



City of Dripping Springs Adult Softball League Rules & Regulations



Updated: 4/3/2023

The Dripping Springs Adult Softball Association (DSASA) was formed in the Spring of 1975 as a recreational league for the citizens of the Dripping Springs to enjoy the game of slow-pitch softball. The League was run by Coach Carl Waits for over 45 years and was graciously handed over to the City of Dripping Springs in 2022. We hope to be able to continue Coach Waits' legacy and "welcome you to another season of recreational enjoyment derived from playing and visiting with friends and family under the skies of Dripping Springs."

LEAGUE PLAYING RULES

***League Rules are subject to change at any time by staff.**

FACILITY:

- ❖ Adult Softball Games will be played at the Upper & Lower Adult Softball Fields located at The Dripping Springs Sports & Recreation Complex.
 - Address: 27148 Ranch Rd 12, Dripping Springs, TX 78620

TEAM MANAGER'S RESPONSIBILITIES:

- ❖ The Team Manager is a vital link between the individual players and the Park's & Community Service's Staff. For this reason, any person assuming this role has a number of responsibilities they are obligated to:
 - Attend the mandatory Manager's Meeting(s).
 - Know the rules and regulations of the program and ensure that all team members understand the information and follow all league rules and park policies.
 - Routinely check email communication for information from staff and players.
 - Make sure all members are eligible to play.
 - Ensure your team arrives on time at the correct location for their scheduled games.

EQUIPMENT:

1. Game Balls:
 - a. Teams are required to provide their own game ball. Balls must be USA Softball approved and feature the USA or ASA trademark stamp to be used for play. Stamp must be legible.
 - Ball should be marked by the team for identification. Letters should be legible and not distract from the continuity of an official softball.
 - Men: use 12" 52/300 ball: use 12" ball (12-inch, optic yellow ball with COR of .520 or under and 300 Compression or under and ASA stamp).
 - Do not use stained, dark, or damaged balls for play. Balls should be clean and in good condition.
2. Bats:
 - Bats must have a safety knob on the handle.
 - Approved bats: ASA 2013 stamp of certification
 - See current banned bat list for additional information regarding 2000 & 2004 ASA stamped bats.

<https://www.usssa.com/baseball/baseball-withdrawn-andor-non-compliant-baseball-bat-models>

3. Uniforms:

- Players are encouraged to wear matching or coordinating shirts for league play but are NOT required to wear uniforms.
- Pants can be long or short.
- Proper athletic shoes are required, no metal spikes or metal cleats.
- Official helmets may be worn by the pitcher, catcher, batter, and base runners.

TEAMS & PLAYERS

4. Player Eligibility:

- Players must be a minimum of 18 years old before the first game of the season to participate.
- A player must register for their team's roster online, have paid all necessary registration fees, and signed all required waivers.
- A player must play a minimum of four (4) games with their current team to be eligible for playoffs.
 - If a player is injured, the Parks Department Program Manager must be notified in writing for a player to be exempt from this rule.

5. Rosters:

- All players must be listed on the Official Team Roster and sign a participant waiver to participate but may be added at any time throughout the regular season.
- Players may be added to a team's roster during the first four (4) weeks of regular play. After the first two weeks all rosters will be locked, and no player(s) may be added.
 - After the roster is locked, players are not allowed to switch teams at any point during the season.
- Rosters have a 20-player maximum for all leagues.
- A player may not play on more than one team in any league. This includes playing on two teams in different leagues.
- Violation of these rules will result in automatic forfeiture of any games played with illegal or ineligible players; unless a team is given express permission by the Program Manager.

LEAGUE SPECIFIC GAME RULES:

6. Game Play:

- All games will be seven (7) innings or 50 minutes.
 - If the game is tied, teams will play one-pitch innings. Each player will begin batting with a full count of two (2) strikes and three (3) balls.
 - During the regular season, if the game is still tied after two extra innings after time has expired, the game will result in a tie.
- Games are played back-to-back. If both teams are available their game may start early. There are NO BREAKS between games and teams should be prepared to start their second game with no delay.
- Games will be considered complete after seven innings or time has expired, whichever occurs first. In the case of inclement weather or circumstances where games are interrupted, games are considered complete after 30 minutes or 4.5 innings provided the home team is leading. Games that have not reached this point will resume from the point of interruption at a later date.

