

SSUSA RULES SUMMARY FOR 2018

Pitch Arch

- 6 feet to 12 feet above the ground.
- Illegal pitches are signaled and verbalized in flight.

Pitcher's Box

- Pitcher's box is 2 feet wide by 10 feet deep.
- Pitcher must have some portion of one foot inside of the pitcher's box when beginning the windup / delivery.
- Any portion of the foot touching the chalk / lines is considered "in" the box.

Batter's Box

- Batter's box is 3 feet wide by 7 feet deep.
- Batter must have some portion of both feet inside of the batter's box when the windup / delivery begins.
- Any portion of the foot touching the chalk / lines is considered "in" the box.
- On the swing, the batter is considered "out of the box" when he has one foot completely on the ground, completely outside of the batter's box when contact is made.

Pitch Count / Men and Women 65, 70, 75, 80, 85 Age Divisions

- Starting count is 0-0. (Note: In Men's & Women's 40 Masters, the pitch count is 1-1 with NO waste).
- Batter walks after 4 balls. Batter is out after 3 strikes.
- No extra foul / courtesy foul to give.
- On foul tips with less than 2 strikes, the ball must go higher than the batter's head for an out to be recorded.

Pitch Count / Men and Women 40, 50, 55 and 60 Age Divisions

- **Starting count is 1-1. (Note: In Men's & Women's 40 Masters, the pitch count is 1-1 with NO extra foul ball. In Men's & Women's 50, 55 and 60s, the pitch count is 1-1 WITH an extra foul ball).**
- **Batter walks after 3 balls. Batter is out after 2 strikes.**
- **On foul tips that are caught in the air, the ball must go higher than the batter's head for an out to be recorded.**

Double First Base

- Safety base for use by the batter-runner only on the initial play.
- Batter-runner must use the safety base if there is a play being made at the bag unless he is trying to avoid a collision with the defender (a runner touching both bases simultaneously is not out). In that scenario, the batter-runner can use either bag. The defensive player must touch some portion of the white bag to record an out on the initial play.
- Calls involving the double base / safety base are live calls by the umpire (no appeals).
- After the initial play, the double base / safety base become one base.

Commitment Line

- 30 feet up the third base line from the front edge of home plate.
- Once a runner touches or crosses the commitment line, he cannot retreat for any reason.
- A retreating runner is declared out at the moment he re-crosses the commitment line.
- Runners tug after touching or crossing the commitment line are declared "safe" and are not required to continue to the scoring line / scoring plate. They can only be declared out if the defensive team touches the mat prior to the runner crossing the scoring line.
- These are live ball calls. Umpires should make the appropriate call, then focus on any remaining runners.

Scoring Line

- All plays at home are force outs.
- Runners must have a foot on the ground touching the scoring line / scoring plate before the defensive team has possession of the ball and is touching the strike mat. Note- a runner's foot on the ground beyond the scoring line / scoring plate is deemed to have touched the plate.
- Runners are automatically out at home if they cross through any part of the batter's box.
- This is a live ball call. Umpires should make the call, then focus on any remaining runners.

Base Running

- A runner must make every effort to avoid collisions.
- If in the umpire's judgment the runner misses a base to avoid a collision, they may be declared safe.
- If in the umpire's judgment the runner fails to avoid a collision, they may be declared out.
- A base runner may tag and advance on any fly ball that is caught in the field of play regardless of pitch count. The ball remains live.

Courtesy Runners

- Any player listed on the lineup card may be used as a courtesy runner.
- A courtesy runner must notify the umpire prior to taking a position on the base, and is deemed to be in the game when he touches the base.
- **A courtesy runner may enter the game only prior to the first pitch to ANY batter.**
- Once in the game, the courtesy runner cannot be replaced for another runner (exception- when that courtesy runner becomes injured).
- A courtesy runner may be used for a base runner at any time, but the same player can only act as a courtesy runner one time per inning. If so, an out is declared.
- Should a courtesy runner be on base when his turn at bat comes due, the courtesy runner is declared out, and then must take his turn at bat.

