

# GAME RULES

## SOFTBALL – OUTDOOR MEN’S

### LEAGUE POLICIES

- A. The mission of BSSC, the Program Manager, and the League Officials is to provide a fun and safe adult recreational sports environment for players of all ability levels to participate in.
- B. **Unsportsmanlike Conduct** - At no time will unsportsmanlike conduct be tolerated, including, but not limited to - physical abuse, verbal abuse, or over-aggressive play. The league reserves the right to discipline anyone not adhering to these standards of fair play and sportsmanship, including possible removal from the league without refund. The Sportsmanship Policy can be found online [BSSC.com](http://BSSC.com).
- C. **League Fees** - All teams must have their league fee paid in full before the start of the season. A team will not be allowed to compete if team fee is not paid before their first game.
- D. **Umpire Fees** - Before the start of the game, each team is responsible for paying the umpire present that will officiate the game. The umpire reserves the right to declare a forfeit for any team that does not adhere to this policy.
- E. **Complaints/Feedback** - Any player or team that wishes to file a formal complaint or protest must submit it in writing to the Softball Program Manager ([ed@bssc.com](mailto:ed@bssc.com)) within 24 hours of the incident. The Program Manager or Sports Director will respond to the protest as soon as possible and will review accordingly.
- F. **Drug/Alcohol Policy** - No drugs or alcohol are allowed on any league premises before, during, or after a game. Absolutely no player will be allowed to compete if the game official feels that the player is intoxicated, or that the safety of the player and/or others in the game is in jeopardy. That player will be removed from the game and face possible expulsion from the league without a refund.
- G. **Use of Facilities** - Please remember that we are guests of all locations that we play at. Please do not abuse the facility itself, its staff, or any other guest within the facility. This includes leaving trash behind, profanity, and any other acts that may be deemed disrespectful. Failure to comply with these rules, as well as the rules of the facilities themselves, may result in expulsion from the league. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and understanding!
- H. **Weather Cancellations** - In the case of inclement weather that may result in game postponement/adjustments, please use the multiple resources available to our players: Website ([BSSC.com](http://BSSC.com) > [Cancellations](#)), Twitter ([@BSSC](#)), or our Weather Cancellation Hotline ([617-789-4070 ext 700](tel:617-789-4070)). We always make an effort to give you 2-3 hours’ notice, but is not always possible due to changing weather so please be sure to check these resources before heading out if there is any doubt on the status of your game.
- I. **In-Game Issues** - In the absence of the Program Manager, any in-game decisions regarding ANY issues should be discussed with the umpire and both team captains (or team representatives). The umpire will have the final say on any issues that arise.

### TEAM ROSTERS

- A. There can be any number of players on a team roster, and rosters are open only to players who identify as men (“male players”). A minimum of 10 male players is required.
- B. Once registered, captains may access their team’s roster via their personal account on BSSC.com. Captains are responsible for uploading their roster by the determined deadline. If any issues arise, please contact the Program Manager.
- C. Team rosters will be locked after the 3rd week of the season. Players may be added/removed up until that point.
- D. Only players listed on the team’s roster, and have played in the minimum number of regular season games, will be eligible to participate in the playoffs. Violation of this rule will result in a forfeit.
- E. Players may only be listed on one team’s roster per division.
- F. Any player listed on a team’s roster that is not a BSSC member will be charged a \$25/non-member fee. All non-member fees are charged to the captain after the 3<sup>rd</sup> week. Please refer to the **League Info** tab of your league page at BSSC.com for more details

### PICKING UP PLAYERS & FORFEITS

- A. **Picking Up Players** -
  - a. The complete BSSC Picking up Players Policy can be found on the league’s page at [BSSC.com](http://BSSC.com).
  - b. Picking up players is only allowed during the regular season only, not Playoffs.
  - c. Men’s Softball teams must have a minimum of 6 players to be allowed to pick up substitutes.

- i. Teams may only pick up enough players to reach the minimum for a full team (10).
- ii. When using non-rostered players, the captain must inform the umpire and opposing captain.
- iii. If a rostered player arrives late and causes the team to go over the minimum for a full team, the substitute player(s) must be removed from the game.
- iv. If a team suspects their opponent is violating this policy, they must bring it to the attention of the umpire BEFORE the game is completed. The umpire will inform the opposing captain of the protest and gather any information to forward to the Sports Manager, and the game will continue. BSSC will decide the appropriate action at a later time. The umpire does not make a decision, only acknowledge the protest, inform the opposing captain, and gather information.