7. Minimum Number of Players:

- A minimum of eight (8) players required to start and finish a game for all leagues.

- A maximum of ten (10) players are allowed on the field during play.
8. Forfeits:
- Teams will be given a 5-minute grace period at game time. The game clock will start on time. Game time is considered when the game is scheduled and not when the previous game is over.
 - If your team does not have enough players available (8 player minimum from their own team) by the end of the 5-minute grace period, it will be declared a forfeit.
 - If the game is forfeited, players are encouraged to gather a group and play a game for the sake of the opponent but must not be played beyond the start of the next game.
 - Teams forfeiting multiple games in a season are subject to removal from the league.
9. Lineups:
- Team Managers must turn in team lineups into the scorekeeper ten (10) minutes before game time.
 - Lineups must be printed legibly with players first name and last initial.
 - A manager that has ten or less players to start the game may add players as they arrive at the game if they are listed on the starting lineup. Any extra players not listed on the starting lineup once it has been submitted to the scorekeeper must be entered as a substitute. Additionally, a player cannot be dropped from the lineup for any reason, except in the case of an emergency or injury.
10. Manager Lineup Options:
- a. Extra Hitter Rule: allows a team to bat more than the ten players that can play in the field. The EH may be placed in whichever batting position in the lineup the manager desires. Once the game begins, a player may not change positions in the batting order, only positions in the field. An EH may take someone's place in the field and make them an EH. Teams can have more than one Extra Hitter.
 - b. Designated Hitter Rule: allows two players to take up one batting slot in the lineup. One player plays in the field and the other bats. The two players cannot move around in the batting lineup. They are considered one player and can reverse positions. This rule is most often used when a player is injured but can be used however the team decides. Teams can have more than one Designated Hitter.
 - c. Courtesy Runner: A courtesy runner may be used for a runner that is unable to run due to an incurred injury, disability, or advanced age (over 50). A runner replaced by a courtesy runner cannot be reinserted for another runner later in the inning. A courtesy runner cannot not run for more than one runner in the same inning. A courtesy runner can also be used for a player that is umpiring. A courtesy runner may not be used after the player that hit the ball has reached second base.
 - d. Re-entry Rule: any member of the starting lineup may be taken out of the game and then returned to the lineup, ONE TIME ONLY. This can be done through pinch-hitting, pinch-running or substitution. When the starter re-enters the game, IT MUST BE in the same batting position in the lineup they vacated. That means, whoever is occupying that place in the lineup must be removed from the game. The sub and the starter CANNOT be in the game at the same time.
 - e. Loss of Player Rule: Should a team with a full complement of players, lose a player due to injury or emergency and have no eligible replacements, it will NOT be penalized with an out when their turn at bat comes up. HOWEVER, if the player has been ejected from the game, an out penalty will be assessed each at bat.
11. Homerun Rule (3+1 Rule): No team may hit more than three (3) over-the-fence homeruns in a game. Any over-the-fence homeruns in excess will become an automatic out. If both teams have hit three (3) homeruns each team will be awarded one (1) additional homerun.

12. Stealing Rule: There is no leading off or stealing of bases. Doing so results in an out.
13. 10/15 Run Rule: If a team is ahead by fifteen (15) or more runs after four complete innings or ten (10) after five complete innings, the game is over. The home team, if behind, always gets their final at bat in the inning.
14. Halo Rule: The intent of this rule is to protect the pitcher and deter retaliatory hits up the middle. The "Halo" area extends to one foot on either side of the pitching rubber and one foot above the pitcher's head.
 - A sharply batted ball traveling through this area will result in an immediate dead ball and the batter being called out.
 - Runners may not advance and additional outs may not be recorded.
 - Halo violations are the sole discretion of the umpire. Arguing is not permitted.
15. Double First Base: To avoid possible collisions, a double base will be used at first base. Anytime there is to be a play at first, the batter-runner should touch the outside (orange base) and the first baseman, the inside (white base). Otherwise, the runner can use the white base as normal.
 - Exception: If the play puts the first baseman on the foul side of the base, he should touch the orange and the runner the white base to prevent a collision.
16. Third Strike Foul: Each batter begins at bat with a count of one ball, and one strike. If the third strike is fouled, the batter is automatically out. There is NO courtesy foul.
17. Warmup Pitches: A pitcher gets no more than five (5) warmup pitches or one minute, whichever comes first, before the first inning they are to pitch.

