to be cancelled it will be continued from that point at a later date. If a game goes less than 1 inning it will start over.
7. Mercy rule will be used in the playoffs.

TIE BREAKERS FOR THE PLAYOFFS

1. Head to Head
2. If the teams played twice & split the 2 games we will then go to the following in order
    a. Run differential in the 2 games
    b. Run differential for the season with the team with the higher differential getting the higher seed
    c. Lowest runs allowed for the season to get the higher seed
    d. Record within the teams division
    e. If more than two teams are tied, the seating will be determined by the outcomes of the games played between each of the teams involved in the tie.