

Slo-Pitch Rules

GENERAL BLOORDALE PRINCIPLES

The mission at Bloordale is to provide all participants with an opportunity to enjoy the game and at the same time to develop their athletic, social and interpersonal skills.

For all those who volunteer to coach, it is our goal to be fair to all players, fellow coaches and umpires. We should always be good role models by promoting sportsmanship and fair play at all times.

All players are entitled and should be encouraged to play all positions.

All players are entitled to equal playing time.

No rules will be changed, deleted or altered in any way without consultation from the Umpire in Chief and League President.

All Coaches, players, umpires, spectators and league officials shall adhere to the Bloordale Code of Conduct that can be found on bloordalebaseball.com.

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## The Slo-Pitch Game

### Field Set Up, Equipment, and Other

Bases are placed 55 feet from the front edge of the wooden Home Plate to 1st Base and 55 feet from the front of Home Plate to 3rd Base. Measuring tape/marked rope is in the Equipment box on the field. Second Base can be visually lined up with the pitcher's mat and Home Plate, then with 1st and 3rd bases to form the diamond shape. All bases must be fastened securely in their designated places. Metal fasteners should oppose the direction of the incoming base runner.

The Slo-Pitch diamond has 2 additional lines that are to be clearly marked into the diamond by the Umpire or Home team.

1. The "Commitment Line" is located half-way between 3rd Base and Home Plate.

2. The “Score Line” is intended as a straight line extending from the front of the home plate to the screen. It should also be visually lined up in a straight line from Home Plate to the 1<sup>st</sup> Base.

## **EQUIPMENT**

**A DOUBLE BASE** is mandatory for use as 1st Base. One half of the base is White and is to be securely fastened in fair territory and the other half is Orange and is to be securely fastened in foul territory.

The following rules apply to the Double Base:

1. If a batted ball hits ANY PART of the white bag, it is a fair ball and if it hits COMPLETELY on the orange bag, it is a foul ball.
2. If a play is made to 1st Base, the batter-base runner’s first attempt to reach first base must be to touch some portion or all of the orange bag. If she touches only the white bag, she is to be called out.
3. A defensive player must use only white bag or some portion of it at all times. If she touches only the orange, it is not the same as not touching the white at all: missed base.
4. If a batter-base runner touches on all of or a part of the orange bag and a portion of the white, it is a legal touch. If the defensive player touches a portion of the white and a part of the orange, it is a legal touch.
5. Once a batter-base runner has attained 1st Base, and time is called, she must use only the white portion of the base. This includes:
  - a. After overrunning first base or after rounding 1st Base, if applicable, and the base runner decides not to advance, she must return to the white portion.
  - b. After overrunning first base or after rounding 1st Base, if applicable, and the base runner touches only the orange portion and decides to advance further, she need not retouch the white bag.
  - c. When tagging up, the base runner must use the white bag.

The use of shoes with metal cleats, exposed metal or toe pieces is prohibited for safety reasons.

## **Other**

During the Regular Season – Home team will be determined by the convenor and indicated on the schedule.

During the Playoffs and Final, Coaches flip a coin to determine who will have the Home position.

The Home Team is placed first in the field and bats last.

The Away/Visiting Team is first at bat.

It is the Home Team's responsibility to set up the field, to place the equipment back in the locked equipment box at the end of the game and provide the "new" game ball.

Each team is responsible for keeping their own score. Scorekeepers should cross reference with the opposing team every few innings to make sure scores are in agreement. Coaches are responsible for reporting the Scores to the Convenor(s) after the game so they may be posted on the League website.

The **Mercy Rule** (maximum of 5 scored runs) is in effect for the first 6 innings. The 7th inning is considered "open" to any number of scored runs.

## **General:**

A Team consists of 10 players in the field at one time. Defensive positions are: Pitcher, Catcher, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> base, and Shortstop, Left, Centre, and Right field and Rover.

The minimum number of players before a default is declared is EIGHT.

If a Coach requests the other team provide them a Catcher to bring their number of defensive players up to 10, **the other team Must provide that player**. The Catcher will Not make Outs or be involved in any way except to return the ball to the Pitcher.