PLAY OFFS

- All teams are eligible for the playoffs and will consist of a double elimination tournament.
- Teams will be seeded based on how they finish in the regular season standings.
- All playoff games will be seven (7) innings or 50 minutes.
- If there are less than 6 teams in the league, games will be scheduled like normal through the end of the season and no playoff tournament will take place.
- Standings: All game scores and books will be kept by the league staff. Team standings will be posted online each week and will determine seeding for playoffs. Teams that would like to have record of their team's games should ask the scorekeeper before leaving at the end of the night.

LEAGUE POLICIES:

18. Inclement Weather:
 - We prefer to play in agreeable weather. If weather conditions and/or forecasts are poor before games begin, league staff may reschedule games for another night. Once play is underway, all games will be played as scheduled, unless conditions become severe.
 - a. Lightning: If lightning is present games should be halted until the danger has passed. If lightning, rain, or storm conditions persist games will be rescheduled to a later date.
 - b. Rain/Wet Fields: if the fields are unplayable because of wet conditions, League staff will contact team managers at least one hour before games are scheduled to begin.
 - League Staff will contact managers directly about cancellations and rescheduling.
19. Make-up Games:
 - Make-up games will be played at the next available date and may include Fridays and/or weekends. Games will not be played on a consecutive night for a league.
 - Managers will be contacted regarding the scheduled make-up game. No special considerations or accommodations will be made for any team when scheduling make-up games.

20. Team Practices:

- Pre-game Practices: No batting or infield practices should take place on the infields on the day of the games. All pre-game warmups should be outside the playing field or on the outfield grass. Hitting balls into the field fences is not allowed.
- Wet Ground Practices: If the softball infield is wet or has been prepared for games, please stay off the dirt portion while holding practices. Instead, please use the outfields or other open fields around the park or community

21. Umpires & Scorekeepers:

- A Scorekeeper will be furnished for each game by the league.
- Each team should provide two players from their team to umpire when they are at bat. One umpire behind and one in the field. The umpires are responsible to call the plays for that inning as well as balls and strikes. Please ensure that the players umpiring are familiar with all of the rules and can call the game fairly.
- USA Softball Rules: Apart from league specific rules, this league will be governed by the USA Softball rulebook.

22. Dugout Rules:

- All team members and equipment should be kept within the dugouts.
- Only the on-deck bater and base coaches should be out of the dugout during play.
- For their safety, absolutely no spectators, children, or animals are permitted in the dugouts or on the field at any time during the game.

PLAYER CONDUCT

- ❖ This program is offered for your enjoyment. Your cooperation and sportsmanship are essential to the overall success of the program. All players, coaches, managers, and spectators are expected to act in an acceptable manner during the entire program.

23. Unacceptable Behavior:

- Any player who uses physical violence, uses fraud or undue profanity will be suspended from the league until a hearing with the Programs Manager is held.
 - Participants will remain suspended until the hearing is held and permission is restored.
- League Staff and/or the umpire(s) may declare a team, player, coach, or fans unfit to participate in the program due to their behavior (i.e., excessive drinking, abusive language, unruly conduct, etc.). Resulting actions may include forfeits and/or suspensions. In these matters there will be no case of appeal.

24. Throwing the Bat: players must attempt to toss their bat off safely to the side. If the umpire judges that a bat throwing incident was unnecessary, the player will be ejected from the game without warning.

25. Ejections:

- Any player, coach, or manager ejected from a game will automatically be suspended from playing or coaching for the remainder of the current game plus the next game.
- Upon ejection, the player/coach will be required to leave the softball complex immediately.
- Any player returning to the softball complex after being ejected will be suspended indefinitely.
- League Staff and/or the umpire(s) have the authority to remove unruly players or fan(s) if necessary.

