



2015 General Slow Pitch League Rules



New for the 2015 season, Rule 21 below for USSSA Rule 8 Base Running Section 5

MGSA Slow Pitch games will use this set of General Local League Rules presented in this document as an extension or revision to **USSSA Slow Pitch Softball Game Rules**. All MGSA Leagues use the **USSSA Slow Pitch Softball Game Rules** as the basis for game play. These general rules are applied across all Leagues, with individual League exceptions specified in a Local League Rules document.

Rule specifications contained in this document may be a restatement, clarification, point of emphasis, exception or addition of **USSSA Slow Pitch Softball Game Rules** to meet the specific needs and goals of the MGSA program. USSSA specific rules are cited as references for further information or as an indication of compliance with the USSSA rule set.

General MGSA local league rules that apply to all leagues are:

1. No player may participate in a league game unless registered with MGSA
2. Home and away team game assignments are determined by the MGSA scheduler. The schedules are balanced as best possible to provide an equal distribution of home and away games to each team (**USSSA Rule 4 Section 1**)
3. Visitor team shall be assigned to use the 1st baseline dugout or bench area. Home team shall be assigned to use the 3rd base dugout or bench area.
4. The home team coach is responsible for ensuring that the field is properly set, including bases, and shall provide the game balls
5. Teams will begin game play at the scheduled game time
6. The batting order shall include all players present at the start of the game. Late arriving players will be allowed to enter the game and must be placed at the bottom of the batting order.
7. A team may draft substitute players from a lower age group league with notification to the League Director.
8. In the event no umpire is available at the scheduled start time for a game, the home and visiting coaches will jointly agree upon a substitute umpire
9. On-field coach exceptions to rules as stated by USSSA or MGSA Local League Local Rules are not allowed or permissible in any way
10. All coaches, players, and parents must abide by Umpire rulings. Verbal abuse, harassment, insulting remarks or actions, or unsportsmanlike conduct by coaches, players, or spectators will not be tolerated. After one warning by the head umpire, the offending team may be declared in forfeit of the game by the umpire or a representative of the MGSA or Bennett Park boards. The MGSA Code of Conduct will be strictly enforced. All incidents of unsportsmanlike behavior will be reported to the MGSA Umpire Director for appropriate disciplinary action (**USSSA Rule 5 Section 9-10**)
11. A game may be postponed or suspended due to weather conditions by the umpire, the League Director, or any other MGSA board member. (**USSSA Rule 4 Section 2**)
12. Games will be suspended immediately if lightning is sighted (**USSSA Rule 4 Section 2**)
13. The home team coach will immediately report any game that has been postponed or suspended to the League Director. The Umpire will immediately report any game that has been postponed or suspended to the Umpire Director.
14. Postponed games will be rescheduled by the MGSA scheduler with notification to team coaches. Best effort will be made to determine a game date and time that will work for

both teams. If the assigned game makeup date cannot be played by either team the League Director will determine if the game should be dropped from the season schedule.

15. A batter **accidentally** (accidentally being defined as unintentional or a lack of skill) or **carelessly** (carelessly defined as intentional or without regard) throwing a bat during their at bat will receive a warning from the Umpire on the first occurrence. Subsequent **accidental** violations will be tolerated as long as there is no imminent danger to other players. If player safety is compromised (Umpires judgment) on the 2nd or later bat throw, the batter will be declared out.
 - a. The second at bat **careless** bat throw violation will result in the batter being declared out and the ball will be dead. (**USSSA Rule 5, Section 9 interpretation**)
16. Except for the on-deck batter, all players and equipment for the batting team must remain in the team's dugout (**USSSA Rule 5 Section 9D**)
17. No jewelry or any other items deemed hazardous by the umpire may be worn during the game (**USSSA Rule 2 Section 11A**)
18. All players must wear shoes (**USSSA Rule 2 Section 9**)
19. Team jerseys as provided by the league should be worn by all game participants (**USSSA Rule 2 Section 11**)
20. A game may end with a tie score at the end regulation play of 7-innings, timed ending or 4 or more completed innings in the case of a called game (**USSSA Rule 4 Section 3A-D clarification and exception**)
21. Base runners are required to slide or alternately avoid contact with a defensive player in the base path who is in possession of the ball waiting for a tag out. If the base runner does not slide or attempt to avoid contact with the defensive player, the base runner shall be declared out. This rule change has been made by USSSA to reduce player injuries from deliberate crashing between players. Deliberate shall be interpreted by umpire judgement as pre-meditated or avoidable by the base runner. Base runners must NOT run directly into a defensive player that has possession of or is fielding the ball. (**USSSA Rule 8 Base Running, Section 5V**)

USSSA Youth Program Field Dimensions as applied to MGSA leagues

DIVISION	PITCHING	BASE PATH
10U	40'	60'
12U	46'	65'
14U	50'	65'
HSSP	50'	65'

Source: **USSSA Policy and Procedure 0039 I – Youth Program**

Run Ahead rule and when to Flip/Flop

The Run-Rule (**USSSA Rule 4 Section 3E-F, USSSA Policy and Procedure 0039 I – Youth Program**) awards a win to the Team that has the required number of runs ahead after innings played as specified in this modified MGSA schedule:

Innings Played	Runs-ahead	Home Team Ahead Flip After Inning
4	12	3
5	10	4

Note that this schedule omits inning 3 due to the MGSA inning run limit of 5 runs. A maximum of 10 runs can be scored by either team after 2 innings of play, making the USSSA Run Ahead rule effective at the end of the 2nd inning not possible.

Typical use of this rule will be found at the 12U and higher division games.

When to Flip

If the Away Team is ahead by the Runs-Ahead margin at the end of the inning, the Home Team is provided an opportunity to match or exceed the Away Team score by flipping the "Team At Bat" to the Home Team to the first at bat of the next inning. If the Home Team is unable to match or exceed the Away Team runs, the win is awarded to the Away Team. If the Home Team matches or exceeds the Away Team score, the game will continue as is with the "At Bat" Home and Away flipped.

End of Season Tournament Local Rules

Follows all regular season rules with these addition, clarifications, points of emphasis and exceptions:

- 1) No players in the same division may be drafted as a substitute for any other teams that same division. If a team needs substitute players they may be drafted from lower divisions only.
- 2) Games that have a tied score at the end of regulation or timed play will continue the game using the **International Softball Federation Rule 5 Sections 6 and 7A** process interpretation:
 - a) Each tie-breaker at-bat inning will start with the offensive team last batter from the previous inning placed at 2nd base
 - b) Player substitutions are allowed as specified in (**clarification use of USSSA Rule 5 Sections 3A-E**)
 - c) The offensive team will start each inning with no outs (**clarification use of USSSA rules**)
 - d) The game winner will be declared as the team with the highest score at the end of a complete inning
 - e) The game will continue to be played until a winner is declared

Goals of Local League Rules

- Each game is fairly and uniformly officiated with the same set of rules to ensure consistency in game play and opportunity for all teams
- Clear and uniform rule set to eliminate potential conflict and confusion with between coaches, spectators and officials