

Teen Softball FCRV Rules

Age:

1. All contestants must be between the ages of thirteen (13) and nineteen (19) on the day of the state competition.

Membership:

1. All contestants must be a member of the chapter or district for which they are competing.
2. Their parents or guardians must be current members of FCRV.
3. The contestants must possess and present a valid teen ID card.

The Team:

1. The team shall consist of a maximum of twenty (20) members, which must include four (4) females, minimum.
2. The team in play shall consist of ten (10) members, two (2) of which must be females.

The Grounds:

1. The playing area shall be a level surface that is sodded.
2. The distance to the home run line should be on a radius of two hundred twenty-five (225) feet from home plate.
3. The distance between bases shall be fifty-two (52) feet.
4. The distance from the home plate to the pitcher's plate shall be a minimum of forty-two (42) feet.
5. The pitcher's plate shall be on a line drawn between home plate and second base.
6. The coach's boxes shall be:
 - a.) located by first and third bases;
 - b.) shall lie _____ feet outside of and away from the line between home plate and the base (first or third);
 - c.) shall begin at a point eight (8) feet from the base and extend for fifteen (15) feet toward home plate.
7. The home plate, pitcher's plate, and the three bases will be marked with distinguishable markers, easily observed by the umpires and all players. They shall be constructed of a material safe to the players.

Equipment:

1. The softball used shall be a regulation, seven (7) ounce ball.
2. The bats used shall be regulation softball bats of wood or metal, with no alterations.
3. The catcher must wear a protective mask while behind the plate.

The Game:

1. The game shall consist of five (5) innings. The last half of the fifth (5th) inning need not be played if the team coming to bat has scored more runs than the opponent.
2. In case the game has to be called for inclement weather or the umpire decides to stop the game, the team ahead at the end of the fourth (4th) shall be considered victorious.
3. In case of a tie at the end of the five (5) regulation innings, additional innings shall be played until the tie is broken.

Start of the Game:

1. The choice of first or last bat in the inning shall be decided by a toss of a coin.
2. The ten (10) person starting line-up card must be given to:
 - a.) the umpire
 - b.) the score keeper
 - c.) the manager of the opposing team
3. The starting team list shall include for each starting player:
 - a.) their name
 - b.) position to be played
 - c.) batting order

Officials:

1. There shall be one or more umpire(s) to officiate at a game.
2. The umpire(s) shall:
 - a.) NOT BE CONNECTED IN ANY WAY WITH EITHER TEAM;
 - b.) wear some identification, vest or shirt of an out-standing color;
 - c.) inspect the playing field and boundaries prior to the game;
 - d.) inspect the balls and other equipment;
 - e.) clarify all ground rules to both teams and their coaches;
 - f.) have the power to make decisions on violations committed any time during playing time or during suspension of play until the game is over;
 - g.) be fully conversant with the FCRV SLOWPITCH SOFTBALL RULES for Teenage Sports Competition;
 - h.) have in their possession a copy of the said rules and access to the ASA International Joint Rules.
3. Plate Umpire shall:
 - a.) be judging balls and strikes decisions
4. Base Umpire shall:
 - a.) be judging base decisions
5. Both Umpires shall:
 - a.) NOT have the authority to set aside or question decisions made by the other within the limits of their respective duties as outlined in these rules.
 - b.) have equal authority to:
 - (1) call a runner out for leaving a base too soon;
 - (2) remove a player, coach, or manager from the game for violation of rules;
 - (3) charge penalties for interference or behavioral actions as set forth in these adapted rulings;
 - c.) jointly make forfeit decisions.
6. The Plate Umpire shall:
 - a.) take his position back of the catcher;
 - b.) have full charge of and are responsible for proper conduct of the game;
 - c.) call all balls and strikes;
 - d.) by agreement and in cooperation with the base umpire, call plays, hit balls (fair or foul), legal, or illegal caught balls;
 - e.) assume the duties of the base umpire on plays which would necessitate base umpire leaving the infield;
 - f.) determine and declare whether a batter bunts or chops the ball;
 - g.) whether a batted ball touches the person or clothing of batter;
 - h.) whether a fly ball is an infield or an outfield fly;

- i.) assume all duties when assigned as a single umpire to a game and may take a position in any part of the field, which in his judgment, will best enable him to discharge his duties.

