

SENIOR SOFTBALL BEAUFORT

SPRING 2024 RULES AND REGULATIONS

General. This league is sponsored by Senior Softball Beaufort and shall be governed by the following rules and regulations as adopted by team representatives and approved by the league commissioner.

Player Eligibility.

1. All players must be 55 years of age or older at the time of registration. A case by case exception may be approved by the Commissioner for females between the ages of 50 and 54.
2. This league will allow females to play but will not have any "Co-Ed" rules.

Rosters.

1. A maximum roster of 15 players (including managers and coaches who are also players) plus two alternate players who may play if a team has less than 12 participants able to play in a specific game. **Spring 2024 Exception: A maximum roster of 17 players, with a maximum of 15 players in the batting lineup. The 16th and 17th players may serve as courtesy runners and pinch hit only for any of the 15 players in the batting lineup and is not required to play innings in the field. The player for whom they pinch hit may re-enter the game to play in the field and return in the batting lineup.**
3. To be eligible to play, a player must register on www.seniorsoftball.com and sign waiver forms with Senior Softball Beaufort and Island Rec Center.
4. At the beginning of each new season, current players may opt to remain with their current team or enter the draft process to join a different team.
5. At the beginning of each new season, new players, current players who have opted into the draft or players who have missed more than just the prior season will be entered into a player draft for that season. The draft will be conducted with the goal of improving parity amongst teams. The draft order will be a function of each team's record the prior season and the number of open roster spots on each team. The commissioner, in consultation with the managers, will determine the exact draft process for the new season.

Game Play.

6. Ground rules will be dependent upon the field and field conditions. Prior to the start of the season, the Commissioner will specify ground rules for the umpires and managers for each field.
7. A pitching screen is required to be used. The teams will provide their own screen and must follow the rules listed below:
 - a. The pitching screen must be placed in front of the pitching plate no more than 4 feet in front of the plate and must cover a minimum of one half of the pitching plate
 - b. Once the screen is in place, it may not be moved in that half inning unless a new pitcher comes in or the screen is moved by a batted ball.
 - c. The pitcher may release the ball from either side of the screen, but have at least one foot in contact with the plate itself.
 - d. Before releasing the ball, and in contact with the plate, the pitcher must pause at least one second before he may release the ball or it is an illegal pitch.
 - e. If the batter hits the screen with a batted ball and there is less than two strikes, it becomes a dead ball immediately and runners, if any, return to their bases.

- f. If there are two strikes on the batter when he hits the screen with a batted ball, he is out and the runners return to their bases.
 - g. After the pitcher releases the ball, he must make a reasonable effort to move entirely behind the screen. He may field the ball as soon as it is hit.
- 8. A strike mat will be used at home plate. All legally pitched balls (6-12 foot arc) that hit any part of the home plate or strike mat will be called a strike.
- 9. The umpire will announce that a pitch is “illegal” if it is outside of the 6-12 foot arc. If the batter does not swing at the pitch, it is a ball. If the batter swings at the pitch, then it will be treated the same as a legal pitch.
- 10. A double bag will be used at first base with the outer bag (generally orange) being in foul territory. The defensive first baseman must use the inner bag (generally white) and the runner must use the outer bag. However, when no play is being made at first base, the batter/runner may use either of the two bags.
- 11. A commitment line (or point of no return) will be marked perpendicular to the 3rd base foul line and placed 30 feet from home plate.
 - a. Once a runner’s foot touches the ground on or past the commitment line, the runner must continue to the scoring plate
 - b. If he crosses back over the commitment line towards 3B, the runner is out.
- 12. A scoring plate (or auxiliary home plate) will be placed 10 feet from the back of the home plate in a straight line with first base.
 - a. The scoring plate is to be used by the runner only.
 - b. The defense can only get the runner out by touching home plate while in possession of the ball.
 - c. If the runner touches home plate/strike plate mat, the runner is out.
 - d. All plays at home plate are force plays.
- 13. Runners going into 2nd or 3rd base must slide or go in standing.
 - a. There is no over-run rule at 2nd or 3rd base.
 - b. The runner must make every effort to avoid colliding with a defensive player. If the umpire judges that the runner did not make such an effort, the umpire will call him out.
 - c. The umpire will use standard ASA/USA Softball rules to determine which player, if any, is responsible for interference when a runner collides with a fielder while running between bases.
 - d. Tagging of runners is allowed except past the commitment line.
- 14. An 11th fielder (includes a middle fielder or rover plus a 4th outfielder) will be allowed. A team’s use of 11 fielders is not dependent on the number of fielders available to its opposing team. Outfielders must take a position behind the 180-foot line until the ball is hit by the batter.
- 15. Batting Orders
 - a. All players who arrive to play in the games must be in the lineup (See exception for Spring 2024 season in Rosters 1. Paragraph). Any late players will be added to the bottom of the batting order and can be put in the field as needed.
 - b. If a player becomes ill or is injured during the game and is removed from the game, their team will not be penalized with an automatic out when that player is due to bat, provided they advise the umpire and the opposing manager at the time of the illness or injury.
 - c. All players who arrive to play in the games must play at least three innings in the field if it is a seven inning game or two innings in the field if the game lasts at least five innings, unless the player opts out due to injury. A manager may not dictate to a player to opt out; it is the decision of the player.