Defense

Teams must meet the minimum for their division of play.

- 10 defensive players for Men's 40-65 and Women's 40
- 11 defensive players for Men's 70-80 and Women's 50 - 70.
- **12 defensive players for Men's 85.**
- A team is permitted to play short-handed with 1 fewer than the minimum number.

Short-Handed Rule

- If short-handed due to injury or a missing player; an out is recorded the first time the missing spot comes due. After that, simply skip the batter without penalty.
- If short-handed due to player ejection; an out is recorded each time the missing spot comes due.

Game Cards

- Proper game cards are critical
- You will be given a game card that includes all information necessary for completing that game. It is your responsibility for accurately tracking lineups, game time, runs scored, runs, home runs and substitutions.
- At the conclusion of the game, tally all scores and have both managers verify the final score and sign the game card.
- Umpire(s) working the game will also sign the card and rate the performance of both teams.

Flip Flop Rule

- Mandatory in all games (seeding and bracket)
- Applies when the home team is trailing by 10 or more heading into the open inning.
- The home team bats again in the open inning. If still trailing after their final at bat, the game is over. If tied or ahead, the visiting team gets their turn at bat.

Home Runs / Runs per Inning

- All home runs are walk-offs. No need to touch a base.
- All home runs over the limit are dead ball outs.
- Major Plus- 9 HR per game. 7 runs per inning.
- Major- 6 HR per game. 5 runs per inning.
- AAA- 3 HR per game. 5 runs per inning.
- AA- 1 HR per game. 5 runs per inning.
- 40 Masters Major Plus- 10 HR per game. 5 runs per inning.
- 40 Masters Major- 8 HR per game. 5 runs per inning.
- 40 Masters AAA- 6 HR per game. 5 runs per inning.

Gloves

- **Gloves and mitts may be worn by any player. (Mitt restrictions were deleted)**

Open Inning

- In timed games, you must announce that time has expired at the moment it occurs.
- Once time expires, finish the inning in progress. The next inning is the open inning.
- Failure to make the announcement will result in an additional inning being played.
- Watch your clock during the game.
- Keep both coaches informed.

International Tie-Breaker

- If tied, each team begins the extra inning with the last completed batter from the previous inning at 2nd base.
- Teams cannot use a courtesy runner or substitute until that player has advanced at least one base.
- Should the proper runner be unable to continue due to injury an out is recorded and the next previous batter becomes the proper runner.
- All international tie-breaker innings are open innings.

Pre-Game Preparation

- Check your game card for time limits
- Check your game card for equalizers
- Home team is decided by coin flip in all games that do not include an equalizer (if a team receives an equalizer, they are automatically the visitor).
- Home run rules are always that of the lower rated team.
- Be sure the back of the game card includes the names of all starting players and potential substitutes. If not listed on the game card, the player is not allowed to participate.
- All pitchers are required to wear a protective facemask.

Game Time

- Start the time for the game as soon as the plate conference is complete: 67 minutes for seeding games, 72 minutes for bracket games and 7 innings with no time limit for championship games only.

During the Game

- Record all runs scored and home runs hit. Quickly confirm with each bench every half inning to avoid confusion later.
- Record all substitutions on the back of the game card as they occur.
- Track the number of balls hit over the fence, regardless of whether they count as home runs.
- Starting with the 4th inning, clearly announce time remaining to both teams.
- If there is a working scoreboard present- use it.

Protests

- There is no charge for protests, but most protests must be done before the next pitch. If there is a protest, call the director immediately and explain the situation. He will contact the Protest Committee and get a ruling. Remember there is no protest for judgement calls – only for rule interpretations.

Post-game

- Total and verify the score with both coaches and have them sign the card.
- Plate umpire and base umpire must also sign the card.
- Be sure that it is accurate and neat.
- Be sure to rate the teams based on performance in that game.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, DON'T HESITATE TO ASK, WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU.