

Greater Orleans Slo-Pitch League Rules

(no rule changes in 2025, unique rules in *italics*)

1. The Softball Canada Rule Book and Slo-Pitch Ontario (SPO) Official Handbook apply to the operation of the GOSPL, unless a contrary rule is provided in this document.
 2. The league will use the following ball: Worth Hotdot .52 COR / .275 COMP. The home team will provide one new game ball and visitor supplies a good used ball and the game sheet at the commencement of each regular season game. If additional balls are required during the game, the home team is responsible for providing the additional balls. A supply of new game balls will be issued to each team at the beginning of the season.
 3. There will be a lock box in the home team dugout (3rd baseline) containing bases, home plate mat, hammer, first aid kit, and a lock. All home teams playing that night are responsible for ensuring the equipment (bases, home plate mat, hammer, first aid kit, lock, and lock box) are in good working order and stored securely.
 4. The home team of the first game on game night is responsible for setting up the bases (two regular and one "safety") and the home plate rubber/wood mat. The lock should be replaced through the box lock holes to ensure it does not get lost. The home team of the last game on game night is responsible for returning the bases and the rubber/wood mat to the equipment box and locking the box.
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0. A safety bag must be used at first. Softball Canada rules apply to the use of the safety bag.
 1. Games may be played on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday each week. No games will be played on statutory holidays. The start times for the regular season games are 6:30pm, 8:00pm, and 9:30pm. No inning can start with less than 10 minutes before the next scheduled time slot.
 0. In the event that the umpire does not show up for the game, the home team captain must immediately contact GOSPL to inform them. If no umpire is available, each captain will assign a player to umpire the game while their team is at bat. The game will continue as usual. Any disputes will be handled by the captains. All incidents (protest, fighting, arguments, harassment, etc) must be reported to GOSPL immediately.
 0. Each team must have at least 8 roster players in order to play. Each team is allowed a maximum of 10 defensive players on the field at any time. A team will be allowed a 10-minute grace period (from the scheduled start time) to field a minimum of 8 players. If after the 10-minute grace period a team cannot field the minimum players, the game will be forfeited if the other team has at least 8 players. A forfeit will be recorded by GOSPL as a 7-0 loss for the forfeiting team. *Any team playing with 8 players does not have an automatic out in the 9th or 10th spot in the batting order.*
 0. If a team has 6 or 7 players present, they may use a maximum of 2 other league players to field a team. Once the player(s) has started a game, he may, at the option of the team he is playing for, play the entire game. This rule does not apply to the playoffs.
 0. The insertion of late arrival(s) will be as follows: Offensively the player(s) would be inserted at the bottom of the batting order. The insertion of defensive player(s) can enter the game at any time but should not be during an opponent's at bat. The game shall not be interrupted for late player(s) to be inserted.
 0. If neither team can field a minimum of eight players, both teams forfeit the game and no points will be awarded to either team in the GOSPL standings.
 0. Teams may "lend" player(s) to the opposition to validate a game. The opposition is NOT obligated to accept the loaned player(s), however if they do the game result shall stand.
 0. If for any reason (example: ejection, injury) a team reduces to 7 players, then that team will automatically forfeit the game.
 0. In the case of rain or darkness, a regular season game will be officially completed if 4 complete innings have been played (3.5 innings if home team is winning). If a regular season game cannot be completed, it will be rescheduled as a rained-out game.
 0. If a playoff game that has gone 4 complete innings cannot be completed due to rain or darkness, it will commence prior to the next scheduled game and be started at the point where it left off. All round robin game

must be a minimum of 6 innings. All elimination, semis and finals games must be 7 full innings (6.5 if the home team is winning).

