

MCR SENIOR SOFTBALL



MONTGOMERY COUNTY
Recreation

2023 Rules Comparison at a Glance

Rule	Mon. Evening Women	Tue. Evening Men 50+	Wed. Evening Men 60+	Thur. Evening Men 55+
Illegal Bats. (Rule 2.3)	MCRD List	MCRD List	MCRD List	MCRD List
Home Run Limit (Rule 3.5)	Unlimited	See 3.5.1	Unlimited	See 3.5.1
Minimum to avoid forfeit (Rule 5.2)	8	8	8	8
Lineup Substitutions (Rule 5.3)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Number of Defensive Players (Rule 5.6)	11	10 or 11 [*]	11	10 or 11 [*]
Equalizer	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Time Limits	55	55	55	55
Tie Game After 7	Yes	YES	Yes	Yes
Mercy Rule After 5 th (Rule 6.5)	15	15	15	15
Flip flop 10 run difference in final inning	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Courtesy Runner from Home	Yes/up to 2 that are identified before the game	No	Yes/up to 2 that are identified before the game	No
Distance Between Bases (Feet)	65	70	65	70

*Only for games where there is a handicap.

2023 MCSSA Softball Rules

The MCSSA will be responsible for developing schedules, reporting scores, and amending rules and initial protest resolution. Issues which affect procuring playing fields, registration /fees, umpires rest with the MCRD.

1. Playing Rules.

1.1. All games shall be played in accordance with current Montgomery County Recreation Department Rules as amended by Montgomery County Senior Sports Association (MCSSA) and those of the umpire association assigned to all leagues, usually USA (Amateur Softball Association) (hereinafter, "the Association").

2. Equipment.

2.1. SHOES. Metal and screw-on cleats shall be illegal in all league games.

2.2. BALLS. The home team shall provide league-approved balls for each game. The team causing the previous ball to go out of play, if needed, shall provide additional balls.

2.3. BATS. Titanium bats and Senior Association bats shall be illegal. For evening league team games, MCRD shall provide managers with a description and list of illegal bats as shown in Appendix A, and the list is also available on the MCRD website. League commissioners may, with consent of a majority of managers, add bats to, but not remove bats from, the illegal bat list.

Players that use an illegal bat listed on the banned bat list (Appendix A) or a senior bat will be suspended. The League Director from the Recreation Department will determine suspension. If the batter is caught with the illegal bat when he/she is in the batter's box, the batter will be called out, ejected from the game, and will receive a suspension letter. A player could receive up to a year in suspension. Managers will be held responsible for informing all players of this rule.

2.4 PITCHING HELMETS. Pitching Helmets Are Strongly Recommended!!!

3. Field of Play.

3.1. A COMMITMENT LINE, three-feet long, shall be marked, halfway between third base and home plate and perpendicular to the foul line. A base runner, advancing beyond this line, who re-crosses to return to third base is ruled out—this includes re-crossing on a fly ball out. If a runner re-crosses the line, he/she shall be declared out and the ball will remain live.

3.2. A SCORING PLATE shall be placed eight feet from the rear point of home plate on an extended line from first base. If a scoring plate is not available or if weather or field conditions would make its use unsafe, a scoring line extended from the first base line shall be marked.

3.3. A STRIKE ZONE MAT shall be placed over or behind home plate to demarcate the strike zone. At the league's discretion, FULL or PARTIAL mats may be used.

3.3.1. The FULL mat shall be placed longitudinally with its front edge aligned with the front edge of home plate and overlapping home plate equally on either side. Legal pitches striking any portion of the FULL mat shall be called strikes. A defensive player may use any part of the FULL mat for a play on a runner attempting to score.

3.3.2. The PARTIAL mat, 17 inches wide and 24 inches long (measured from either side point of home plate to the end of the mat), shall be placed behind and touching home plate. Legal pitches striking any portion of home plate, including the black edge and the PARTIAL mat, shall be called strikes. A defensive player may use any part of home plate or the partial mat for a play on a runner attempting to score (See Rules 8.4.1 and 8.4.2).

3.4. A DOUBLE BAG or mat of equal size shall be used at first base in addition to the normal bag. The double bag/mat shall be placed in foul territory abutting the normal first base bag.

3.5. HOME RUN LIMITS. For the purpose of this section, a home run is defined as an unassisted fair ball hit over the fence. If a batter hitting such a ball does not score due to the 5-RUN LIMIT, the hit shall not count against the home run limit.

3.5.1. In all men's team evening leagues, the home run limit shall be 3 per team. Beyond this limit, any fair ball hit over the fence will be ruled an out. **Exception:** For the Tuesday and Thursday night league, if two A division teams play each other, the home run maximum is extended to 5 per team.

3.6. BATTING PRACTICE. Any pre-game batting practice shall occur with the batter standing at least six (6) feet behind the established batter's box and the pitcher releasing from at least 6 feet in front of the pitcher's plate.

