

**METROPLEX SOFTBALL UMPIRES ASSOCIATION**  
**PLAYING RULES**  
**www.msuasoftball.com**

**ROSTER GUIDELINES**

1. Each team must submit a roster to their league director at the start of their first game. Only those names that appear on the roster are eligible to play.

NOTE: It is the responsibility of the manager to provide his or current contact information. If a change of scheduling is necessary, and a team roster is incomplete, the Metroplex Softball Umpires Association (MSUA) will not be responsible for game(s) missed.

2. Managers may add or drop players to/from their original roster prior to the start of the fourth game. Any roster change must be made by the listed manager and player. Verbal changes will not be accepted.
3. The regular playing roster shall not exceed twenty (20) players including a playing manager.

**PLAYER ELIGIBILITY:**

1. MSUA leagues are open to all players. Church Teams: Eligibility for membership on a church team shall be determined by the pastor of the participating church. Each player must be a bonafide member of that church for which he/she plays or an approved participant by an official of said church. Rosters must be certified in writing; by the pastor or authorized agent (title must be shown).
2. Once a player's eligibility is questioned and a \$25 protest fee is received, the player must produce a proper ID and sign the official scorebook. A signed scorebook must be followed by immediate proof of identity, which the player can go no further than the parking lot to retrieve and must do so in a timely manner, so that the league director may settle the protest.
3. Player eligibility protests are accepted the entire duration of the season. A team can protest eligibility of a player with the umpire(s) during a game only. Player eligibility protests will only be accepted in the first inning of the game or the first inning of entry of the protested player. Protests filed during the game shall be made only by the participants of the game being played. The game will be suspended until the protest is settled.

The umpire(s) will inform the league director (who will have the official roster) to see if said player is legal. If the protested player is not on the roster or cannot show proper identification, the umpires will declare the game a forfeit and the \$25.00 fee will be returned. If the player is legal, the fee is forfeited and the game continues.

4. A person may play with only one team per league. Players may be on more than one roster and may play on as many teams for which he/she is eligible. Players, however, can only go up or drop down one division of play. For example: "B" league players may go up to "A" league or down to "C" league, but not both "A" and "C". Players will be classified in their highest level of participation. This will include going from church to open competition & vice versa. This will be monitored and enforced by league directors.

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5. The minimum age for participation in MSUA leagues is sixteen (16) with written parental permission.

**PRE-GAME:**

1. Managers must submit their line-up to the scorekeeper **no later than ten (10) minutes prior to the SCHEDULED GAME TIME**. The PENALTY for submitting the lineup with less than 10 minutes before scheduled game time is **LOSS OF FIRST AT BAT!** (The penalty is waived if a team has back-to-back games). The line-up will be the batting order and must include player's last name, first initial & jersey number. Failure to have the line-up in by game time or to take the field at game time or when the official says "Play Ball" can result in forfeiture of the game. **GAME TIME IS FORFEIT TIME!!!**

Official time is provided by clocks at the park located on the concession stand.

2. Any player listed on the batting order who is not physically present at game time must be scratched or changed. Once the clock is started a legal substitute must be made or an out will be assessed.
3. Teams may start with nine (9) players. An out will be assessed to the tenth position in the batting order. The tenth position may be filled by a legal player at any time during the game. A forfeit will be declared if a team, at any point in the game, fails to produce nine (9) players in the game. Teams starting with 10 or more players will be assessed an out when a vacancy cannot be filled in the batting order as a result of injury, etc. However, when the vacancy cannot be filled as result of an ejection, the game will be forfeited.
4. Substitutes do not have to be listed on the lineup to be eligible to play in any game. The players name must however appear on the team roster.

**UNIFORM & EQUIPMENT:**

1. Each player must wear a uniform shirt with a non-duplicating, permanently applied number on the back that is a minimum of six (6) inches in height. (For clarification 0 and 00 "are not" the same number.) Taped on or marks-a-lot numbers are illegal and therefore not allowed.
2. Players are prohibited from wearing cleated shoes, except molded rubber cleats. Football, metal, or any detachable spiked shoes with exposed metal are prohibited. If a player has been warned to remove prohibited shoes and is discovered playing, the player will be ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct and be subject to the discipline/ordinance section of these rules.
3. All bats must have the USSSA thumb print type stamp. If a player enters the batter's box with a non-stamped bat, he/she will be declared out.
4. In the event that an eligible player does not have a legal uniform shirt, he/she may "rent" a MSUA provided mesh pullover. The cost will be \$5 per shirt. A \$20 deposit is required to initiate the rental. A team is allowed a maximum of two MSUA shirts per game.