Umpires Judgment and Protests:

1. There shall be no appeal from any decision of the umpire(s) on the grounds that he was not correct in his decision as to whether:
 - a.) a batted ball was fair or foul;
 - b.) a base runner was safe or out;
 - c.) a pitched ball, a strike or ball on any play involving accuracy of judgment.
2. NO decision rendered by either umpire shall be reversed except that he is convinced it is in violation of one of these rules.
3. In case the manager or coach of either team does seek a reversal of a decision based solely on a point of rules, the umpire whose decision is in question shall, if in doubt, confer with his associate before taking any action.
4. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES, shall any player or person other than the manager or coach of either team have any legal right to protest on any decision and seek its reversal on a claim that it is in conflict with these rules.
5. An umpire may request the coach/manager of a team whose spectators are unruly and/or abusive to control such spectators; if such warning must be repeated more than twice, umpire may impose a penalty against the offending team of a walk when team next in defensive position.
6. Protests involving interpretation of rules only will be accepted by Protest Committee.
7. Protests involving any judgment decision by umpires will not be subject to protest.
8. All protests must be submitted in writing immediately following the game to the Teen Athletic Chairperson and any decision by the Protest Committee is final.

Forfeit:

1. Forfeit of the game to the non-offending team shall be declared when:
 - a.) a team fails to show on the field with a minimum of ten (10) players, including two (2) girls;
 - b.) a team fails to appear on the field at the appointed time; at the discretion of the umpire a ten (10) minute grace period may be given;
 - c.) a team member, coach and/or manager of a team uses vulgar language and/or gestures;
 - d.) any action continues about which a team has been warned, example, interference, unnecessary roughness, etc.;
 - e.) an attack on an umpire by a team member or spectator is made.
2. A forfeit can be declared at any time before or during a game.

Substitutions:

1. Substitutions may be provided from original twenty (20) person team roster.
2. Substitutions must be registered with scorekeeper, umpire and opposing team coach prior to entry into game.
3. Any substitution made without prior announcement as stated shall result in penalty to offending team.
4. Any illegal substitution of player not on original team roster will result in forfeiture of game to non-offending team.
5. Substitutes are considered official when:
 - a.) if batter, takes place in batters box;

- b.) if fielder takes place of fielder's position;
 - c.) if runner, upon replacing person at base;
 - d.) if pitcher, upon taking place on pitcher's plate, pitcher must complete pitching to one batter before changing or being changed, any other player at the time.
6. A REMOVED PLAYER SHALL NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE GAME AGAIN, EXCEPT AS A BASE COACH.

Illegal Attire:

- 1. No player shall wear footwear with cleats.
- 2. No player shall play barefoot.

Conference with Umpire:

- 1. Only a coach or manager may request a conference with the umpire.
- 2. Only one (1) person per team may take part in the conference.

Penalties:

- 1. An OUT shall be called a PENALTY when:
 - a.) the batting order is not followed properly;
 - b.) substitution is not registered with scorekeeper, umpire or opposing team coach prior to entry into game;
 - c.) upon offensive team members interfering with player attempting to field a foul fly ball;
 - d.) upon one or more members of offensive team standing or collecting at or around a base to which base runner is advancing, thereby confusing fielders;
 - e.) upon a runner, after being declared out, interfering with defensive players opportunity to make play on another runner ... closest to home runner out;
 - f.) upon coach near third base running in direction of home plate on or near baseline while a fielder is attempting to make a play on a batted or thrown ball, thereby drawing throw to home plate ... closest to home runner out;
 - g.) upon a coach intentionally interfering with a thrown ball closest to home runner out.
- 2. A BALL shall be called as a PENALTY when:
 - a.) a defensive player takes a position in the batter's line of vision;
 - b.) defensive player, with deliberate unsportsmanlike intent, acts in a manner to distract the batter such as: calls to batter to swing or calls to batter that the batter can't hit, etc.
- 3. A WALK shall be called as a PENALTY when:
 - a.) a coach/manager of defensive team calling time or committing any other act during ball being in play for obvious purpose of distracting batter;
 - b.) substituting into defensive lineup made without prior notice to scorekeeper, umpire, or opposing coach.
- 4. A PITCH shall not be called when coach or manager of offensive team calls time or commits any other act for obvious purpose of distracting pitcher.
- 5. A RUN shall not be scored if:
 - a.) the third out of the inning is the result of the batter being put out before legally touching first base;
 - b.) the base runner is forced out due to batter becoming a base runner;
 - c.) the base runner leaves base before pitched ball has been swung at and HIT.