Other than the pitcher and catcher, players in the field can be positioned anywhere they choose on fair ground. As each pitch is delivered, however, no defensive player shall take a position in the batter's line of vision, and with deliberate attempt act unsportsman-like in any manner, to distract the batter.

The **Batting Order** must remain constant.

Players in the field may be changed at any time as long as there are no more than 10 defensive players.

All players eligible to play must be listed on the line-up card submitted to the opposing Team Captain before the start of the game. The line-up should include the Player's name.

If players arrive late (i.e. after the game has started), and are not present for their first turn at bat, their names must be moved to the bottom of the line-up for the rest of the game and the opposing team is to be notified of the line-up change. As this is Recreational Play – late players may join the game at any point before the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning and will be added to the bottom of the batting order.

If players leave the game early, their names are to be crossed off the list and the opposing team is to be notified. There is no penalty (e.g. no automatic out) for players leaving the game early.

A Regulation Game consists of 7 innings. Seven full innings are not played if the home team scores the winning run in 6 innings or before the 3rd out is made in their half of the 7th inning. A game called by the Umpire, which cannot be resumed within 30 minutes, may be regulation if:

- Five or more innings have been played, or
- Home Team has scored the winning run during the uncompleted 5th inning, or
- After 4 ½ innings, the Visiting team has been outscored by the Home team.

NOTE: The Umpire can call a game at any time because of rain, lightning, darkness, panic, or for any other cause which puts the Umpire or the Players in peril.

A regulation game is declared if the score is TIED when the game is called, after 5 complete innings, or if the home team has equaled the score of the visiting team while batting during any uncompleted inning (i.e. 4 ½, 5 ½, etc).

The Winner of the Game is the team that scores the most runs in the game. Regulation games can end in a Tie.

Play-off games Cannot end in a Tie, and if play is not possible to break the tie during the current game, the game must be completed at another time.

- A. The total number of runs scored legally, when the game is called at the end of any completed inning after 5, shall be the score.
- B. When the home team has scored the winning run during any uncompleted inning after four, or the visiting team has scored more runs than the home team after the end of any completed inning after 5 complete innings.
- C. If a game is to be called and the home team has not scored more runs, or does not score as many or more runs in their half of the uncompleted inning to tie or win the game, the game reverts to the last inning that was fully completed after 5 innings.
- D. Games that are not considered regulation, or regulation tie games, shall be replayed from the beginning if the schedule allows. Original line-ups may be changed when the game is replayed.
- E. Games that are not considered regulation and cannot be rescheduled are to be declared a tie with a score of 7-7.

A **Forfeited Game** (mandatory score of 7 to 0) shall be declared by the Umpire in favour of the Team not at fault in the following cases:

- 1. If a Team fails to appear upon the field with a minimum of EIGHT players
- 2. If after a game has begun, a Team refuses to play or resume play as directed by the Umpire
- 3. If a team uses tactics clearly designed to delay or hasten the playing of the game as determined by the umpire.

One run shall be scored each time a base runner legally touches first, second, third and passes the home plate scoring line, before the third out of an inning, unless the third out is the result of a force out, or the batter/base runner is out before reaching 1st Base.

Runs achieved in an inning **after the Third Out is made, may not be counted.**

A run shall not be scored if the third out of an inning is the result of:

- A. The batter-base runner being put out legally before touching 1st Base.
- B. A base runner forced out at any time

- C. A base runner being called out for leaving a base too soon on a pitched ball (Lead-off, when seen and called by Umpire).
- D. A preceding base runner being called out for failure to touch a base.

A base runner shall not score a run ahead of a base runner preceding her in a Team's batting order, if the preceding runner has not been put out.

EFFECT A preceding runner called out for missing a base, does not affect the following runners on first or second. However, no preceding runner crossing home plate may return to touch any missed base after the following runner has scored. If the fielding team appeals a preceding runner missing a base, and the appeal is upheld, the following runner's score is counted, unless the appealed out is the third out of the inning. If no appeal is made, then all scored runs are counted.

