



# Indoor Softball Rules



Updated October 30, 2024

## 1. Pre-Game – Equipment, Game Time & Defaults

**Spirit of the League:** The primary focus of FCSSC is FUN! This league is a positive and encouraging environment that is welcoming to players of all backgrounds and playing abilities, with the goal of getting moving, meeting new people, and having fun while doing it! We look forward to an awesome season of welcoming and inclusive play.

Play that is competitive, overly aggressive, rough and/or unsportsmanlike such as pushing, shoving, elbowing, shouldering, tripping, hacking, slashing, sliding, tackling, ball blasting, chirping, name calling, threats and intimidation, is prohibited and will not be tolerated by FCSSC. FCSSC IS FIRST-AND-FOREMOST-FOR-FUN. ANY ROUGH OR PHYSICAL PLAY WILL RESULT IN IMMEDIATE EXPULSION FROM THE GAME, THE LEAGUE, THE CLUB AND/OR ALL OF THE ABOVE. All players should go out of their way to avoid contact with other players and/or eliminate actions or behaviours that could jeopardize player safety. If accidental contact occurs it is expected that players will apologize for that contact, ensure everyone is all right and stop the game to seek appropriate help as required. This rule supersedes all others!

**Equipment/Set-Up:** FCSSC Game Hosts will provide bases and softballs to every game. Teams are to provide their own softball gloves, bats and catcher masks (if desired). Bats must be official softball bats of legal size, weight and shape (for more details, visit the [equipment](#) page on our website).

**Mixed Gender Requirements:** FCSSC is committed to providing inclusive access to for-fun sport for players of all gender identities. In this mixed gender league, teams on the field consist of (8) players and a minimum of three (3) players of the non-majority gender (for example, a team that has a majority of men must have 3 players of another gender on the field). A team can play with a minimum of 7 people, as long as there is a minimum of 2 non-majority gender players on the field. A team of 8 or more players that only has two non-majority gender players (for example, a team with 6 men, 1 woman and 1 non-binary) may only have 7 players on defense and will be playing short 1 person on defense.

### Batting Order

1. The batting order of a team can have a maximum of two players of the same gender in a row.
2. The batting order must stay consistent from inning to inning.
3. All players must bat before someone can bat for a second time, but players of the non-majority gender may bat more often to maintain Point 1, and may not bat behind the same player every time. (see Example 3)
4. Any players arriving after their team has batted in the first inning will be inserted into the bottom of the batting order, while still maintaining Point 1
5. The first player to bat in an inning is the person following the player who recorded the last at bat from the previous inning.

Example 1 (Majority Male)	Example 2 (Majority Female)	Example 3 (only 2 non-majority gender)
1. Male 1	1. Female 1	1. Male 1
2. Male 2	2. Female 2	2. Male 2
3. Female 1	3. Male 1	3. Female 1
4. Male 3	4. Female 3	4. Male 3
5. Male 4	5. Female 4	5. Male 4
6. Non-Binary 1	6. Male 2	6. Female 2
7. Male 5	7. Female 5	7. Male 5
8. Male 6	8. Female 6	8. Male 6
9. Female 2	9. Male 3	9. Female 1
		10. Male 1
		11. Male 2
		12. Female 2

### Game Time/Default:

- Please arrive 15 minutes early so that you can start your games on time. The first team that arrives should start setting up bases. Games are 5 innings in length with a time limit of 1 hour. A default will occur if any team cannot field a squad by 10 minutes after the official start time.
- If the team that was first to bat is losing after the top of the 5th inning, they have the choice to call the game or let the other team bat.
- No new inning can start with 10 minutes left before the formal end time.
- During playoffs, if the game is tied after the completion of 5 innings, or the expired time, teams will utilize the following format. The team that is up to bat will start the inning by placing their 'last out' from the previous inning on 2nd base, with 2 outs. Once 3 outs have been reached, the other team will then place their 'last out' from the previous inning on 2nd base (also with 2 outs) and proceed to bat until 3 outs are reached. Teams will take turns doing this until the score is settled upon the completion of a full inning.

**Alcohol/Drugs:** ALCOHOL AND DRUGS ARE NOT PERMITTED DURING LEAGUE PLAY! ANY OFFENDERS WILL BE ASKED TO LEAVE THE LEAGUE WITHOUT REFUND. No exceptions.

**Discrepancies:** All games are self-refereed. Any disputes will be discussed amongst the two team captains. Please play honestly.

## 2. In Game – General Rules, Scoring, Pitching, Batting, Hits, Runners

### Playing at Centrefield:

As always, FCSSC's leagues are recreational and focused on FUN - and our indoor softball league follows this model! In order to bring softball inside and keep the fun-factor, some of our rules are different from those used in our outdoor leagues!

