

Senior Olympics Softball Team Rules

Playing Format

1. This tournament will be conducted in accordance with Softball Players Association (SPA) rules and National Senior Games Association except as modified herein. For a copy of these rules, please write or call:

Softball Players Association	National Senior Games Association
925 W. State Hwy. 152	P.O. Box 82059
Mustang, OK 73064	Baton Rouge, LA 70884-2059
(405) 376-7034	(225) 766-6800
www.softballspa.com	www.nsga.com
2. New Mexico Senior Olympics will hold qualifying tournament for men and women softball teams during the year. The results of this qualifying tournament will be forwarded to the National Senior Games Association in the qualifying year it is held. The top two New Mexico teams will be named as the representative teams for New Mexico in the NSGA Summer Senior Olympics.
 - a. Team Players/Coach eligible for team rosters for Nationals - All team player(s)/coach must be registered and have checked in at a qualifying team sport in order to be eligible for addition to a National roster. Documentation of player/coach registration must be provided by the State Coordinator to Nationals.
3. There will be no local pre-qualifying for this tournament and a team fee will be charged. The team fee will be reflected in registration information.
4. Teams must provide their own bats, gloves and practice balls.
5. Teams must consist of all one gender.
6. Team rosters shall be limited to 22 persons, including non-playing coaches, non-playing captains and non-playing bench personnel. No more than 20 of these persons may be players. A maximum of five out-of-state residents are allowed. Teams in the 70+, 75+ and 80+ age divisions may have six out-of-state players on their rosters.
7. A maximum of three players may be added to a roster following registration. Changes must be received by the NMSO office in writing and may be made no later than one week prior to the scheduled tournament.
8. A team that is a member of a local league located in a major metropolitan area that encompasses two states, such as Kansas City and Cincinnati, may include a maximum of five out-of-state players who reside in the adjoining state on the team roster. All of the out-of-state players must have been regular members of the team during league play, and their names must have been included on the team's league roster. It shall be team captain's responsibility to provide sufficient documentation to the State Coordinator that the team has met this provision. State Associations that wish to allow teams to take advantage of this exception must notify New Mexico Senior Olympics in advance. In addition, this provision must be clearly stated in the state's game literature.
9. All registration and team rules apply to non-playing coaches, non-playing captains and non-playing bench personnel.

Softball Playing Format (cont)

10. Age divisions for all team competition will be determined by the age of the youngest team player as of December 31 of the competition year.
11. Men's teams will be divided into categories (Platinum, Gold and Silver) based on national ranking, if numbers warrant. AAA, Major and Major Plus teams will compete in the Gold category. AA and Recreational teams will compete in the Silver category.
12. Women's teams will be divided into two categories (Gold and Silver) based on pool play results, strength of team during pool play, if numbers warrant. The Gold division will be utilized as needed as determined by tournament officials.
13. Seeding for bracket play will be determined based on pool play results in the following order:
 - a) Win/loss record
 - b) Head-to-head results – only when all teams play each other.
 - c) Total runs allowed
 - d) Run differential
 - e) Total runs scored
 - f) Coin Toss
14. NMSO and Sport Coordinator reserve the right to change the tournament format for any age division based on entry numbers, space restrictions, skill levels or other circumstance.
15. Any game missed/forfeited during bracket play will be considered a loss.
16. **House Rules:** House Rules will vary according to Host and will be sent or provided to Team Captains prior to the Tournament. Some basic rules for each tournament are listed below:
 - a) There will be a mandatory Captain's meeting. If a captain is unable to attend, he/she should send a representative.
 - b) All athletes must check in and sign in with Photo ID. **No Exceptions.**
 - c) Credentials must be worn during all play.
 - d) Players must participate in pool play to participate in bracket play.
 - e) Line-up cards must be presented to the opposing manager and scorekeeper 10 minutes prior to **each** game time. NMSO will provide line-up cards to all team Captains.
 - f) No infield practice will be allowed between games.
 - g) NMSO officials reserve the right to reschedule, modify or cancel any portion of tournament due to inclement weather, team numbers or unplayable conditions.
 - h) All Team Tournaments will adhere to the New Mexico Senior Olympics, Inc. official rulebook. This will include but is not limited to Code of Conduct, Protest, Appeal Process and scheduling procedures.
 - i) All game inquiries must be addressed by the Captain and presented to the Sport Coordinator prior to start of games.