## **PITCHING**

Pitchers can pitch Maximum of 4 innings total in a game.

The pitching rubber is to be placed at 45 feet from home plate.

At the beginning of each half of the inning, five practice pitches will be allowed. Only a definite underhand motion is permitted in the delivery of a pitch. Once the pitcher starts her pitching motion, the batter may not request time out.

NOTE: Pitchers may not deliberately "walk" a batter.

Legally delivered pitches:

- The pitched ball must have a perceptible arc of at least 6 feet from the ground before it passes any part of home plate and shall not reach a height of over 12 feet at its highest point from the ground.

Illegally pitched balls include:

- Any pitched ball that doesn't conform to the requirements of a legally delivered, pitched ball
- All pitches made by the pitcher from other than the pitching zone and pitcher's position
- The pitcher fails to face home plate on delivery of the pitch

- When a pitcher moves towards the batter after releasing the pitch.

**EFFECT** In each case an illegally pitched ball shall be called immediately when it occurs, and a ball be awarded to the batter. The Umpire will call the illegal pitch loud enough for the Batter and Pitcher to hear. If the batter swings at any illegally pitched ball, the pitch will immediately become legal. The ball is alive and in play if hit by the batter.

**Appealing After Ball is Dead/Dead Ball Appeal:** Once the ball has been returned to the infield and “TIME” has been called by the Umpire, or the ball becomes dead, any infielder, including the pitcher or catcher, with or without possession of the ball, may make a verbal appeal on a runner missing a base or leaving a base prior to the ball being caught. The Umpire must acknowledge the appeal and then make a decision on the play. base runners may not leave their bases during this appeal process as the ball remains dead until the Umpire calls “PLAY BALL”.

A “**STRIKE**” is called by the Umpire

1. For each fairly delivered pitch that passes through the strike zone and touches any part of the home plate and/or batting mat
2. For each pitch struck at and missed by the batter
3. For each batted ball striking the batter while she is in the batter’s box
4. For each foul tip – a legally batted ball which goes directly from the bat with no perceptible arc, to the catcher’s hand or glove and is caught by the catcher. (The batter is Out if this is the 3rd strike)
5. For each foul ball not caught on the fly. (Batter is out if the foul fly is caught)

A “**BALL**” is called by the Umpire on each pitch not swung at by the batter, if:

1. The pitched ball does not enter the strike zone or does not attain the 6-12 foot arc before dropping to the home plate/mat
2. The ball strikes the ground before reaching home plate or any part of the mat
3. For any ball striking the batter while she is in the batter’s box

A **FAIR** Ball is a legally batted ball which is immediately in play when:

1. Settles or is first touched on fair ground between home and 1st Base or between home and 3rd base
2. Bounds past 1st or 3rd while on or over fair territory

3. Touches 1st, 2nd or 3rd base
4. Touches the person or the clothing of an Umpire or Player while in fair territory. (NOTE: If the base runner is hit by a ball while she is off the base, the base runner is Out.)
5. Falls to the ground in foul territory then rolls or bounces into fair territory before passing 1<sup>st</sup> or 3rd and without having touched some object other than the ground
6. First touches the ground in fair territory, then rolls into foul territory, then rolls again into fair territory, provided the ball did not touch anything while on or over foul territory other than the ground

A **FOUL Ball**, is one which:

1. Settles on foul ground between home and 1st or home and 3rd base
2. Goes past 1st or 3rd while on or over foul ground
3. First touches the ground in foul territory beyond 1st or 3rd base
4. A foul tip caught by the catcher

Home Run Rule : Where a home run is hit that is in excess of the number allowed per inning (e.g. Mercy Rule of 7 runs), the batter will be called Out.

## **BATTING**

- The batting order, once submitted to the opposing team, must remain constant throughout the game. The names of Players leaving the field prior to the end of the game (e.g. injury) will be removed from/crossed off the batting line-up without penalty.
- Each player of the team at bat, shall become the batter in the order in which her name appears on the line up sheet.
- The 1st batter in each succeeding inning shall be the batter whose name follows that of the last completed turn at bat in the preceding inning
- When the 3rd out of an inning is made before the batter has completed her turn at bat, the same player will be the 1st batter in the next inning and all previously called balls and strikes will be cancelled.