1. Games are 5 innings in length, with a time limit of 1 hour, and no new inning can start within 10 minutes of the formal game end time. Keeping to this time limit is crucial in our indoor league, as there are other players and groups that will be using the turf after us. Please respect this time limit and make sure to start and end games on time.
2. Indoor softball will be played with 8 fielders (no rover!)
3. A ball that hits the wall or boundary mesh is LIVE! A batted ball that hits the mesh on the ceiling and is caught by a fielder (before it touches the ground) is considered an OUT.
4. If a batted ball is hit in fair territory but goes out of play (beyond the boundary mesh, gets stuck on a stationary object, etc.) it is considered a ground rule double.
5. If a ball is overthrown at 1st or 3rd base and goes 'out of play' (beyond the boundary mesh), then the base runners can advance 1 'free' base.
6. A batted ball that hits the far wall in right field ABOVE the yellow line is considered a home run (even if a fielder catches it after it bounces off the wall).
7. Fair vs. Foul calls: A ball is determined fair or foul based on where it touches the turf. This means that a ball that hits the wall/net in foul territory but lands on the turf fair, would be considered a fair ball. As always, the back catcher is responsible for making fair vs. foul calls.

### General Rules:

1. A coin toss or paper/rock/scissors should determine the home team (except during playoffs, when the higher ranked team will have a choice to bat 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup>)
2. Each inning is played with 3 outs or when a team scores a maximum of eight (8) runs. EXCEPTION: A team has no run limit in the final inning of the game.
3. Mercy rule: **If a team is up by 8 runs or more after the 3rd inning of play (UPDATED FOR INDOOR)**, the losing team has the option of calling the game or choosing to continue.
4. Foul ball calls (balls that are hit outside of the base lines) should be made by the catcher. We expect all teams to place extra players on the offensive team at 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> to act as "base-coaches". Controversial "out" or "safe" calls at each of the bases should be made by these base-coaches. If base-coaches are not being used, all controversial calls should be made by the pitcher. Please do your best to ensure that the game is being called in a fair manner.
5. No metal cleats are allowed.

## Fielding:

1. Players in the field are not allowed to stand inside the baselines before a player attempts to hit a ball. ie. Shortstop can't come up and stand beside the pitcher before the batter has swung at the ball. Players are only allowed to come within the baselines after the batter has made contact with the ball.
2. There is no "infield-fly" rule in effect. However, it is poor sportsmanship to purposely drop a ball to try and get a double play.
3. There will be "safety bases" at 1<sup>st</sup> and home, giving the first baseperson and catcher a separate base to touch than the runner. At 1st base there will be an additional bag for the runner to step on, and Home Plate will have a marked line that the baserunner must cross to score. For the other bases, fielders should be touching 1 side of the base allowing a baserunner to touch the base without interference. A runner cannot be tagged while running to first base, rather the first base player must tag the base.
4. If a ball is overthrown at 1st or 3rd base and goes 'out of play' (beyond the boundary mesh), then the base runners can advance 1 'free' base. (Ex. A base runner who has just rounded 2nd when the ball goes out would get 3<sup>rd</sup>, and a runner almost at or on 3<sup>rd</sup> would get home). If the ball stays in play (hits fence, etc) then the ball is live, and the runners can advance at their own risk.
5. A "force out" will always be in effect between 3rd base and home plate once the baserunner has crossed over the "commit line", meaning that a team can touch home plate with the ball rather than tag the runner to achieve an out.
6. **INDOOR ADDITION: A ball that hits the mesh on the ceiling and is caught by a fielder (before it touches the ground) is considered an OUT.**

## Pitching/Batting:

1. The team at bat provides their own pitcher. We strongly recommend that the pitcher should be a minimum of 12 paces from home plate, for player safety. If a hit ball touches the pitcher, the ball is declared dead and the pitch is redone – base runners return to their previous bases and the pitch count is restored. (Pitchers should do their best to avoid making contact with a hit ball).
2. Every batter can receive a maximum of three (3) pitches. All foul balls, wild pitches, strikes and balls count as one of the three pitches. The only exception is a ball that hits the pitcher, which is considered a dead ball and does not count as one of the pitches.
3. There is no bunting or faking to bunt. However, a ball that is hit with a full swing, but does not go past the pitcher IS a live, playable ball.
4. **INDOOR ADDITION: A 'foul ball' pop-up behind home plate can only be caught for an out if it touches the netting on the ceiling.** A ball not exceeding this height is considered a 'strike'.
5. A ball that pops up when batted and goes out of bounds (behind the mesh netting) is out of play, and cannot be caught for an out.
6. **INDOOR ADDITION: If a batted ball is hit in fair territory but goes out of play (beyond the boundary mesh, gets stuck on a stationary object, etc.) it is considered a ground rule double.**
7. **INDOOR ADDITION: A batted ball that hits the far wall in right field ABOVE the yellow line is considered a home run (even if a fielder catches it after it bounces off the wall).**