Softball Playing Rules

1. Commitment line: A 6 foot line drawn perpendicular to the 3rd base line, beginning at the base line and extending into foul territory. This line is located 20 feet from point of home plate, measured along the 3rd base line. Once a runner's foot touches the ground on or past the commitment line, the runner may not return to third base; the runner must continue toward the scoring plate. Violations will result in an out.
2. Scoring plate: A scoring plate shall be placed 8 feet from the back tip of home plate on an extended line from first base. A line shall be drawn from third base to the scoring plate. The scoring plate is for use by the offensive player only.
3. All plays at the plate shall be force plays. A defender shall record an "out at the plate" by having possession of the ball and tagging home plate prior to the runner touching the scoring plate. If a defender attempts to tag an offensive player at the scoring plate the runner shall be called safe. A runner who attempts to score by touching other than the scoring plate shall be called out. Players who violate this rule are subject to ejection from the game.
4. Strike zone mat: A strike zone mat will be used. The mat will measure twenty-one (21) inches wide and thirty-five (35) inches long with a white home plate centered at the front of the mat measuring seventeen (17) inches across the front, 8 1/2 inches down each side, and 12 inches diagonally to a point nearest the catcher. A legal pitch not swung at that strikes any part of the strike zone mat or home plate shall be called a strike by the umpire.
5. Pitcher's Plate/Box: a pitcher's box consisting of the area from the front of the pitcher's plate, 50 feet from home plate, and extending back eight feet (8ft) and twenty-four (24) inches wide perpendicular to the pitcher's plate shall be used. The pitcher must release the ball after coming to a complete stop with one foot or both feet in contact with the pitcher's plate or within the pitcher's box. One foot must remain in contact with the plate/box when the pitch is released with an underhand motion. A step simultaneous with the release of the ball may be taken in any direction with the free foot. The pitcher must be facing the batter when delivering the pitch. The catcher must remain within the lines of the catcher's box until the pitched ball is batted, touches the ground or home plate, or reaches the catcher's box. This area should be chalked off.
6. Double bag/mat: A double bag/mat, twice the size of a standard base, shall be placed at first base, the double portion of the bag or mat being in foul territory. For the purposes of plays at first base, the entire bag shall be considered to be in fair territory.
7. Runner's line: A runner's line measuring 3 inches wide and 30 feet long shall be marked parallel to, and 3 feet away from, the first base foul line in foul territory, extending from first base back toward home plate. Runners shall stay between this line and the foul line while running to first base. Failure to do so will result in the runner being declared out.
8. Metal cleats: Metal cleats will not be permitted. Players found wearing metal cleats in a game will be ejected from the game, and, if on base, a "dead ball out" will be called. If there are less than three outs, any players on base must return to the base occupied at the time the ejected player came to bat.

Softball Playing Rules (cont)