Batting out of order

1. If an incorrect batter is discovered before she completes her turn at bat, the correct batter may take her proper place, assuming any accumulated balls and strikes.



2. If the mistake is discovered after the batter has completed her turn and before a pitch to the succeeding batter, the batter who should have batted is called Out. All base runners, if they have advanced, must return to the base occupied at the time the incorrect batter took a position in the batter's box. The next batter is the player whose name follows that of the batter called Out for failure to bat.

If the Out was the 3rd out, then the next batter in the next inning is still the batter whose name follows that of the batter called out for failure to bat. An illegal batter is removed from base. NOTE: In situation 2, only the defensive team can appeal.

3. If the mistake is not discovered until after a pitch is made to the next batter, the turn at bat of the incorrect batter is then legal. All bases advanced or runs scored are counted, and the next batter shall be the one whose name follows that of the incorrect batter who has just finished a time at bat. No one is called out for failure to bat, and players missing their turn at bat, have lost that turn and do not bat again until reached in the regular batting rotation.
4. A base runner who has batted out of order will not be removed from the base she is occupying, to bat in her proper place. She misses her turn at bat with no penalty. The next legal batter will be the one who follows her in the batting order.

The Batter is OUT if

- A. she illegally hits the ball
- B. deliberately bunts or swings the bat downward to chop the ball to the ground
- C. hits a foul after two strikes
- D. steps across the home plate, with the pitcher in the pitching position
- E. intentionally interferes with the catcher, attempting a play
- F. any member of the Team (excluding base runners) interferes with a fielder attempting to make a play on a foul fly ball
- G. she hits a fair ball with her bat a second time in fair territory
- H. NOTE: If the batter drops the bat and the ball rolls to the bat in fair territory, the batter is not out and the ball is alive and in play. However, if the bat rolls towards the ball and subsequently hits it in fair territory, the batter is out and the ball is dead

- I. she hits a fly ball that is legally caught  
EFFECT: the batter is out, the ball remains alive and base runners are in jeopardy.
- J. she hits a fly ball in foul territory and it is caught by a fielder
- K. she hits a foul ball that is caught by the Catcher provided the ball did not first connect with the screen/fencing AND the hit ball had a perceptible arc of 6-12 feet
- L. she has completed three strikes
- M. batter does not drop the bat but carries it to 1st Base
- N. NOTE: Infield fly rule does not apply (for Bloordale)

### **BASERUNNING**

A base runner must touch each base in legal order. The Batter becomes a base runner as soon as she hits the ball.

**Catchers** must have their foot on all or part of the home plate (NOT the mat) when making an Out at home. The mat is purely for pitching placement purposes.

A Batter-base runner is **OUT** under the following circumstances:

- A. A. When hit by her own batted ball in fair territory, after leaving the batter's box
- B. When she drops the bat in fair territory and it makes contact with a fair ball, by moving the ball
- C. When a fly ball is legally caught
- D. When "tagged" or touched with the ball by a fielder before reaching 1st Base.
- E. When the ball is caught by the fielder before the runner reaches 1st Base.
- F. When after reaching 1st Base safely, she overruns that base, and then makes an attempt to start to second and is tagged returning to 1st base.
- G. When she runs out of the 3-foot base path line
- H. If she interferes with a fielder taking a throw, or making a play at 1st Base.
- I. She intentionally slides into any base. Note: determining whether an action is a slip or trip as opposed to an intentional slide will be at the umpire's discretion.
- J. If she interferes with a play at home plate in an attempt to prevent an obvious out.
- K. When a play is being made at 1st Base, she touches only the white portion of the double-bag

- L. If she physically passes a preceding base runner before that player has been put out.

EFFECT: The batter is out and the ball is alive, unless the act interferes with the play, then the batter is out and the ball is dead, and all base runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the interference.