Rules Pitcher:

- 1. One of the pitcher's feet shall:

- a.) remain firmly on the ground until after the ball has left his/her hand;
- b.) remain firmly in contact with the pitcher's plate until after the ball has left his/her hand.
2. His/her arm must come to rest holding the ball in front of the body, with one foot in contact with pitcher's plate.
3. The BALL must be:
 - a.) delivered at a moderate speed. (The umpire shall warn a pitcher who, in his/her judgment, delivers a pitch with excessive speed. If the pitcher repeats such a fast pitch after warning, he/she shall be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.);
 - b.) from below the hip;
 - c.) delivered with a perceptible arc from the time it leaves the pitcher's hand of at least three (3) feet before the ball reaches home plate.
4. No tape or other substance shall be allowed upon the ball, pitching hand, or fingers.
5. No sweatband type bracelet (except FCRV Teen Band) can be worn on wrist or forearm of pitching arm.
6. At the beginning of an inning, or when a pitcher relieves another, no more than one (1) minute may be used to deliver not more than five (5) balls to catcher and/or other teammates.
7. There shall be only one (1) conference between manager/coach with each and every pitcher in an inning.
8. A called walk of a batter will not be allowed; all balls must be pitched.
9. A pitcher must complete a full cycle of pitches to the batter before being removed.

Rules Catcher:

1. Catcher must wear mask while behind plate.
2. Catcher must remain within the boundaries of catcher's box until each pitch is released.
3. Catcher returns ball directly to pitcher after each pitch, except after a strike out or putout made by catcher.

Rules Batter:

1. Batter must come to bat in order in which name appears on score sheet.
2. Batter must be at plate within one (1) minute after umpire calls "play ball".
3. Batter must not switch batting sides when pitcher is in pitching position.
4. The first batter of each inning shall be the batter whose name follows that of the last player who completed a turn at bat in the preceding inning.
5. The batter shall not hinder the catcher from fielding or throwing the ball by stepping out of the batter's box or he shall be deemed ... OUT.

Strike:

1. A STRIKE is called for:
 - a.) each pitched ball that is struck at and missed by the batter;
 - b.) each foul tip which does not attain the height of five (5) feet above the batter's head before being caught and held by the catcher;
 - c.) each pitched ball struck at and missed which touches any part of the batter;
 - d.) each pitched ball that touches any part of the batter's person with his/her own batted ball when he/she is in batter box;
 - e.) each legally pitched ball that enters the strike zone, the space over the home plate and between the batter's highest shoulder and his/her knees, when batter assumes his/her natural batting stance. The umpire makes this call.

Ball:

1. A BALL is called by the umpire for:
 - a.) each pitched ball that does not enter the strike zone;
 - b.) each pitched ball that hits the ground before reaching home plate;
 - c.) each pitched ball that hits home plate and is not struck at by the batter;
 - d.) each illegally pitched ball;
 - e.) when a delivered ball by the pitcher hits the batter outside of strike zone.

