



SBS Official Whiffleball Rules

Revised 6/1/16

I. NUMBER OF PLAYERS

- 1. There is a maximum of 5 players on the field at one time.**
 - At least one of those players must be male and one must be female.
 - A minimum of 4 players is required to play.

- 2. If you have zero males or zero females then it is up to the opponent's team captain and umpire to determine if it will be a forfeit or if they are permitted to play a person down**
 - 4 on the field.

- 3. Defensively, there will be five players in the field**
 - Pitcher, Catcher, First Baseman/Right Fielder, Second Baseman/Center Fielder, and Third Baseman/Left Fielder
 - Teams can rotate players in and out of the field at the start of every half inning.

- 4. Offensive lineups will consist of every team member present.**

II. FIELD SETUP

- 1. The pitching mound stands 38-feet from home plate (40-feet from the strike zone).**

- 2. Bases will be placed in diamond 45-feet apart from each other. Second base, while 45-feet from first and third, should be about 15-feet behind the mound.**

3. Home plate will be 70 feet from the home run fence/netting down the right and left field lines.
4. Foul territory is the entire area outside of the first and third base lines.

III. DURATION OF GAMES

1. All games last at most seven innings or one hour, whichever comes first.
 - The last inning will start 10-15 minutes before the top of the hour.
 - The umpire will make this call at the top of the final inning.
2. In the event of a tie after one hour/five innings, two teams will participate in a “Blast Off” (detailed later).
3. Due to differing circumstances in each and every game, some games will finish short of an hour in length, while others might run over the hour mark.
 - Please respect your ump’s call in this matter. He/she must keep all games on time in fairness to teams playing later hours and due to facility permit restrictions.

IV. GAMEPLAY

1. No metal spikes or cleats. The floor is rubberized
2. Innings consist of three outs. Outs can be achieved by:
 - Strike Out: Pitching can strike a batter out after three strikes have been recorded.
 - A strike can be recorded by *a swing and a miss, a foul ball with less than two strikes, or a pitch hitting the strike zone* without the batter swinging.
 - A batter can foul off as many two-strike pitches for foul balls as he can to stay alive.
 - If a batter gets to six balls before three strikes, the batter is awarded first base.
 - Unlike baseball, if a batter is hit by the pitch, it is only a ball. First base is not rewarded unless it is ball six.

- **Catch: Any ball batted by the hitter in the air can be caught by any of the five defensive players in either fair or foul territory with player's bare hands.**
 - No gloves, hat, or obvious use of shirt. If a batted ball is deflected off another player, offensive or defensive, and caught before it hits the ground, the batter is out.
 - If a batted ball hits the batter while the batter is still in the vicinity of home plate, it is a foul ball.

- **Tagging: A defensive player can tag a runner with the ball if the runner is off the base.**
 - The ball has to remain in the defensive players hand up to the point of contact.
 - If the defensive player throws the ball at and hits the base runner, an out *cannot* be recorded (NO PEGGING).

- **Force Out: When a defensive player stands on a base before a forced runner reaches that base, an out is recorded. Force outs can be recorded on the following bases:**
 - *First base:* On any batted ball on the ground.
 - *Second base:* When a batted ball is hit on the ground with a runner on first
 - *Third base:* When a batted ball is hit on the ground with runners on first and second.
 - *Home plate:* When a batted ball is hit on the ground with runners on first, second, and third.

A force out can be recorded on any base in a bases loaded situation as well

- **Mounding: Used for force plays. Defensive players may throw the ball to the pitcher or another player covering the pitcher's mound or field/run it to the mound themselves before any forced runner reaches the forced base.**
 - Defender must have full possession of the ball while in vicinity of the mound.
 - Runners are safe if the ball is mishandled and not recollected before runners reach base (as with all force plays).
 - *It is the call of the SBS official on mounding plays (as with force plays) if runner is out.*
 - If the lead runner gets to the next base before the ball is fully controlled on the mound, that runner is safe.
 - If the next base-runner doesn't beat the ball to the mound, despite the runner ahead being safe, that runner is out.