A baserunner is OUT under the following circumstances:

- A. If she fails to keep contact with the base to which she is entitled e.g. an overrun and she slips off the base and is “tagged” by the fielder. NOTE: base runners can over-run 1st Base ONLY - provided they touch the ORANGE bag.
- B. If she physically interferes with a fielder attempting to either catch a batted ball or throw a ball/make a play. EFFECT: The ball is dead, the base runner is out.
- C. If she is hit by a fair ball **WHILE OFF HER BASE and before it touches or passes a fielder**, excluding the pitcher.
- D. If she runs bases in illegal order
- E. When she is off the base and legally touched/tagged by a fielder
- F. When she takes her foot off the base (i.e. she is not in direct contact with a portion of the bag), before a pitched ball has been hit (i.e. Lead off).
- G. If she leaves her base to advance before a fly ball is caught and fails to “tag up”/return to touch the original base after a fly ball has been caught OR if the fielder receives the ball while on the base before the runner is able to tag up.
- H. If she fails to touch a base, including an awarded base, before proceeding to the next base.
- I. If she runs off the baseline (>3 feet) to avoid being touched with the ball by a fielder
- J. If she interferes with a fielder taking a throw, or making a play
- K. If she physically touches Home Plate/Mat rather than just crossing the Scoring Line.
- L. When a defensive player clearly has the ball and is waiting for the runner and the runner deliberately crashes with great force into the defensive player. EFFECT: the ball is dead, the offending runner is out, and all base runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the infraction.
- M. When she touches the “Commitment Line” half-way between Third Base and Home with one foot or crosses the Line and attempts to run back again to Third Base, to avoid being Out at Home.

NOTE: Two base runners may not occupy the same base at the same time. The first base runner is entitled to occupy it until she has touched the next base legally, or is forced to leave the bag due to the batter becoming a base runner. The following base runner may be put out by being tagged with the ball.

**AWARDED BASES - RUNNERS ARE ENTITLED TO ADVANCE WITHOUT LIABILITY TO BE PUT OUT:**

- A. When forced to advance because the batter is “walked”/awarded 1st Base
- B. If a base runner is obstructed during a rundown, she will be awarded the base to which she was running
- C. When an accident or incident occurs that prevents a base runner from proceeding to the base to which she is entitled because of a home run or other awarded base, a substitute base runner is permitted to take her place and complete the play.
- D. If a fielder “overthrows” 1st Base, 3rd Base or Home Plate (by at least 10 feet), the Umpire may award the base runner(s) ONE base beyond the next touched base that the base runner was running towards (e.g. a runner going to 1st Base would move to 2nd, a runner to 2nd Base would move to 3rd, a runner to 3rd Base would move to Home and the run scores).

**COURTESY RUNNERS**

A courtesy runner may be used only after the Batter/Runner has safely made it to First base. Bloordale Rules call for the person who was the Last Out to be used as the courtesy runner. The player or coach must indicate “Time”, and inform the umpire and opposing team that the runner is being replaced by a courtesy runner. There is no limit to the number of courtesy runners used in a game, provided there is a **valid medical reason** for the player to have a courtesy runner. This provision is not to be used to replace slower runners with faster runners. Players requesting courtesy runners should consider their safety when playing active defensive positions.

**THE BALL IS DEAD AND NOT IN PLAY WHEN:**

- A. “No pitch” is declared by the Umpire
- B. A base runner is called out for leaving the base too soon on a pitched ball (i.e. a lead-off”)
- C. After each “Ball” or “Strike” is called by the Umpire
- D. A pitched ball touches any part of the batter’s body
- E. A batter is hit by her own batted ball, either fair or foul

- F. A batter deliberately bunts or chops the ball downward
- G. A foul ball is not caught
- H. A batter steps completely across the plate, with the pitcher standing within the pitching zone
- I. An offensive team member causes interference
- J. A base runner deliberately crashes into a defensive player who is waiting to make a tag
- K. A base runner is off base and is hit with a fair batted ball
- L. A ball lands outside the established limits of the playing field
- M. "Time" is called by the Umpire for any reason.

RULE CLARIFICATIONS : No sub players shall be permitted to play. All players must be paid and registered.