PARK RULES

26. Curfew: All players and spectators should be out of the park by 11:00 PM.

27. Music:

- Music may be played in the dugouts but should only be heard in that team's dugout.
 - No vulgar or profane music allowed.
28. Park Signs: All posted signage should be read and understood and the rules they expound should be obeyed by all players and teams using the facilities.
29. Trash: The fields, dugouts, and general area around the softball complex should be clear of any trash or debris. All trash should be placed in receptacles provided by the city. Violations may result in fines.
- NO GLASS CONTAINERS ALLOWED
30. Pets:
- All pets should be kept on a leash at all times.
 - Please pick up any pet waste and dispose of it properly.
 - Pets may not be in dugouts or on the fields at any time.
31. Children:
32. Children:
- For their safety, absolutely no children are permitted in the dugout or on the field during gametime or when teams are warming up.
 - It is recommended that small children not be brought to the softball complex. If, however, it is necessary to bring your child, they must be supervised by an adult. Parents that leave children unattended will be asked to leave the softball complex.
- ❖ **KNOW THE RULES** - It is the responsibility of team managers and the players to familiarize themselves with the rules. Please note that all rules and regulations so stated are for the safety and welfare of the players and spectators. It is expected that all participants who register to play in this league will obey and respect all park/league rules and regulations. Basic softball rules can be found in the USA Softball official rulebook.
- ❖ **HAVE FUN** - It has always been the object of the league for the participants, players and spectators, to have fun and enjoy themselves while playing softball. Good sportsmanship by everyone involved will be the key to that success. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated by the Parks/League Staff. HAVE A GREAT SEASON.

COMMON RULE EXPLANATIONS

1. **SELF-UMPIRED GAMES:** In some leagues, teams are required to furnish their own umpires for each game. Additionally, there may be times when a scheduled umpire is unavailable and a new one cannot be scheduled in time. In these cases, teams will umpire their own at bats and should do so fairly. It is best in these cases to provide two umpires when possible.
2. **JUDGMENT CALLS:** Except through the process of an appeal, judgment calls cannot be disputed, only the application of the rules can. It is assumed the eyesight of the umpire is just as good as anyone else's in judgment calls.
3. **UMPIRE APPEAL:** Games are most often umpired by one person, they may on occasion ask for help if they were unable to make a clear call on their own. If a team feels that something was missed by the umpire or a bad call was made **ONLY** the team manager is permitted to present an appeal to the umpire. The umpire's call is final, and no further discussion should be had once the umpire has made the final call.
4. **INFIELD FLY RULE:** This rule is to prevent an infielder from purposely dropping a routine pop fly in order to get a double play instead of just one out. The rule states that anytime a team has runners on first and second **OR** first, second and third with **LESS** than two outs, the batter is automatically out when they hit a pop fly that an infielder can get to without undue effort. The ball can be anywhere on the field and not just in the infield. The ball must be fair for the rule to take effect. If dropped, the runners are allowed to run at their own risk of being put out. When the pop fly occurs, the umpire should quickly announce "Infield Fly Rule, the Batter is Out" May also include "if Fair" if the ball is near the lines.
5. **PLAY APPEAL PROCESS:** There are times when a team thinks a player misses a base or leaves the base too early on a caught fly ball. If time has not been called, then the ball can be thrown directly to the base and the umpire will make the call. If time has been called, then the pitcher steps off the rubber and states their case to the umpire and the umpire then makes the decision. No appeal, no decision has to be made and play continues. An appeal must be made **BEFORE** the next pitch is made. **LEAVING** the base early on a batted ball is not appealable. The umpire must make that call immediately when it happens.
6. **DOUBLE-PLAY INTERFERENCE:** The lead runner in a double play attempt must slide or veer to the safe side of the play and not run through the base standing up. If the runner interferes with the defensive person's right to attempt the proper throw by their actions, including throwing up your hands, then the umpire should declare a double-play. It is still the umpire's judgment and they may want help from their partner.
7. **COLLISION RULE:** Anytime a defender has the ball in their possession or is receiving a throw, the runner must slide or make some other type of evasive maneuver. Failure to do so and a collision results, the runner is automatically out. If it is deemed flagrant, the player should be removed from the game. There are times when the defensive player initiates the collision by their action or the throw causes that action and it is not the runner's fault. Umpire's judgement. **NOTE:** If the defender is receiving a throw, they should not be blocking the base, inviting an unneeded collisions with the possibility of injury to both parties.
8. **BATTER'S BOX RULE:** A batters box is three by seven feet (3X7). The rule says that a batter must have both feet **ENTIRELY** within the batters box before the pitch is made or the batter is automatically out when the bat makes contact with the ball. It is the responsibility of the batter to adhere to the marked box.
9. **OUT OF BATTERS BOX:** A batter is out if in the process of hitting the ball, they have at least one foot **COMPLETELY** out of the box when the ball is actually hit. If any part of the foot is touching the line, then it is a legal hit. Exception: When the foot is touching home plate when the ball is hit. The umpire must see this to call it and if in doubt the umpire should err