- If all runners beat and remain on the base before the ball is fully possessed by a defender on the mound, then they are all safe.
- **Pitching: The strike zone is a target 20 inches wide by 24 inches high and is placed 15 inches above the ground**
 - When a pitch hits the strike zone border or within the target, it is a strike
 - Pitcher must stand on the mound and address home plate when pitching.
 - No crow-hopping or no look pitches.
 - Pitch speed will be regulated to "medium speed" which will be up to the SBS Umpire's discretion.
 - Any pitch thrown too fast to the ump will be called a ball and pitcher will be issued warning to slow down.
- **Hitting: There is no bunting allowed. A bunt attempt will result in a non-contact strike even if the bunt is put into play.**
 - All batted balls that are not caught where hitter reaches first before the ball is collected by the first baseman or the defender at the mound is a single.
 - Batter can over run first base in an attempt to beat the throw, as long as the batter runs along the foul line/in foul territory.
 - Any turn by the batter towards second will be ruled as advancement and the runner must continue to second or attempt to return to first safely.
 - First base is the only base that can be over run.
 - If over running of second and third base occurs the runner must safely return to the bag or continue on to the next base safely.
 - *A ground-rule double* can be achieved if the hitter bats a ball that hits the fence/net below the home run line.
 - *On a ground rule double*, any baserunner on second and/or third at the time of the hit will score.
 - Base runners on first will be awarded third base.
 - Any ball hit over the fence/above the HR line on the net will be a home run for the batter.
 - All base runners on base at the time of the hit will score.
 - *Everyone bats*, even if they didn't play in the field that half inning. Keep the same batting order the entire game. If someone shows up late, they are inserted into the end of the batting order. If you do not meet gender requirements, an "out" must be taken when the missing gender would have batted.
 - A foul ball over the batters head can be caught for an out.

- On an infield fly with less than 2 outs and runners on 1st and 2nd or 1st, 2nd and 3rd, the batter is automatically out
 - Infield fly = any fly ball within the infield with significant arc and deemed an "easy catch"
 - Runners can advance after the catch, BUT at their own risk.
- **Baserunning: Base-runner to defensive player contact is closely watched by the umpire.**
 - Any excessive contact will result in an out or ejection,
 - i.e. breaking up a double play.
 - This is a social league, no need for sprained ankles.
 - Railroading the catcher will result in an out and possible ejection.
 - Any intentional interference with a defensive player will result in the runner and batter being called out.

3. No stealing or leading.

- No tagging up on fly balls to advance to the next base.
- Runners can only advance bases on batted balls that are not caught by a defender.
- If the ball is caught, and runner is off the bag, defense can tag runner, throw the ball to the base runners original base, or mound the ball to record an out.
- If a runner leaves early, the ball is dead and the runner is declared out.
- If this is the 3rd out of an inning, the batter will be the first up next inning.

4. There is a seven run limit in the first 4 innings.

- Unlimited runs may be scored at the start of the 5th inning.
- The only exception is if the umpire declares one of the first 4 innings the last of the game.
- At that point, unlimited number of runs can be scored in any last inning.

V. BLAST OFF

- 1. In the event of a tie after five innings or an hour of play, the tie will be broken is a home run blast off.**
- 2. Alternating visiting team and home team, each team will have a player take one swing to hit a home run to give their team the lead.**

- No player can swing twice before all players on the team have taken one.
 - Pitcher will be a player from the hitting team
3. **In any given round, if visiting team hits a HR, the home team has one chance to tie it up.**
 - If home team doesn't, visiting team wins.
 4. **If visiting team fails to hit a HR and the home team does, the home team wins.**
 5. **Hitter can take up to three pitches before they swing.**
 - Any swing that doesn't result in a home run is an out.
 - If no swing is taken by the third pitch, the batter is out.

VI. OUT OF PLAY

1. **Some fields may have home run rules. Consult your umpire.**
2. **All over-thrown balls are deemed out of play when:**
 - The ball is thrown into or beyond the track area
 - The ball is thrown beyond the backstop screen
 - The ball is thrown behind the backstop screen
3. **On overthrows out of play, the runner is granted the base he/she is going to (at the point of the throw) plus one more base.**
 - Note: in cases where a base runner runs past first base, he/she must make a clearly aggressive turn towards second base to be granted 2nd and 3rd in overthrow situations.

VII. FORFEITS

1. **If your team forfeits a game during the season, the following rules apply:**
 - First Offense: Loss of game and warning issued.
 - Second Offense: Loss of game and staff reserves the right to remove team from playoffs.
 - Third Offense: Removal from the league.
2. **If you know in advance that your team is going to forfeit a game, we encourage you to email us so as to help us schedule your opponent a game.**

3. **Teams have until ten minutes past the designated start time to field a full squad (minimum numbers of players required to play according to the rules above).**
 - Anything less than the minimum must be approved by the staff and opposing team.

VIII. LEAGUE CANCELLATION/RAINOUT

1. **Leagues may be cancelled due to existing weather conditions, dangerous or unplayable field conditions, facility constraints, etc.**
2. **SBS staff makes every effort to play all scheduled games, thus we will not cancel games until absolutely necessary.**
3. **If the game is canceled, SBS staff will change the website immediately.**
4. **If a game is cancelled on site, SBS staff will attempt to contact those teams still scheduled to play the remainder of the league night.**
5. **Depending on the time of cancellation, some teams will have to be notified on site.**
6. **We do our best to schedule make up games.**
7. **In extreme circumstances, SBS reserves the right to run a shortened season without a refund or schedule games on days other than our regularly scheduled league day/night.**