



## Metro Detroit Softball League Diamond Ground Rules

Article 1- Home Team: .....	2
Article 2- Game Ball .....	2
Article 3- Pitching .....	2
Article 4- Bases .....	2
Article 5- Number of Players .....	2
Article 6- Courtesy Runners.....	2
Article 7- Ejected Players.....	3
Article 8- Batting .....	3
Article 9- USSSA Ground Rules .....	3
Article 10- Lightning .....	4
Article 11 – In Game Appeals .....	4
Article 12 – Mercy Rule .....	4



### **Article 1- Home Team:**

Home and visiting team will be designated on the schedule each and every week. The visitors will always be listed first and the home team will always be listed second. Home team is the official scorekeeper for each game.

### **Article 2- Game Ball**

All games shall be played with a twelve-inch (12") ball. All games shall be played with an USSSA approved softball.

### **Article 3- Pitching**

The pitching mound is 50 feet from the back of home plate. The pitching arc must be between 3-10 feet from the point of release to be ruled a legal pitch. A pitcher must have contact with the pitching rubber when the pitch is delivered to be ruled legal. A pitcher is not allowed to walk up to the pitching rubber and deliver a pitch while walking toward home plate, this will be ruled an illegal pitch. Back spin and side spin, are legal pitches. The pitch must be delivered in a slow underhand motion. Excessive speed will be ruled an illegal pitch. One conference with the pitcher per inning is allowed with no penalty. Any second conference with the pitcher in the same inning, will result in the pitcher having to be removed from the pitching mound, and a new pitcher inserted. The pitcher may play another spot in the field, but he/she can not continue to pitch that inning.

### **Article 4- Bases**

Length of bases are to be set at 65 feet apart. A double base consisting of 1 orange bag, and 1 white bag will be used at first base on all diamonds. This base is referred to as the safety base. The runner must tag the orange base, and the fielder must tag the white base on all batted balls, that result in a play at first base. Any ball put in play, where the batter is going for second base, they only need to touch the white base when rounding first base. The double base at first base, is there to allow more room between the first baseman and the runner, to help avoid unnecessary collisions.

### **Article 5- Number of Players**

A team must have the required number of players present to start or continue a game.

Requirements are:

- A. A team may start/finish a game with a minimum of 8 players, and a maximum of 15 players (consisting of 10 players in the field and 5 extra hitters).
- B. Any team that has a player ejected during the game must replace that player in the lineup with someone off the bench. If a team does not have a player available to replace the ejected player the spot in the batting order vacated by the ejected player will be ruled an automatic out for the remainder of the game.
- C. If at any time the number of players for a team drops to 7 because of either, injury, illness, or ejection the game must be stopped immediately and the opposing team will be awarded the win, because of a forfeit.

### **Article 6- Courtesy Runners**

Each team is awarded one (1) courtesy runner per inning for any reason. The courtesy runner will always be the player who recorded the last out. If a courtesy runner is needed before any outs have been recorded ( example: in the first inning) then the batter in the line up, who is not on base, and who is the furthest from batting again will be used as the courtesy runner. No team will be granted a second courtesy runner in any game for any reason. If a second runner is needed in the same inning, the second courtesy runner must be a pinch runner off the bench and is



someone who is not in the current lineup. Any and all pinch runner's must be eligible players on your team roster, in order to successfully enter the game.

### **Article 7- Ejected Players**

A player ejected from a game, **WILL NOT PLAY**, in their team's next scheduled league game. All ejections are followed up with an automatic one (1) game suspension. The umpire will document the ejection in the scorebook, and complete an incident report. If the ejection of the player causes a team to be reduced to less than 8 players, then that team forfeits the game. All ejections will be reported to the MDSL Executive Board for review, and longer suspensions may be handed out, as a result of the severity of the player's actions.