**B. Forfeit Policy -**

- a. The full BSSC Forfeit Policy can be found on [BSSC.com](http://BSSC.com).
- b. Teams must have a minimum of 5 total players, including 1 female player, (and substitutes) to avoid a forfeit.
- c. When forfeiting before game time, captains must contact the Program Manager (or another BSSC Staff member) before 2pm on the day of the game. A BSSC representative MUST acknowledge the forfeit, whether via phone or email, for it to be official.
- d. Below are the possible penalties for forfeiting a game:

Greater than 24 hours before game time for Monday thru Friday games OR before 2pm Friday for games scheduled for Sat/Sun or Monday Holiday games	No financial penalties. Your Opponent will receive a Win & your team will receive a Forfeit Loss. Your team will also lose 1 point in the standings* & automatically seeds your team lower in any tie breaker situation for playoffs
Less than 24 hours before game time but before 2pm on game day for Monday thru Friday games (does not apply for any Sat/Sun or Monday Holiday games, see below)	Both teams' ref fees. Your Opponent will receive a Win & your team will receive a Forfeit Loss. Your team will also lose 1 point in the standings* & automatically seeds your team lower in any tie breaker situation for playoffs
After 2pm on the day of your game (if Monday thru Friday game) OR after 2pm Friday for games scheduled for Sat/Sun, and Monday Holidays	\$50 late notice forfeit fee which is given to your opponent for late notice + both teams' ref fees. Your Opponent will receive a Win & your team will receive a Forfeit Loss. Your team will also lose 1 point in the standings* & automatically seeds your team lower in any tie breaker situation for playoffs
At the field or court without enough players for a real game, but still able to scrimmage	Both teams' ref fees. Your Opponent will receive a Win & your team will receive a Loss, but it will not be recorded as a Forfeit
No Show without any notice	\$50 late notice forfeit fee which is given to your opponent for late notice + both teams' ref fees. Your Opponent will receive a Win AND your team will be INELIGIBLE for Playoffs

- e. Once BSSC has acknowledged the forfeit, it is official. Teams may not change their minds later.

## GAME RULES

**A. Start of the Game -**

- a. Captains (or a team representative) will meet with the umpire 5 minutes before the scheduled start time and home team will be decided by a coin flip.
- b. One team will be designated each game to provide game balls (will be labeled on the league schedule).
- c. Each team is responsible for paying umpire fees directly to the umpire before the game can begin.
- d. If requested by their opponent or the umpire, captains must provide their lineup before, during, or after the game. Captains must notify the umpire of any changes to the lineup during the game.
- e. A minimum of 8 players is required to begin.

- f. Games will begin at the time scheduled.
  - i. There is NO grace period on lighted fields or when a game is scheduled after yours.
  - ii. All other games will have a 10-minute grace period until the minimum number of players arrives.
  - iii. Once the grace period has ended, if a team has less than 8 but more than 5, that team may elect to automatically be the Away team. If the team still has less than 8 players once the half inning is completed, a forfeit is awarded. If neither team has the minimum of 8 players, a double forfeit is awarded.

