

## **Bantam Softball Rules**

### The Field

- Bases will be 50 feet.
- Pitching rubber will be 30 feet (official ASA distance for 10u is 35 feet).

### Roster Management

- A team must be able to field a minimum of 6 players. Once both teams have at least 6 players, the game must start.
- In the event that one team cannot field the minimum within 15 minutes of the scheduled start time, the team will forfeit the contest. However, following the recording of the official forfeit, the players in attendance will still be allowed to scrimmage, with mixed teams permitted.
- Borrowing players:
  - In the event that a team has more than the minimum 6 players but less than 9, they may choose to borrow defensive players from the opposing team/another Bantam team.
  - Borrowed players from the opposing team can only play in the outfield, and do not bat. They may freely rotate to facilitate batting in their regular lineup spots for their own team.
  - Borrowed players from other Bantam teams may bat if both coaches agree in advance.
  - Borrowing players is not allowed in playoff / championship games.
  - If a team is missing players in a playoff / championship game, they must bat the same number of spots (up to 8) as the opponent. For example: If one team has 6 players and the other has 9, the team with 6 must add two empty spots ("automatic outs") to their lineup.
- All players present at the start of a game should be listed in the batting order. Late arrivals should be added to the bottom of the order no matter what place in the order is up at the time of their arrival.
- Teams may place up to ten defensive players in the field, with no more than 6 in the infield. Outfielders must begin on the outfield grass.
- All players should play at least 3 innings on the field. Coaches are encouraged to rotate players in the field to allow experience at each position.
- Free defensive substitutions are allowed.
- "Coach catching" is not permitted.

### Player Equipment

- All players must be in full uniform (jersey and pants) to participate.
- Hanging jewelry (earrings, necklaces, etc.) is not allowed.
- All batters, on-deck batters, and base runners are required to wear protective batting helmets at all times. Face cages on batting helmets are strongly encouraged.
- Catchers may use a batting helmet with a full face cage in lieu of a catcher's mask. They must wear all other standard catcher's equipment.

## Gameplay

- Games will last 5 innings with a 2-hour time limit on weekends. An inning may not begin less than 15 minutes before the time limit.
- Play may be halted because of darkness at the umpire's discretion. If an inning is not complete at the time when play is suspended, the game will revert to the previous complete inning.
- There is a run limit of 5 per inning except for the final (5th) inning. **The maximum walks per inning rule has been eliminated in an effort to speed up gameplay.**
- Mercy rule: if a team is ahead by 15 runs or more after both teams have batted 4 times, the game will end.
- Time outs may only be requested in the infield and cannot be used as a means of stopping runners in motion. Players should always attempt to complete a play in progress before requesting time out. When time out is awarded, the umpire will determine how far runners may advance.
- A ball thrown into dead ball territory from the infield will result in all runners being awarded one additional base.
- A ball thrown into dead ball territory from the outfield will result in all runners being awarded two additional bases.
- There is no infield fly rule.

## Pitching

- Pitchers are strongly encouraged to wear a protective face shield.
- Windmill-style pitching is not allowed.
- The pitcher must start her windup with both feet on the pitching rubber and should push off the pitching rubber with the pivot foot while releasing the ball. Run-up deliveries are not allowed.
- At the umpire's discretion, pitchers who are unable to reach home plate consistently during the early part of the season may begin their windup at 28 feet. However, by the mid-point in the season (game 6), all pitchers must pitch from the standard distance.

## Batting

- Bunting is not allowed.
- Batters shall not attempt to advance to first on a dropped third strike.
- A batter who is hit by a pitch while making a reasonable attempt to get out of the way will be awarded first base.
- Throwing the bat is prohibited. A first offense will result in a warning; the batter will be called out for any subsequent offenses.

## Base Running

- Base runners may lead after the pitch is released.
- Stealing is not allowed.
- Runners may not attempt to barrel over the catcher or any other fielder. Failure to slide or give will result in a called out and may result in ejection.

### Ground Rules

- Smoking is prohibited on the field and in the spectator area.
- Pets are prohibited from ICYP grounds.
- Parents are not allowed in the dugout or on the field of play unless they are serving as base coaches. Base coaches should return to the spectator area following a team's batting half of each inning.
- Arguing with umpires, coaches, or other players will not be tolerated. The umpire may eject any individual whose behavior is considered abusive. Failure to leave the field promptly following ejection may result in forfeit by the associated team.

***For safety reasons, players and spectators should walk around the perimeter of the field when arriving/departing and should remain alert for batted and thrown balls on adjacent fields.***

*Updated 4/13/21*