### **Article 8- Batting**

All batters come to the plate with a 1-1 count on them. After your first strike, whether called or fouled off, you have one courtesy foul to waste. If a second batted ball is hit foul, then the next ball hit must be fair or the batter is ruled out. Only USSSA approved bats are legal. No bats with dents, bends, cracks, or bare handles can be used in a MDSL game. If for any reason you are unsure about a bat, simply ask the umpire and they will make the decision for you, and explain why you can or cannot use a particular bat. Any player using an illegal bat will be automatically ejected from the ball game, and be suspended for the following game. Any player found to be using an illegal bat twice will be ejected from the game, and suspended for the remainder of the season. All ejections are reviewed by the MDSL Executive Board and are subject to further suspensions.

### **Article 9- USSSA Ground Rules**

The umpire will judge balls that roll under the fence in the outfield, after an honest effort to field it, as a ground rule double. The umpire will instruct outfielders of what to do in those situations in the pregame instructions.

#### **USSSA Highlights:**

The official rules as published in the Official Guide and Rule Book of the United States Specialty Sports Association or USSSA. Including:

- A. **Collision Rule:** All players must slide or give themselves up on plays where a clear out is made. No player under any circumstances can lower his/her shoulder and take a player out in an attempt to dislodge the ball from the fielder's glove. Any player attempting to take another player out, will be ejected from the game immediately and suspended, indefinitely.
- B. **Fake Tag Rule:** fielders are not allowed to pretend to have the ball and make fake tags on runners, in the hopes of having them slide or stop running. This can result in serious injury to someone, and is illegal. The umpire will warn the first time he/she sees it, and the second time, the player will be ejected from the ball game and suspended for the team's next league game.
- C. **NO Metal Spikes:** metal spikes on cleats are not allowed. This is a danger to anyone involved in the game, and are illegal.
- D. **Foul Tips:** any foul tip with an arc that is caught by the catcher is an out. A ball tipped directly back to the catcher with no arc, will be called a foul ball.
- E. **Donuts:** for safety reasons, donuts are not allowed to be used for batting warm-ups.  
**Re-Entry:** a starter may leave the game and re-enter once at any point of the game. A substitute player, once taken out of the game may NOT re-enter for any reason.
- F. **Safety Bases:** the batter/runner must still contact the orange side of the base when there is a possibility of a defensive play at 1st base. Once the batter passes 1st base the entire base becomes "white" offensively and defensively.
- G. **Legal Arc:** for all MDSL play, a legal arc is 3-10 feet from the point of release by the pitcher.



H. **Infield Fly Rule:** will apply to all MDSL games played. For the infield fly rule to apply, the following must happen:

1. There must be less than 2 outs when the ball is put into play.
2. 1st and 2nd base must be occupied when the ball is put into play.
3. A batted ball must be fair.
4. Umpire judgment, the infielder must be able to make a reasonable play on the batted ball.
5. Once the batted ball is ruled an infield fly, the batter is automatically ruled out whether the ball is caught or dropped. All runners on base may advance at their own risk at any time. If the ball is caught all base runners must tag up in order to advance to the next base. If the ball is dropped the base runners do not have to tag up in order to advance to the next base. However, whether the ball is caught or dropped, the base runner does not have to move off the current base they occupied.

#### **Article 10- Lightning**

Once an umpire sees lightning the fields will be cleared for a minimum of 15 minutes. The 15 minutes will start over if lightning is sighted again. The MDSL Executive Board will make the decision of whether play will continue that day or be re-scheduled.

#### **Article 11 – In Game Appeals**

- A. **Live Ball Appeal** – Time has not been called, a player must announce loudly the appeal to the umpire. The player must be specific to the umpire in the appeal. For example: “Ump, I want to appeal that the base runner on third missed second base”. The umpire will make the safe or out call.
- B. **Dead Ball Appeal** – Time has been called. The next batter is in the box. Time-in is motioned by the umpires. The pitcher DOES NOT have to be on the mound and DOES NOT have to throw the ball to the base regarding the appeal. The pitcher must tell the umpire that they are appealing. For example: “I am appealing that the runner now on third missed first base. The umpire will make the safe or out call.

#### **Article 12 – Mercy Rule**

- A. The game is over if there is a difference of:
  - a. 20 runs after the third inning
  - b. 15 runs after fourth
  - c. 12 after the fifth