

Mabel League Playing Rules

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1. General Playing Rules

- (1) Gendered rules do not apply in the Mabel League.
- (2) The current Softball Canada Rule Book will be adopted by the Mabel League and all rules and regulations of Softball Canada will be followed and applied to league play unless otherwise stated.

2. Batting Order

- (1) Each team will have the option of using the current Softball Canada rules for players and substitutions or may bat through the order as described in 2(2). Each team must notify the umpire and opposing team of their decision at the pre-game conference.
- (2) A team that chooses to bat through the order may have more than 9 players in their batting order, with the following restrictions:
 - (a) Substitutions are permitted following regular substitution and re-entry rules, provided the number of batters stays the same.
 - (b) A player may be removed from the batting order without penalty provided the umpire and opposing team are notified.
 - (c) Any player in the batting order may switch in and out of any defensive position at any time.

3. Pitching

- (1) All divisions will use the modified fastpitch pitching style as described in section 2(3).
- (2) A competitive or intermediate division team may use the windmill pitching style, as described in the current Softball Canada rule book, when agreed upon by the opposing competitive or intermediate division team at the pre-game conference.
Note: both teams do not have to make the same choice.
- (3) There are three major parts to a modified fastpitch delivery: the starting position, the backswing up to the top of the windup, and the forward swing down to and through the release.
 - (a) Before starting the delivery (pitch), the pitcher:
 - (i) Must start with both feet on the rubber.
Note: where a pitching line is used in place of a rubber, both feet must be in close proximity to the line.

- (ii) Must their hips and shoulders fully square to home plate.
 - (iii) Must pause while holding the ball in front of the body.
Note: The ASA requires a 1 to 10 second pause before the pitch. However, precedent is for only a brief but distinct pause. The intent of rule is to prevent the pitcher from gaining unfair momentum for the pitch, or "quick-pitching" a batter.
 - (iv) May hold the ball in either the glove or the pitching hand.
- (b) During the backswing, the pitcher:
- (i) Must start the backswing directly out of the paused position.
 - (ii) Must move the pitching hand backwards to start the delivery.
 - (iii) May bring the arm above the shoulder line.
 - (iv) May lift their front foot off the ground.
 - (v) May slide or drag the pivot foot, so long as it remains in constant contact with the ground.
 - (vi) May rotate the body towards first or third base.
 - (vii) MAY NOT step backwards or sideways off the rubber (pitching line).
 - (viii) MAY NOT use a "windmill" motion.
Note: In a windmill motion, the backswing and delivery are in one continuous circular motion.
 - (ix) MAY NOT use a crow-hop delivery.
Note: A "crow hop" is defined by the ASA as jumping off the pitching rubber and re-planting the back foot before releasing the ball. It effectively shortens the distance to home plate and is illegal in all forms of fastpitch. However, it is legal to "leap" off the rubber during the delivery so long as pitcher does not re-plant the pivot foot and remains in constant contact with the ground.
- (c) During delivery, the pitcher:
- (i) Must deliver the ball in a full underhand motion.
Note: Sidearm pitches are illegal.
 - (ii) Must release the pitch on the first forward movement past the hip.

(iii) Must roughly square the shoulders to home plate at the point of release.

Note: No pitcher squares the shoulders fully at the time of release, owing to the effects of the stride. The intent of rule is to eliminate cross-body slingshot deliveries.

(iv) May point the palm downward upon release.

4. Regular Season

- (1) A minimum of 8 players is required to start or the game is forfeited. A 15 minute grace period from Game Time is permitted. If game is played with 8 players, the 9th position in line-up is an automatic out. The 9th player may enter game at any time with notice to the Umpire.
- (2) The official Mabel League ball will be used for all games: Red Dot 12" .47 core. The Mabel League will supply each team with 12 of the League approved balls at the beginning of the season.
- (3) The Home team must supply two balls to the Umpire: both must be official balls, either new or in good condition.
- (4) No new innings will start after 1 hour 30 minutes into Game Time.
- (5) The Umpire will announce the beginning of the last inning, at the beginning of the inning. If time runs out before a final inning is called, no open inning shall be played. If time runs out after an inning has already started, that inning may not be called an open inning.
- (6) Run Rule: teams are limited to scoring a maximum of 5 runs per inning, except for the last inning which may be an open inning announced to both teams by the Umpire at the start of the inning.
- (7) Mercy Rule: the Umpire will immediately end a game, regardless of time remaining in the game, if a team has a lead of 10 runs over the opposing team and if the opposing team has had at least 5 complete opportunities at bat.
- (8) Games may end in tied scores and points will be awarded accordingly. There is no tiebreaker rule in effect.
- (9) SPN insurance (2013) has removed the jewellery rule. However, for the safety of all players jewellery must be removed or taped up.
- (10) Only softball shoes with rubber cleats and soles are to be worn by players and coaches; no exposed metal from soccer shoes permitted.

- (11) No bat throwing is allowed, regardless of intention. The first offence in a game will receive a verbal warning. The second offence in a game will result in that offending player being ejected from the game, regardless of which player/team committed either offence.
- (12) Slap bunts are permitted in the competitive division. Slap bunts will be permitted in the intermediate division only when agreed upon by both teams, prior to game start. Slap bunts are not permitted in recreational division.
- (13) Batter-runners must run the bunt line to first base, unless the defensive player has moved to the orange safety bag to receive a throw – then the batter-runner must use the white bag.
- (14) Courtesy runners are permitted in all divisions at any base in the spirit of good sporting behaviour. The Courtesy runner must be the last available player from the batting order.
- (15) All Protests must be made in accordance with the procedure set out in the Softball BC Handbook. The Handbook defines a Protest as “a dispute that must be dealt with at the game site, or by a league executive, tournament protest committee, or Softball B.C. Representative, prior to the game continuing” and states that Protests must concern:
 - (a) Misinterpretation of a playing rule,
 - (b) Failure of an umpire to apply the correct rule to a given situation, or
 - (c) Failure to impose the correct penalty for a given violation.
- (16) Any Complaint (other than a “Protest” under rule 3(15)) must be submitted in writing within 96 hours of Game Time, to the Chair or Co-Chair or a member of the Rules and Grievances Committee, who must consider the Complaint at the next regularly scheduled Rules and Grievances Committee meeting or within 96 hours if such a meeting is not scheduled.
- (17) The Home Team must set up the bases prior to the game, and each base must be securely fastened into position on the field with two spikes.

5. Tournaments

- (1) Round robin games may end in a tied score and points will be awarded accordingly. There is no tiebreaker rule in effect.
- (2) Final and semi-final games may not end in a tied score. At the end of 7 innings, or if the time limit has expired, International Tie Breaker will be in effect. All tie-breaking innings will be open, and the last out from the previous inning will start at 2nd base.

- (3) For round robin games, no new innings will be started after 1 hour and 15 minutes into Game Time.
- (4) For final and semi-final games, no new regular innings will be started after 1 hour and 30 minutes into Game Time.
- (5) Home Team will be determined by a coin toss at the pre-game conference.
- (6) Each team must supply one official ball to the Umpire: either new or in good condition.