**THE GAME:**

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1. When not covered in the MSUA constitution and by-laws or playing rules, the current USSSA rules will apply.
2. All games will start exactly at the time scheduled with no grace period allowed (providing prior games finished on time). Both managers must agree if a game is to begin early. When a game is completed, dugouts should be cleared immediately and teams scheduled to play next should be ready to begin. Church teams should meet for prayer at the pitchers' mound while the prior teams clear the dugout. The clock will be started at the scheduled game time or as directed by the game officials, should the previous game not complete on time.
3. TIME LIMIT: Fifty-five (55) minutes per game. No inning will start after 55 minutes.
4. If the first batter of a new inning enters the batter's box with less than five (5) minutes on the scoreboard clock (a "4" is showing on the scoreboard clock), the game will continue using a one (1) pitch format. The batter will either walk, hit a fair ball, or be called out as a result of a strike out or hitting a foul ball.
5. If a game is tied at the end of seven innings or regulation time, the game will continue with one (1) pitch to each batter until a winner is determined.
6. RUN RULES: 25 after any inning; 20 after two (2) innings; 15 after three (3) innings; 12 after four (4) innings; and 10 after five (5) innings.
7. In designated Recreation Leagues, teams will be restricted to 7 runs per inning the first three innings. If a team scores 7 runs prior to making 3 outs, the teams will switch from offense to defense. Beginning with the fourth inning, the run restriction is no longer in effect.
8. Incomplete or suspended games will be resumed from the point at which the game was interrupted. A game is official when 3 ½ to 4 innings or more have been played.
9. Smoking is not permitted inside the complex or within 50 feet of the entry gate.
10. A double or safety base will be utilized at first base. This base is for offensive purposes only. On the initial throw to first base from any fielder, the batter-runner must touch the orange base. Failure to do so, on proper appeal before time is called, will result in the runner being called out. After the initial contact by the batter/runner, the white base becomes the base of record. Defensive plays must be made to the white portion of the base.
11. If on the initial throw to first base the ball is overthrown and pulls the first baseman into foul territory, the batter/runner and first baseman may touch either the orange or white base to complete the play.
12. If teams are tied at the end of league play, then comparing common games against one another will serve as the tie breaker. If wins are even, then the point differential in those common games will break the tie. If still tied, then total runs allowed will break the tie. If still tied, then total runs scored will break the tie. If still tied a one game playoff will be scheduled.

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13. If the umpires determine that a team is intentionally delaying the game, outside the rules of normal play, with 2:00 minutes or less remaining in the game, the umpire(s) may stop the clock.

**HOME RUN RESTRICTIONS:**

The following home run rule will restrict balls hit "over the fence" at Travis Williams. Any additional (unobstructed) fair balls hit over will be ruled an "out" in the restricted leagues listed below:

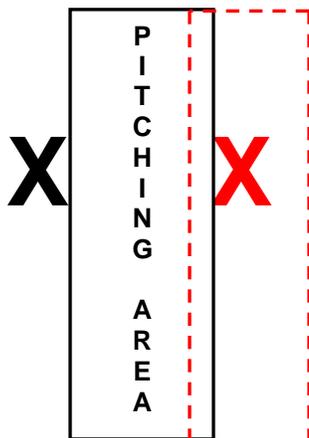
"UNL" - unlimited; "A" - 8; "B" - 6; "C and Church C" - 4; "D - 2"  
"COED Church and COED C" - 2 per gender; "COED D" - 1 per gender  
"E and Recreation Leagues" - None. Penalty: Inning ending out and offensive ejection

14. **PROTECTING THE PITCHER** - Effective 1/1/2011: MSUA has adopted the **Modified North Texas USSSA PROTECTING THE PITCHER RULE.**

A line drive will be defined as any ball that either hits the pitcher, is caught by the pitcher in a defenseless mode or glances off the pitchers glove or clothing in a defenseless mode. Any ball that strikes the ground first will not be included in this rule interpretation.

**Pitching Position**

The USSSA pitching rule allows the pitcher to position him or her self anywhere within or outside of the pitching area provided that one foot is in contact with the pitcher's plate or pitching area. Therefore for the purposes of interpretation of this rule, the Pitching Area will be the area that the pitcher establishes at the time of release. (Example: If the Pitcher releases the pitch with his/her body extended to the left of the defined Pitching Area, the Pitching Area is now to the left of the defined Pitching Area). Any ball hit outside of the newly established Pitching Area will be deemed legal.



