

SENIOR SOFTBALL BEAUFORT

SPRING 2025 RULES AND REGULATIONS

REVISED APRIL 19, 2025

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 Board of Directors.

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 Board of Directors 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.
3. To be eligible to play, a player must register on www.seniorsoftballbeaufort.com and sign waiver forms with Senior Softball Beaufort and Island Rec Center.

Rosters.

1. There will be a maximum roster of 15 players (including managers and coaches who are also players). However, since the fall 2024 season rosters had up to two alternate players on a roster, the Board of Directors may consider and approve having an alternate player from the fall 2024 season remain a provisional or will-call player for the spring 2025 season. When the league transitions to a full draft system, this provision will no longer apply. 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. Since the league plans to transition to a full draft system in the fall of 2025, this provision will no longer apply when the full draft is implemented.
2. At the beginning of each new season, new players will be entered into a player draft for that season. The draft will be conducted with the goal of improving parity amongst teams. The Board of Directors will decide, in consultation with the current managers, if there are enough new players and available fields to form additional teams. The Board of Directors will determine the exact draft process for the new season. Potential new players who lack basic softball skills, as determined by the Player Personnel Committee, and therefore are unable to participate safely in competitive games may be declared ineligible for the draft by the Board of Directors. However, they may participate in practices and informal scrimmages to work on their skills so that they can work to become eligible for future drafts.

Game Play.

1. Ground rules will be dependent upon the field and field conditions. Prior to the start of the season, the Grounds Committee will specify ground rules for the umpires and managers for each field. On fields without complete fencing between the foul lines, a line will be marked on the field at an appropriate distance for that field. If a player hits the ball in the air over the line, it is a home run; if the outfielder catches the ball with at least one foot over the line, it is still a home run. If a player hits the ball that crosses the line on the ground, untouched by the fielder, it will be a ground rule double; if the fielder touches the ball, it is a live ball even if it crosses the line and the player can continue running the bases and is not limited to a ground rule double.

2. 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 plate will be set at 50 feet from the rear point of home plate.
 - b. The pitching screen must be placed in front of the pitching plate no more than 4 feet in front of the plate with the edge of the screen covering a minimum of one half of the pitching plate.
 - c. 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.
 - d. The pitcher may release the ball from either side of the screen, but have at least one foot in contact with the pitching plate itself.
 - e. Before releasing the ball, and in contact with the plate, the pitcher must pause momentarily before he may release the ball or it is an illegal pitch.
 - f. If the batter hits the screen with a batted ball, it is treated as a dead foul ball immediately and runners, if any, return to their bases. It is treated the same as a foul ball in terms of being a strike or a courtesy foul ball or an out.
 - 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.
 - h. If a pitcher violates these rules, then the umpire will issue a warning to the pitcher. Any subsequent violation of these rules will result in the umpire declaring the pitch to be a ball.
3. 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. The edging of the actual home plate and strike mat is treated as part of the strike zone.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. 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 or scoring line, if there is not a plate.
 - b. If he crosses back over the commitment line towards 3B, the runner is out.
7. A scoring line (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 or line is to be used by the runner only.
 - b. The defense can only get the runner out by touching home plate (not the strike mat) while in possession of the ball before the runner crosses the scoring plate or line.
 - c. If the runner touches home plate/strike plate mat, the runner is out.
 - d. All plays at home plate are force plays.
8. Runners going into 2nd or 3rd base must slide or go in standing or give himself up by swerving out of the baseline without obstruction to the defensive player or his throw to second or first base.
 - 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 or interfering with a throw. 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.
- 9. An 11th fielder (includes a middle fielder/ 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. If a team has less than 11 players, they may designate one player as the middle fielder/rover and play only three outfielders who must take a position behind the 180-foot line until the ball is hit by the batter.
- 10. Batting Orders
 - a. All players on the roster who arrive on time to play in the games must be in the lineup. It will be the manager's choice as to whether any late players for the first game of a doubleheader will be added to the bottom of the batting order (and play the minimum number of innings in the field). In other words, a manager may elect to use a player arriving late for the first game of a doubleheader or only in the second game of the doubleheader.
 - 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. If a manager determines that one of his players is not in a condition to play (for example, due to being intoxicated due to alcohol or drugs), then the manager, in consultation with the opposing manager and umpire, may declare that player ineligible for that game and remove him without having the team penalized with an automatic out when that player is due to bat.
 - d. All players who arrive on time 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.
- 11. 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 and remains on the base if there are less than three outs.
- 12. The ball and strike count will be 1 and 1 when a batter steps to the plate.
- 13. 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.
- 14. Home Run Rule
 - a. Each team is limited to two (2) over the fence (or over the marked home run line if there is no 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.
- 15. 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.

16. 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.
17. 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 may be inserted at the end of the lineup and field at that time.
 - a. A team with less than nine (9) players will forfeit the game following a 10 minute grace. However, SSB encourages the two teams to play an informal scrimmage once a forfeit is declared so that all players that showed up to play are able to do so. The managers can mix the rosters as they see fit for the scrimmage.
 - b. 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.
18. There is a 5 run limit per inning with unlimited runs allowed in the last inning.
19. 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. The break between the first and second games will be limited to five minutes. The second game will start with the players who return within the five minutes. If a player is late for their scheduled at bat, he will be declared out.
20. 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. However, for the second game of the doubleheader, any inning that starts after 6:10pm will be considered an open inning and will also be considered the final inning of the game so that the game can be completed by 6:30pm since other leagues or sports programs may reserve the fields starting at 6:30pm. In that case, if the score is tied after the final open inning, no extra five run limit inning will be played and the game will be considered a tie.
21. Mercy Rule: 15 runs difference after 4 innings, 10 runs difference after 5 innings.
22. 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