**B. During the Game -**

- a. A maximum of 10 male players may be allowed on the field.
- b. A minimum of 8 players must be on the field to be a legal game. If a team only has 8, the opponent will provide a non-defensive catcher (once the ball is in play, non-defensive catcher removes them self from the play on the field). A team must supply their own catcher if they have 9 or more players.
- c. **Batting Order** -
  - i. All players that play in the field during the game MUST be in the batting order.
  - ii. **Late Arrivals** - Once everyone in the order has batted, any player arriving late will be added to the end of the lineup.
  - iii. **Players Leaving Early** - A player who cannot bat in their spot in the lineup (due to injury or leaving the premises) is not penalized, but is simply skipped. A forfeit will be declared if a team is left with less than 8 players.
  - iv. **Substitutions** - No subs are allowed in the lineup. Any new players will be added to the lineup according to the rule on Late Arrivals.
- d. **Courtesy Runners** - Before a player's at-bat, they may request a courtesy runner from the umpire, which will then be announced to the fielders. The batter may not advance beyond first base on a batted ball except when an automatic advancement is awarded (i.e. ball goes out of play on an overthrow, a ground-rule double, or an automatic home run).
  - i. If a batter does not request a courtesy runner, but is visibly injured while running the bases, the umpire may use discretion and allow a courtesy runner once the play is over.
  - ii. Once a batter asks for a courtesy runner, it is automatic for the rest of the game but should still be announced to the fielders each at-bat.
  - iii. The replacement runner will be the last person to have completed their turn at bat, and is not currently a base runner.
- e. **Safety First Base** - There will be 2 bases present on the foul line at first base: one traditional base reserved for the fielder, and a second one next to it just inside foul territory that is reserved for the batter. Once the batter reaches safely, or if rounding first base, they may use the traditional base. On plays at first base, if the runner does not touch the safety bag they are considered to have missed the base. If there is no play at first base, the runner is safe no matter which bag they use.
- f. **Fouling Out** - 2 foul balls once a batter has 2 strikes will result in an automatic OUT.
- g. **No Bunting** - Any full swing is deemed legal, regardless of the distance the ball travels. Any swing considered a bunt by the umpire will be an automatic OUT.
- h. **Pitching** -
  - i. A strike mat will be used to determine balls and strikes
  - ii. All batters start with a 1-1 count.
  - iii. Pitcher must be 50 feet or further away from home plate at the time of release of the pitch.
  - iv. Ball must arc 6 feet from ground, and cannot go above 12 feet from ground.
  - v. Speed must be slow. Any kind of spin or underhand release points are legal.
  - vi. Any pitch deemed too high or too low will be announced by the umpire, during the pitch, as "illegal." The pitch will be automatically called a ball if the batter does not swing at it.
  - vii. The ball used for games is a 12" .52COR/300lb softball.
    - 1. Any ball that is hit or throw into an unreachable area (i.e. over a fence/in the woods) must be replaced by the team that causes the ball to be lost.

**C. End of the Game -**

- a. Games will be played for 7 innings or 1.25 hours, whichever occurs first.
  - i. If the end of the time limit is approaching and the away team is ahead, umpires reserve the right to switch home and away so that the losing team is guaranteed one more at-bat before

time expires. If that team ties the game or takes the lead, the opposing team will receive one more at-bat as well.

- b. There is NO mercy rule during the regular season.
- c. No new inning will begin after 70 minutes of the game's start time. (If no game to follow, no new inning will begin beyond 1.5 hours of play or when it's too dark, whichever occurs first).
- d. If game is tied, extra innings will be allowed if time allows. If time does NOT allow, games may end in a tie.
- e. If game cannot be completed for any reason (darkness, inclement weather, etc.), the score will revert back to the last full completed inning (unless home team is ahead). A game will be determined legal as long as 4 innings (or 3.5 if the home team is ahead) are completed.
- f. **Reporting Scores** - Teams should report their game results, win or lose, via the [Report Scores](#) tab on BSSC.com. Please report your score ASAP. The sooner results are received by the Program Manager, the sooner standings can be updated.

## PLAYOFFS

- A. Playoffs (number of qualifying teams, format, etc.) will be determined on a league-to-league basis.
- B. Only players listed on the team's roster, and have played in the minimum number of regular season games, are eligible to participate. Picking up illegal players will result in a forfeit.
  - a. If you suspect your opponent is violating this rule, you must bring it to the attention of the umpire BEFORE the game is completed. The umpire will note the protest, talk to your opponent, and gather as much information as possible. The umpire will NOT make a decision on the protest, but instead will pass along all the information to the Program Manager to decide the appropriate penalty.
  - b. During the playoffs, all games will be completed in their entirety. If halted for any reason, game will be continued at a later date/time from the exact point of interruption, with same lineups. Lineup changes will adhere to the rules laid out in Section 4-B-c.
- C. **Mercy Rule** - Game will be considered over if one team leads by 20 or more runs after the 5th inning (or 4 1/2 if the home team is winning), or 15 runs or more after the 6th inning (or 5 1/2 if the home team is ahead). Mercy rule is in effect for the playoffs only.
- D. **Tiebreakers** - In the case of two or more teams finishing the regular season with the same record, the following criteria will be used to determine playoff seeding:
  - a. Team with a forfeit will automatically be lower seed (multiple forfeits may result in exclusion from playoffs)
  - b. Head-to-Head Record (only used if all teams involved played each other an equal number of times)
  - c. Record vs. Common Opponents
  - d. Strength of Schedule (total win percentage of all teams played against. Cannot be used if all teams played the same schedule)
  - e. Record vs. Each Common Opponent (starting at the top of the standings, one at a time)
  - f. Coin flip
  - g. \*\* If multiple teams are tied, list of tiebreakers will be used until one team is determined stronger or weaker than the rest. List will then be used again, starting at the top, for the remaining tied teams.