**Penalties**

- 1st Occurrence (for a team) - Dead ball. Batter is out.
- 2nd Occurrence (for a team) - Dead ball. Batter is out & ejected from game.

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- 3rd Occurrence (for a team) - Dead ball. Forfeiture of game.
- In all occurrences all base runners will be returned to the last base legally occupied.
- In all occurrences the players bat will be removed from the game and tested using the USSSA compression tester. If the bat passes the compression test, it will be returned to the team/player. If it fails the compression test, the USSSA failed test procedure will be applied. Any player caught using a bat that has been removed from play, will be ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct and subject to additional sanctions.

**Exception**

If a line drive is caught by the pitcher, the pitcher shall have the opportunity to double off any base runner(s). The play will continue until a normal time out is called by the umpire and then the penalty will be enforced.

**15. COURTESY RUNNER**

Once a batter/runner has reached based and the umpire has called time a *COURTESY RUNNER* may be enter the game. The *COURTESY RUNNER* must be a player that is already in the lineup. Once the *COURTESY RUNNER* has taken his/her position on the base, another person cannot come in as a *COURTESY RUNNER*, this would constitute a substitution. If the *COURTESY RUNNER* is on base when their turn at comes around, their spot in the lineup will be declared an out and they will remain on base. Only one *COURTESY RUNNER* is allowed per inning. COED will allow for one *COURTESY RUNNER PER GENDER* per inning (Male for Male / Female for Female).

**TEAM PLACEMENTS IN LEAGUES:**

*It is the intent of the MSUA Board, League Scheduler and League Commissioners to strive for parity in all leagues. With that goal in mind: Teams that finish in the top two in league play will be considered for movement to the next higher league. Teams that finish in the bottom two will be considered for movement to next lower level of league play. All moves will be the sole discretion of the MSUA Board, League Scheduler, and League Directors.*

**CO-REC RULES:**

1. Teams may begin a game with nine (9) players providing that it is composed of a combination of five (5) and four (4) players of either gender. The vacancy of the tenth position in the batting order will be ruled an out until the vacancy can be filled. Managers may bat twelve (12) players by utilizing two extra hitters. They must be one male and one female and both must be present when the clock is started.
2. A team **may not** start a game with 11 players under any circumstances.
3. Teams must alternate the batting order according to gender. If a player leaves the game for any reason, their sub must be the same gender.
4. Co-Rec players may take any defensive position. (USSSA)
5. When a male batter receives a base on balls or an intentional walk, he will be awarded two bases and the next female batter has the option to walk or bat.  
(USSSA)

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**DISCIPLINE/ORDINANCES:**

1. Any player that uses loud profanity will be ejected from that game and potentially suspended for the next played game. Any two (2) profanity ejections from the same league will result in an ejection from that game plus a suspension for the next two (2) games played.
2. All other unsportsmanlike player ejections will result in the player being ejected from that game plus a suspension for at least the next two (2) games played. Serious unsportsmanlike conduct will result in being barred from participation in MSUA programs, for a minimum of two calendar weeks.
3. A player who has been suspended from league play for any reason and has not been reinstated is considered an ineligible player.
4. If a person refuses to leave the park after an official, including the league director, instructs him/her to do so, may result in forfeiture of the game to the opposing team.
5. In accordance with City of Mesquite Ordinances 1517 and 1729, the consumption of alcoholic beverages is prohibited upon and adjacent to the City Athletic Fields where league games are played. Players identified by league officials consuming alcoholic beverages before scheduled games will not be allowed to participate. NOTE: Tickets/fines for the possession of alcoholic beverages may be issued by the city of Mesquite police department.
6. All disputes in league and post-season play will be resolved by the MSUA board.

**BLOOD RULE:**

The following procedures are to be used if a player is bleeding during the course of a ball game.

The player shall be asked to remove the bloody article of clothing. If unable to remove the clothing, the player will have to leave the game, without penalty, until the blood is covered or removed from the clothing. If the player needing to be removed is a base runner, the last player to make an out in the inning will be used as a substitute until the player is cleaned up (in Co-Rec the substitute will need to be the same gender). If the player is a batter and is not able to come to the plate in the allotted time, he/she will be skipped for that turn at bat (in Co-Rec, skip 2 batters so that the right gender will be batting) with no penalty. If a forfeit will occur by removing the player, time will be allowed to cover the blood. The clock will not automatically stop unless it is the last 5 minutes of the ball game.

Once a team's jersey has been deemed legal, a player with blood on their jersey will be allowed to substitute any color of shirt so that the game may be continued without delay.

These procedures are aligned with the rules set forth by USSSA.