0. If it rains during the game, it is up to the umpire to call the game. If a regular season game is called due to rain or darkness before 4 complete innings have been played, the game will be rescheduled by GOSPL and started as a new game. If a playoff game is called due to rain before 4 complete innings have been played, the game will be rescheduled by GOSPL and started as a new game. If a playoff game is called due to rain after 4 complete innings have been played, the game will continue from where it was stopped with current rosters being used. If a player cannot make the rescheduled game, they may be substituted as per the substitution rules.
0. A game can only be cancelled under three conditions: inclement weather, adverse field conditions, or a major altercation occurring between the playing teams (where the game is called by the umpire). Should the latter situation arise, GOSPL will call a meeting of the Disciplinary Committee and impose penalties as deemed by the Disciplinary Committee.
0. A game consists of 7 innings. However, no new inning can start within 10 minutes of the starting time of the next game. Once an inning has been started, it will be played to completion. If it is the last game of the evening, the game can continue until the ballpark lights go out (11:00PM). The plate umpire will inform the team captains at the start of the game of the time piece that will be used to measure the duration of the game. Team captains are responsible for keeping the game proceeding at a sufficient pace to complete the game within the allocated time limit. (Note: Pitchers must be allowed at least three warm-up pitches at the start of the defensive inning; 5 pitches if they just entered the game as a "Relief Pitcher"). There will be no warm up for infield and outfielders after 2 innings. – umpires to use discretion based on the flow of the game if they wish to continue to allow an infield warm-up ball past the 2nd inning.
0. If a regular season game is tied after 7 complete innings and the game has not exceeded the game time limit, complete extra inning(s) will be played until the tie is broken OR the time limit allocated to the game has expired.
0. A strike will be called by the plate umpire if the pitched ball is within the legal height (have an arc of at least 6 feet and no higher than 12 feet) and hits any part of home plate mat. The umpire will call any illegal pitch. If a batter swings at an illegal pitch, the pitch becomes legal.
0. Three strikes and the batter is out. The batter is out on a 3rd strike foul ball.
0. A batter must have both feet in the batter's box from the time the pitcher starts his motion until the time the ball crosses home plate or is hit. If the batter does not have both feet in the batter's box during delivery of the pitch or when the batter makes contact with the ball (i.e. swings the bat and makes contact with the ball regardless if the ball is fair or foul) he will be called out. Running approaches are not allowed. A foot on the batter's box line is considered in the batter's box as long as the entire foot is on the line or inside the batter's box. The batter's box dimensions are outlined in the Softball Canada Rule Book.
0. There is a pitching box which starts at 50 feet from home plate back to 60 feet and is 2 feet wide. The pitcher must have at least one foot in the box to pitch.
0. Base stealing is not permitted. Runners will be permitted an anticipation step. Runners will be called out if they leave the base before the ball has reached the plate, hits the ground, or is swung at by the batter.
0. Home plate is owned by the defensive team. Runners are not allowed to touch home plate and will be called out if they do. A commitment line (drawn by the umpire) is in effect 20' before home plate along the 3rd base line. A home plate line will also be drawn (by the umpire) from the tip of home plate (3rd base side) toward the back stop. A runner touching or crossing the commitment line MUST go home as if it were a force play; he cannot return to 3rd base, unless the runner failed to tag up on a fly ball or missed touching the base. The runner will be automatically out if they return to and touch 3rd base, unless the runner failed to tag up on a fly ball or missed touching the base. The runner will be called out if a defensive player has control of the ball while in contact with home plate before the runner touches or crosses the home plate line. The defensive player cannot tag the runner after the runner has touched or crossed the commitment line; he can only put a runner out at home plate by having control of the ball while in contact with home plate before the runner touches or crosses the home plate line. If the runner collides with the defensive player while he is fielding the ball at home plate area, the runner is declared out.

0. If the throw to home is well off the plate (along the 3rd base line) and the catcher cannot return safely to the plate without causing a collision, the catcher cannot tag the runner out if the runner has crossed the commitment line.
0. If the throw to home is up the 1st base line, the catcher must return to home plate for the force play.
0. The purpose of using a commitment line and a force play at home whenever possible is to maintain safe play and avoid collisions and injuries.
0. WALK OFF HR Rule: On an over the fence HR, the batter and all runners on base do not run the bases. Batter or someone on his team should go get the ball immediately. There is no home run limit for games played at Fallingbrook. Games played at any other park will be match +2 for home runs. At no time during a game at a other parks (Kinsella, Ridge, Carriere) will the number of over the fence home runs hit by one team be more than two greater than the number hit by the opposing team.

EFFECT: Where an over the fence home run is hit that is in excess of the number allowed, the batter will be called out.

EXCEPTION: When a fair batted fly ball deflects off a defensive player over the home run fence, the batter/baserunner will be awarded four (4) bases. This will not be considered the same as an over the fence home run.