## SAFETY & SPORTSMANSHIP

- A. **Excessive Baserunner Contact** - Any instance that the umpire determines excessive/unnecessary contact between two players may result in an out and/or ejection from the game.
  - a. Any runner or fielder that intentionally causes excessive contact with the other (including contact with the catcher) is not allowed.
  - b. Sliding is allowed, but not mandatory.
  - c. Fielders that do not possess the ball may not block a base that a runner is going to. Fake tags (i.e., intentionally pretending to tag a player while not possessing the ball) are also not allowed.
  - d. Runners are not allowed to intentionally slide into a defenseless fielder (i.e., no play at the base in which the fielder is standing by).
  - e. NO METAL CLEATS.
- B. **Throwing of Bats** - Intentionally throwing of the bat is illegal and will result in an out and/or ejection. A player who unintentionally throws a bat shall receive a verbal warning, and any future infractions could result in an out.
- C. **Illegal Bats** - For the safety of our players, BSSC adheres to USA Softball rules in regards to bat use.

- a. All bats used during league play must be USA Softball certified and have an official ASA/USAS stamp. The exception to this is any bat that was previously approved by the USA Softball but was later added to their "Illegal Bats" list, which can be found at [TeamUSA.org/USA-Softball](http://TeamUSA.org/USA-Softball) and the back cover of the rulebook.
  - b. If you suspect an opponent of using an illegal bat, bring it to the attention of the umpire immediately.
    - i. If the batter has not entered the batter's box or has not yet completed their at-bat, the umpire will confiscate the bat until the end of the game and the batter will continue with a legal bat.
    - ii. If the batter has reached base via a hit, the umpire will confiscate the bat for the remainder of the game, and the batter will be declared out. Anything that occurred during that player's at-bat will be nullified, and (if still less than 3 outs) all runners will return to their previous positions.
  - c. Penalties are not retroactive. If an illegal bat is discovered, any plays that have been completed prior to the bat being confiscated will remain. This is why it is important to notify the umpire IMMEDIATELY if you suspect an illegal bat is being used.
- D. BSSC and its officials take pride in ensuring everyone involved is safe and has fun during their activities. Players and/or teams that do not adhere to the [BSSC Sportsmanship Policy](#) may be removed from a game or league without refund.

## FIELD ISSUES & CANCELLATIONS

- A. **Weather Cancellations** - In the case of inclement weather, games may be postponed, delayed, or relocated. Please use the multiple resources available for scheduling notices:
  - a. Web ([BSSC.com > Cancellations](http://BSSC.com > Cancellations))
  - b. Weather Cancellation Hotline ([617-789-4070 ext 700](tel:617-789-4070))
- B. **Problems At the Field** - For any issues during non-business hours (after 5pm on weekdays, or weekends) please call our After Hours Hotline ([617-462-8844](tel:617-462-8844)) to get in touch with a BSSC Representative. Reasons for this may include, but are not limited to:
  - a. **Another group on the field** - BSSC has permits for all fields in use, so if other group does not have one than field is for our use. Sometimes fields get accidentally double booked, please let the umpire handle the other group.
  - b. **Lights not turning on, or going out early** - While most fields have their lights on a timer, some are required to be turned on manually. In most cases the umpire is responsible for this, so please wait for them to arrive.
  - c. **Umpire not present** - If umpire has not arrived by game time, please call the After Hours Hotline and we will get someone there ASAP. In this instance, please start your game without them. Teams will call their own balls, strikes, and outs until someone arrives.
  - d. **No opponent present** - Scheduling mistakes, while rare, do happen. If nobody from the opposing team has arrived by game time, they may have misread the schedule and/or be at the incorrect field. Call the After Hours Hotline and we will contact them. Do not leave the field until BSSC has reached out to your opponent.

***Boston Ski & Sports Club reserves the right to add, remove, or modify any rules as it feels necessary.***

**For questions or comments, please call Cassidi at 617-789-4070 x 723 or email [cassidi@bssc.com](mailto:cassidi@bssc.com).  
Thank you for playing softball with BSSC and have a great season!**