16. Courtesy runners may be used at any time once a batter gets on base.
 - a. The same courtesy runner may not be used more than once in the same inning unless running for the same batter.
 - b. If a courtesy runner is still on a base when it is his turn to bat, he is automatically out as a batter.
17. The ball and strike count will be 1 and 1 when a batter steps to the plate.
18. All batters will be given a courtesy foul ball. If the batter hits a foul ball after the courtesy foul the batter will be called out.
19. Home Run Rule
 - a. Each team is limited to two (2) over the fence home runs in a game. Any subsequent over the fence home runs will result in the batter being awarded a single and runners move up one base only.
20. All bats will be USA Softball/ASA approved. A batter using an illegal bat will face the punishment listed in the Beaufort County Adult Softball Rules and Regulations.
21. Each team will provide each player with at least one uniform jersey. A player must be in uniform to play in the game, unless both managers agree prior to the game to waive the requirement.
22. Each team must have a minimum of nine (9) players to begin a game. Once both teams have at least nine (9) players, the game will start at the scheduled time, i.e. no waiting for additional players. Players that arrive late will be inserted into the lineup and field at that time.
 - a. If a team does not have the minimum of nine (9) players, then the other team may, if they have eleven or more players, transfer players to the team that is short players in order to play the games.
 - b. A team with less than nine (9) players will forfeit the game following a 10 minute grace.
 - c. Teams will not be given a 10 minute grace period for the second game. If the first game is forfeited, the second game will begin once both teams have the minimum number of players. The second game will be considered a forfeit if a team does not have 9 players by the second game time.
23. There is a 5 run limit per inning with unlimited runs allowed in the last inning.
24. After 55 minutes of game time, the teams will finish the current inning and play one more unlimited run inning. The last inning is always an unlimited inning unless the "Mercy" rule is reached.
25. If teams are tied at the end of 7 innings or the time limit, they will play one extra five run limit inning. The player who was the last batter to complete his time at bat prior to the extra inning will be placed on second base to start the inning for each half inning of the extra inning. A courtesy runner is not permitted for this runner unless this runner is injured and unable to safely run the bases. If tied at the end of the extra inning, the game will be considered a tie.
26. Mercy Rule: 15 runs difference after 4 innings, 10 runs difference after 5 innings.
27. Determining Regular Season Winner and Seedings or Tournament / Playoff Winner
 - a. Win/Loss Record
 - b. If there is a two way tie, head-to-head win/loss record is used. If that is tied, then least runs allowed in the head-to-head games. If that is tied, a coin flip.
 - c. For 3-4-5 way tie, least runs allowed in all games played.
 - d. Any teams still tied after c above, the most runs scored in all games played.
 - e. If still tied, the winner is determined by a coin flip.
 - f. If a tournament or playoffs cannot be completed, the awards are determined as follows:
 - i. Win/Loss record
 - ii. Head-to-head play

- iii. Least runs allowed in all games played
- iv. Runs scored in all games played