9. Players and substitutes: SPA rules for re-entry and extra player (EP) will apply. Extra players may play defense at any time provided the total number of defensive players on the field at any time does not exceed the total allowed for that age division.
 - a. Men in age division 50+, 55+, 60+ and 65+: Ten defensive players shall constitute a team. A team must have a minimum of nine players at the beginning and end of a game. For any team playing with nine players, an out will be recorded when the 10th position in the batting order appears. A 10th player may be added as he/she shows up for play; however, he/she must be listed as the 10th offensive player and bat after the other nine players. If EPs are used, a team must start and end a game with 11 players, including the EP. In addition, for team using EPs, 10 players must play defense.
 - b. Men in age divisions 70+ and 75+ and women's age divisions 50+, 55+, 60+, 65+, and 70+: Eleven defensive players shall constitute a team. A team must have a minimum of 10 players at the beginning and end of the game. An 11th player may be added as he/she show up to play; however, he/she must be listed as the 11th offensive player and bat after the other 10 players. Teams in these divisions may use up to two EPs. If EPs are used, team must start and end a game with 11 players plus the number of EPs used. In addition, for team using EPS, 11 players must play defense.
 - c. Women in age division 75+: Twelve (12) players constitute a team. A team must have minimum of 11 players to start the game. Until the 12th position is filled, an out will recorded each time that position in the batting order appears. A twelfth (12) player listed on the roster may be added any time during the game, batting in the last (12th) position of the lineup card. Players may leave and re-enter the game unlimited times without penalty, but batting order must remain the same. A team can bat up to 20 players, but all players must be listed on the roster and lineup card.
10. Line-up cards: Official line-up cards must be presented to the opposing manager and scorekeeper 10 minutes prior to game time. Tournament line up cards will be furnished to all team managers.
11. Runs per inning: For all games, there shall be a seven run per inning rule, with unlimited runs allowed in the seventh inning or final inning.
12. Mercy rule: A mercy rule will be in effect for all games. The rule shall be 20 runs after four innings and 15 runs after five innings, ending the game.
13. Homerun rule: All teams will play under the 1-homerun +1-up single rule. Teams in the Platinum division will play under the 3-homerun +1-up single rule. The first ball hit over the fence will count as a home run. Subsequent balls hit over the fence by the same team will count as singles until the opposing team has hit a ball over the fence (home run). Base runners may only advance one base per single over the fence. This rule shall continue throughout the entire game.
14. Games against a higher rated opponent: This rule applies only to the men's skill categories. When a team is playing an opponent with a higher classification as determined by tournament officials the lower classified team shall be given 5 runs added to their score at the beginning of the games at the discretion of the softball sport coordinator.

Softball Playing Rules (cont)

15. Time limit: The length of a game will be seven innings or one hour and fifteen minutes. After one hour the umpire shall announce that teams will finish the current inning and play one more. This last inning shall be played with unlimited runs allowed in accordance with Rule 9E. Tie games after seven innings or at the end of regulation time will continue until one team is ahead after completion of any subsequent inning using the international tie-breaker rule.
16. Women age divisions 65+, 70+, 75+ can run through 2nd and 3rd base without possibility of being tagged out unless an attempt is made or a turn toward the next base is indicated.
17. Courtesy runner: A player may only be used as a courtesy runner once per inning (except Women 65+, 70+,75+ which may have a courtesy runner as many times as needed and players can be a courtesy runner as many times as needed per inning). A courtesy runner may not be replaced by another courtesy runner except for injury causing removal of the original courtesy runner permanently from the game. A courtesy runner on base when it is his/her turn at bat will be declared out as the runner. Another courtesy runner may not be used to circumvent this rule.
18. Sliding or diving: A player may slide or dive into any base and when returning to any base. Runners shall be called out for contact with a defensive player if, in the umpire's judgment, the contact was deliberate or the runner could reasonably have been expected to minimize or avoid contact under the circumstances and failed to do so.
19. Runner hit by fair ball: A runner is not out when he/she is hit with a fair, untouched, batted ball that has passed an infielder, excluding the pitcher, and, in the judgment of the umpire, no other infielder had a chance to make an out.
20. Team clothing must be of like design and color. Jerseys must have a number on the back.
21. Jewelry will not be allowed. If jewelry cannot be removed, then it must be taped.
22. The men's divisions will play 12 inch slow pitch (.44 core and .375 compression). The women's divisions will play 11 inch slow pitch (.47 core and .500 compression).
23. All bats with a BPF of 1.20 or less will be legal for play except those bats listed on the most current SPA banned bat list.