Outs:

1. An OUT is called on the BATTER when:
 - a.) a fly ball is legally caught;
 - b.) a third strike is called;
 - c.) a foul fly is caught by a fielder within the field of play as defined by the umpire before the start of the game;
 - d.) a foul tip goes five (5) feet above batter's head and is caught and held by the catcher;
 - e.) a third strike is struck at and missed and the ball touches any part of the batter's person;
 - f.) the batter hits an infield fly with base runners on first and second, or first, second and third with less than two out infield fly rule;
 - g.) the batter bunts or chops the ball downward.
2. A BATTER-BASE RUNNER is called out when:
 - a.) after a fair hit he/she is legally touched with the ball before reaching first base or the ball is held by the fielder touching first base before the batter-base runner touches first base;
 - b.) a fly ball is caught;
 - c.) the batter fails to proceed to first base after a fair ball hit or base on balls called;
 - d.) the batter-base runner runs outside the three (3) foot line and in umpire's opinion interferes with the fielder taking throw at first base, or interferes with play at home plate in an attempt to prevent an obvious out at plate.
3. BASE RUNNER is called out when:
 - a.) in running to any base, he/she runs more than three (3) feet from the direct line between a base and the next one to avoid being touched by the ball in play;
 - b.) while ball is in play, he/she is legally touched with ball in the hand of a fielder while not in contact with a base;
 - c.) on a force-out, a fielder tags him/her with the ball or holds the ball on the base to which the base runner is forced to advance before the base runner reaches the base;
 - d.) the base runner fails to return to touch the base when play is resumed after suspension of play;
 - e.) the base runner physically passes a preceding base runner before that runner has been put out
 - f.) the batter-base runner legally overruns first base, attempts to run to second base before returning to first, and is legally touched while off base;
 - g.) leaving base before pitched ball has been hit;
 - h.) hit by a fair ball while off base and before it touches or passes a fielder;
 - i.) a runner intentionally kicks a ball which an infielder has missed;
 - j.) there is a base runner on third, the batter interferes with a play being made at home plate with less than two (2) outs.
4. A BASERUNNER IS NOT out when:
 - a.) the batter-base runner overruns first base after touching it safely and returns directly to

- the base;
- b.) hit by a batted ball when touching base, unless intentionally interfering with the ball or the fielder making the play.

Base Running:

1. The base runner must touch bases in legal order, first, second, third, home.
2. When a base runner must return while ball is in play, he/she must touch the bases in reverse order.
3. The base runner acquires the right to a base by touching it before being put out. He/she is entitled to hold the base until he/she has legally touched the next base in order or is forced to vacate it for a succeeding base runner.
4. Two (2) base runners may not occupy the same base simultaneously.
5. No base runner may return to touch a missed base or one he/she had left illegally after a following base runner has scored or return to touch a missed base once he/she enters his/her team area.
6. A batter becomes a base runner as soon as he/she:
 - a.) hits a fair ball;
 - b.) has four (4) balls called by the umpire;
 - c.) is walked by a penalty call;
 - d.) is interfered with striking at a pitched ball by the catcher or any other fielder.
7. In the case of a walk, all other base runners remain on current base unless walk forces advancement.
8. **BASERUNNERS ARE ENTITLED TO ADVANCE** with liability to be put out under the following circumstances:
 - a.) when ball is overthrown into fair or foul territory and not blocked;
 - b.) when ball is batted into fair territory;
 - c.) when a legally caught fly ball is first touched. Sliding is permissible when in the consideration of safety to baseman or runner; injury would not be sustained by either baseman or runner.
9. **A BASERUNNER MUST RETURN TO HIS/HER BASE:**
 - a.) when a foul ball is hit;
 - b.) when a batter or base runner is called out for interference;
 - c.) when any part of batter's person is touched by pitched ball, swung at and missed;
 - d.) when the batter is hit by a pitched ball.
10. **UNDER NO CONDITIONS IS A BASERUNNER PERMITTED TO STEAL A BASE. HE/SHE MAY NOT LEAVE BASE UNTIL PITCHED BALL HAS BEEN HIT.**

FCRV Teen Softball Rules Examples:

1. Example play:
Runner is on third and attempts to score on hit to outfield. Catcher takes throw from fielder and tags runner while runner is in Safety Zone but before runner touches plate.
Ruling: Runner is SAFE. See below.
2. Example play:
Pitcher joins catcher in BACK OUT ZONE while runner is attempting to score, but leaves before runner reaches SAFETY ZONE.
Ruling: Runner is OUT as long as catcher is alone in BACK OUT ZONE when runner reaches SAFETY ZONE.
3. Diagram and Dimensions of SAFETY ZONE and BACK OUT ZONE (See next page).