on the side of the batter. The batters box extends 2 ½ feet in front of the plate, so can be deceiving.

10. ONE PLUS ONE: Anytime a thrown ball leaves the field of play (dugout or over the fence) the runner(s) are awarded the base they are going to, plus one more. The position of the runner is determined by where they were at when the ball was released, NOT when it went out of the field of play. If a player has touched a base, that is the point of reference and not which direction they are headed at the time.
11. FOUL TIP RULE: As per USA Softball Rules any ball that comes off the bat and causes the catcher to move their glove to catch is an out. The move can be ever so slight. Umpire's Judgment.
12. DOUBLE-BASE RULING: In the normal process of things, when there is a play at first base the runner should touch the outside base and the defensive player be in contact with inside base. Unless it is the special situation, if the defensive player is touching outside base when the ball is caught, the runner should be called safe if they touch the base. Should the runner touch the inside base before ball is caught, the runner can be called out if the defensive player tags the runner before they get back to the base.
13. CALLING PITCHES: With the batter starting out with a one and one count, the importance of being more diligent in your calling pitches is necessary. Umpires should put more emphasis on the flight of the ball taking it through the strike zone and not where it hits the ground. A strike is a pitch that crosses the plate above the front knee and below the back shoulder of a batter that is standing in the normal batting stance and position in the batters box. If a batter stands at the extremes of the batters box, then the call needs to be made as if the batter was in a normal position. Where the ball lands should not be used as a criteria as much as the position of the ball when it crosses the plate. The ball does not have to hit behind the plate to be a strike. The ball just must cross the plate at some point.
14. LEGAL PITCH: This is a ball that is released by the pitcher that attains an arc of not less than six (6) feet, nor higher than twelve (12) feet. For the purpose of making the call, a pitch must rise above the pitcher's head to pass as legal. Height is still a judgment call by the umpire and can not be disputed when made. Also, the pitch must be delivered at a moderate speed and not quick-pitched. This, too, is the umpires judgment.

UMPIRING TIPS

1. Do not brush the dirt away from the plate to reveal the black bevel or draw a strike box behind the plate. The dirt should come level with the plate so that the ball can only hit on top of the plate. There is no such thing as a strike box in slowpitch.
2. Strive for consistency in your calls.
3. Be in a good position to make the best call.
4. Show respect for others and they will respect you.
5. Be confident in your calls. If necessary, on close calls, hesitate before making the call.
6. Avoid arguing with players. If a player wants to argue it is best to make the call and disengage from any unnecessary argument. If necessary, warn the player and the manager that they will be ejected if the behavior continues.
7. Don't exaggerate your calls to embarrass the player.
8. We are here to have fun! This is not the major leagues. Emphasize the need for people to play fairly and act appropriately. Disagreements are bound to happen but make sure that hard feelings don't persist.