## Base Running:

1. There is absolutely no sliding. Any base runner that slides is automatically out.
2. 1<sup>st</sup> base will have an additional bag to use as a "safety base". As such, there will be a base for the first baseperson and a separate base for the runner to step on. A runner cannot be tagged while running to first base, rather the first base player must tag the base.
3. A player can overrun 1st base without being tagged out if they continue to follow the foul line or stay to the right of it.
4. There are no leadoffs for base runners; you must be touching the base until contact with the ball is made.
5. Baserunners must stay along the base paths. They cannot move more than 3 feet away from an imaginary line or they will be deemed out.
6. Pinch runners may be used if the batter is injured on a play, or has a previous injury limiting their ability to run. The player who was the last out from the same gender group of the batter (majority or non-majority) will substitute for the runner

once they've safely reached a base. In extreme circumstances, using a pinch runner from home may be possible if the batter can not run to first without risk of worsening their injury, which should be discussed by both captains and the game host prior to the start of the game.

7. Players on base are allowed to "tag-up" on a pop fly. Base runners must not leave the base until the fielder has caught the ball.
8. A runner that is hit by a batted ball when running between bases is out.
9. If a ball is overthrown at 1st or 3rd base and goes 'out of play' (beyond the boundary mesh), then the base runners can advance 1 'free' base. If the ball stays in play (hits fence, etc) then the ball is live, and the runners can advance at their own risk.
10. There is a "commit-line" midway between 3rd base and home plate. Once the runner has crossed this line, they cannot return to 3rd base. If they do, it is an automatic out.
11. **Scoring a Run:** Home will also have a "safety base", in the form of a marked line that the base runner must cross to score. Home plate should only be touched by the catcher, and any base runner that steps on home plate will receive an automatic out (without scoring a run). This rule is in place to avoid collisions.

**Pitching Screen:** FCSSC does not provide a pitching screen, but teams are more than welcome to provide and use their own if they would like. Moving the screen between innings is a lot of work – so teams should offer to let their opponent use it as well! If a batted ball hits the pitching screen (either a ground ball or a direct hit), the ball is declared dead and the pitch is redone. Base runners must return to their bases and the pitch count is restored.

**Rough Play:** ANY ROUGH OR PHYSICAL PLAY WILL RESULT IN IMMEDIATE EXPULSION FROM FURTHER LEAGUE PLAY AND MAY RESULT IN LIFETIME LEAGUE EXPULSION. PLEASE SEE THE FCSSC POLICY SHEET FOR OUR OFFICIAL POLICY ON THIS SUBJECT. All players should go out of their way to avoid creating an unsafe play. This rule supersedes all others.

### 3. Post-Game – Departure & Score Reporting

**Departure:** Each week after your game, it is important to leave the diamond in a timely manner. Teams could be playing after you and will need to get their game started on time. It is also possible that the facility could be closing upon the completion of your game and all staff and members will need to depart the building at that time.

**Score Reporting:** Team captains must report the scores for each game through their player page, and can learn how through our help page [here](#). Scores and standings can be viewed at [www.forestcityssc.ca](http://www.forestcityssc.ca)

### 4. Playoff Games

**No Ringers:** To play on playoff nights players must have played a minimum of 2 regular season games for that team.

**Substitutes:** A player is only allowed to play for one team in each playoff round. Players cannot sub in for another team during the same round, most particularly in a championship game. Exception: a player may sub for another team in the same league during the same play-off round IF the game is not a championship game (ie, title on the line) and the team needing a sub would default the game without the substitute player (resulting in both teams being unable to play).

**Tiebreaker:** During playoffs, **no new inning can start with 15 minutes left before formal end time.** If the game is tied after the completion of 5 innings, or the expired time, teams will utilize the following format. The team that is up to bat will start the inning by placing their 'last out' from the previous inning on 2nd base, with 2 outs. Once 3 outs have been reached, the other team will then place their 'last out' from the previous inning on 2nd base (also with 2 outs) and proceed to bat until 3 outs are reached. Teams will take turns doing this until the score is settled upon the completion of a full inning.

**Determining Home Team:** During playoffs, the higher ranked team will have the choice to bat 1st or 2nd.