30. At the completion of a game, both team captains and the umpires must sign the score sheet.

31. Metal spike cleats cannot be worn in a game (offensively or defensively). Rubber cleats permitted.

32. Illegal bats are not permitted. The league adheres by the USSSA bat policy. For a bat to be considered legal, it needs to have the 1.20 BPF or USSSA Thumb print logo. Information about the logo and a list of non-approved bats can be found at the following link: <http://www.slo-pitch.com/content/slo-pitch-national-bat-policy>. "As of January 1st, 2012, Slo-Pitch National will be recognizing and accepting the New USSSA bat testing methods for use in the SPN program. All 2012 USSSA Bats marked with the "NEW (1.20 BPF) USSSA STAMP ON THE TAPER OF THE BAT" will be allowed in the SPN program. ALL new bats manufactured after January 1, 2012 "MUST CARRY THE NEW USSSA STAMP". SPN will also continue to use the 2000, 2004 ASA and ISF stamps and the ASA Non-approved bat list with Certification marks.



It is the team's responsibility to ensure all their bats are legal. Should an illegal bat be used and identified during a game, the team will forfeit the game and the individual at fault will be suspended for 3 games.

33. It is strongly encouraged that the pitcher wear protective equipment. A mask/helmet is mandatory. Chest protector, shinpads and jockstrap are recommended. A protective net (approximately 2' wide x 6' high) may be used by pitchers. The team must provide the net should they wish to use one. Should the ball hit the netting device the ball will be considered live and will be played as a ground ball regardless if the ball is caught in the air after contact with the net. The net can be placed a maximum of 10' from the rubber on the pitchers mound.

34. A maximum of three (3) courtesy runners can be used by one team during a game. Batters must reach first base before a courtesy runner can be used. The courtesy runner may be any runner on the team. A courtesy runner would be declared out if his turn at bat comes up and he is still on the base with the team having exhausted their number of courtesy runners or substitutes.

35. Infield fly rule is in effect. An infield fly is when there are none or 1 out with runners at 1st and 2nd or 1st, 2nd, and 3rd and a fly by is hit that is playable by an infielder.

36. Teams must follow all equipment guidelines as set out in Softball Canada Rule Book and SPO Official Handbook.

37. *If a batted ball hits the home plate mat, the ball is considered foul.*

38. A foul tip caught by the catcher is an out (no height requirement).

39. Overthrows that leave the playing field will result in an extra base being awarded to the runner from the time the ball was thrown (umpires call).
40. Advancing bases on a caught fly is permitted once the fielder has made contact with the ball (tag up is allowed).
41. Mercy Rule 1: Maximum of 6 runs per inning except the last inning of the game where there is no limit.
42. Mercy Rule 2: A game may end after 5 (4.5 with leading team coming or at bat) innings on a shake by the Captains or +15 runs after six innings for all games. There is no mercy rule during playoff games.
43. Blood Rule: No player with an open wound can continue to play until the wound has been covered/stopped bleeding (umpire to determine).
44. GOSPL must be notified within 48 hours of an injury that occurred during a game.
45. A game shall be declared a forfeit if a team fails to field the required number of players prior to or during the game, refuses to continue the game after a suspension of play, intentionally tried to delay or hasten the game, or intentionally violates a rule of the game after being warned by the umpire. A forfeit shall be declared if a player, ejected from the game by an umpire, does not leave the park when directed to do so. When a player is ejected and must leave the ball park, that player must move far enough away so that they may not be seen or heard by the participants of the game and may not participate with the game in any manner.
46. At the discretion of the umpire, any team member openly using profanity during the game may be ejected from further participation in that game.
47. No bunting or chopping. An out will be called.
48. Offensive team: the entire roster may be in the batting order (max 20 players) or players may be listed as subs and later substituted in during the game.
49. Teams will not exchange scorebooks every half inning. Teams will keep their own score and advise the opponent/umpire every half inning how many runs they scored. Umpires must sign both books at the completion of each game.
50. Temporary Runner - A Temporary Runner is optional and can be used when the pitcher is on base at anytime regardless the number of outs. The pitcher, who completed the previous defensive half inning in the pitching position (or is listed as the pitcher on the lineup in the first half inning) can be replaced by the next available player preceding them in the batting order without it counting against the team's three courtesy runners.

***These rules have been pulled from the GOSPL constitution. Should there be any discrepancy between the two documents, the information in the constitution is the one that stands.