HOME PLATE UMPIRING

1. POSITION: Stand where you can get an unobstructed view of the plate and a good line of sight for the flight of the ball, as well as, where it hits. One should be as close as possible (not back at the backstop). Lean over the catcher, if they are squatting. Try not to get view blocked during the course of the flight of the pitch.
2. Know what a legal pitch is. A legal pitch is a pitch of moderate speed that gets a minimum of six (6) feet above the ground and not higher than twelve (12). Six feet is considered to be a pitch that goes above the pitcher's head after being released. Try to visualize what twelve (12) feet is so you can have a working knowledge of it. Hint: The backstop wire is twelve feet high.
3. The strike zone is determined by the batter being in a regular batting stance (straddling the plate with their feet in the batter's box. With this in mind, the ball in its downward flight, should cross above the front knee but below the back shoulder. The place in the batter's box by the batter will alter where the ball crosses them but does not alter what a strike is. If they are in front of the box, then the ball will be falling behind them. If they are in the back of the box, then the ball will be falling in front of them. In these cases, the umpire cannot judge where the ball crosses the batter. This can make it a little difficult but with concentration consistency can be gained in the calling.
4. When the ball leaves the pitcher's hand, the umpire must first determine its legality, then whether it is a ball or strike. It can be illegal if it is too high, too low or too fast. If so, call out "illegal pitch". If taken by the batter, it is a ball. If it is hit by the batter, then it becomes a legal ball in play.
5. Must watch the flight of the ball to determine what the pitch is, not where it hits. The strike zone takes into effect the strike as described above. The pitch, at some point between leaving the hand and hitting the ground, must cross a portion of the plate to be a strike. Anything close should be a strike. The ball must go beyond the back of the plate. A ball that hits the top of the plate is automatically a ball. The depth of where the ball hits does not determine ball or strike, but the height of the pitch. A high pitch has to hit within two (2) feet of the plate. A low pitch can hit four or five feet behind the plate and still be a strike. It just has to cross the body as described in a strike. Because it is a slow pitch, the umpire has the option of being a little more deliberate in the call. One can visualize the flight again before making a difficult decision.
6. Make definite calls of ball or strike so the pitcher and others can hear and know the count.

7. Keep the plate clean. Do not let it get completely covered with dirt.
8. In judging a foul or fair ball, quickly get in a position of alignment with the plate and foul pole. A fair ground ball must cross some part of the base before hitting foul behind the base. A fair fly ball must hit fair in the outfield. In making the call, the umpire only makes the verbal call "Foul Ball". Fair ball should not be indicated by voice but by hands pointed to the fair side of the infield. Otherwise, fair and foul sound too much alike to players and can cause confusion. The lines are in fair territory. Also: A fly ball that is touched by a player is determined foul or fair by the position of the ball when touched and not the position of the player.
9. For the most part, it is the plate umpire's call on fly ball tag ups. That is because they are the one's in position to watch the runner and the fly ball catch at the same time. The appeal should be made to them. Note: The runner may leave the base at the point the ball is touched by the player, not when finally caught.
10. Watch the batter's box for feet violations. A batter must start with both feet entirely within the box before the pitch leaves the pitcher's hand. If that situation occurs, the batter is automatically out if they hit the ball, otherwise no penalty. Upon contact of the ball, a batter's foot must be ENTIRELY outside the box for them to be automatically out. Any portion still touching line makes it legal. Exception: If the foot is touching the plate upon contact, automatically out.
11. Watch for runner interference, collisions and infield fly rule situations.
12. Make sure teams keep their equipment and themselves within the dugout area.

BASE UMPIRING

1. POSITION: Without a runner on first. Stand on the foul line and inside grass portion of the outfield. When a play is to be made at first, then move to the infield side to get a position where you can watch the runner's foot hit the bag and hear the ball hit the first baseman's glove. Then the call can be made.
2. POSITION: With the runner on first: Move to a position between first and second and not in the way of the second baseman, so that you can get a good view of second base and first base as plays are made at both. In case of multiple or a difficult position, do not be afraid to ask for help in making the call. If you can't get a good look and will need help, do not make the call first. Make the decision after asking for help.
3. Two things to look at on runners running past first base on plays. (a) Calling a player out for turning to the inside after crossing first base. A baserunner can turn either way after stopping to return to the base and not be liable to be put out. Exception: If a runner makes a believable effort to go to second before changing their minds. If tagged, they are out. Umpire's judgment. A runner that touches white base instead of orange. If they touch the white, they are liable to be put out. However, the first baseman has to touch the runner before they return to the base.
4. Watch for runners missing bases or leaving base before ball is hit. Missing a base has to be appealed but leaving the base too early on a hit is an immediate "out" call by the umpire, if observed.
5. Many of your calls will be close and open to dispute, but, as long as you are in position and make a definitive call, there will be little reason for prolonged disagreement.