4. Rosters and Eligibility.

4.1. MCSSA leagues include both team leagues and draft leagues. Team leagues are those composed of teams that enter with rules administered by MCRD as amended by MCSSA. Draft leagues are those for which individuals register to be placed on a team by the individual league selection process and procedures.

4.2. The Team Manager is required to have all players sign up for their team roster online via www.ActiveMONTGOMERY.org by the deadlines listed below. Tutorials on how to Create and Join a Team, How to Join a Team, and Managing Your Team Online through ActiveMONTGOMERY.org can be found on MocoRec.com in the Adult Softball section. Team Managers may delete players from their online roster and have the additional players sign up to their team roster. Each manager shall submit a preliminary roster (all information completed except for signature) to the relevant MCSSA league commissioner **prior** to the first scheduled game. Changes to the preliminary rosters must be made in writing prior to any added player's participation. Final rosters are due to

the MCSSA League Commissioner and the MCRD Director by the first Monday in June and by the designated submission date for the Fall Leagues. If not submitted by that date, the preliminary roster shall become the final roster, and subsequent changes can be made only with the approval of the MCSSA League Commissioner. Players not included on the final roster will not be eligible for the playoffs. The MCSSA Commissioners shall maintain the official roster and will resolve roster issues with the MCRD Director. Managers are responsible for date of birth verification for first-year players in the senior leagues. League commissioners and the MCRD can check IDs at any time. Team rosters submitted to the Commissioner shall include each player's full name, address, phone number, emergency contact phone number, date of birth and an e-mail address.

4.3. For all draft leagues, commissioners and managers shall organize and establish teams that are balanced, with an emphasis on team building, being fair-minded, and achieving parity.

4.4. Team rosters shall not exceed 24 persons, including players and coaches at any time.

4.5. League eligibility requires each player meet league age requirements and be listed on a team roster.

4.6. Any team using an ineligible player shall forfeit each game in which the player participated. An ineligible player should be reported to the umpire prior to the umpire's departure from the confines of the playing area.

4.7 No player may be on more than one roster during a season. Requests for a transfer to another team can only be granted after the player receives a written release signed by their manager before registering on another team's roster. The request must be made prior to the final roster deadline and approved by the MCSSA Commissioner. Transfers will not be unreasonably withheld.

5. Players and Substitutes.

5.1. Playing age is the age a player will have reached by December 31st of the current calendar year.

5.2. A team may start and continue with at least eight (8) eligible players. A team with fewer than 8 players shall be permitted a 10-minute grace period beginning with the scheduled start time of the first game. The game shall begin immediately upon the arrival of the 8th player. The game time limit will not be adjusted and shall be calculated from the scheduled starting time. With the mutual agreement of both managers and the umpire, a game may begin prior to the scheduled time.

A team with fewer than 8 eligible players to start or continue may borrow players from the opposing team to prevent forfeits. When borrowing team's players arrive, borrowed players return to their team. Players arriving any time after the game begins may be inserted at the end of the lineup in order of arrival. The batting order for a game, once established, shall not be otherwise altered. There shall be no limit on lineup size.

5.3. All players present at the start of the game are not required to be in the batting lineup. A manager may insert any player not in the starting lineup at any time during the game. Any starting or substitute player who has been removed from the game may re-enter the game once, but must re-enter in the same batting position. A player not in the batting order may not play a defensive position unless they are either entered (or re-entered as above) into the batting order at the same time. At no time may a defensive player be on the field without being in the batting order. A player not in the batting order may serve as a courtesy runner.

5.3.1. As an exception to the re-entry conditions (in Rule 5.3), a team unable to field the maximum number of players permitted, (10 or 11), because of an injury, may replace the injured player with a player not in the lineup at the time of the injury. This means that if the player that replaces the injured player has already re-entered the game once, he may do so again in this situation.

5.4. No out shall occur for any lineup vacancy unless due to ejection for unsporting conduct, in which case an out shall occur for the ejected player's lineup spot regardless of additional players being available. However, an ejected player may be replaced on defense.

5.5. BORROWED PLAYERS AND RETRIEVERS.

5.5.1. In men's evening leagues, when a team begins the game with only 8 players in a possible 10-player lineup or 9 players in an 11-player lineup, the opposing team shall provide a player positioned behind home plate to retrieve pitched balls. This retriever shall not otherwise be involved in defensive plays and must leave the confines of home plate when the ball is live or be subject to an interference call. The team requesting the retriever may, for tactical reasons, waive the use of a retriever at any time, but shall also retain the right to reinstate the retriever at any time. The retriever rule shall be canceled when the 9th or 10th player arrives.

5.5.2. A team with fewer than 8 players may borrow players from the opposing team to prevent forfeits. When borrowing team's players arrive, borrowed players return to their team.

5.6. In all leagues, a player in the batting order may play any defensive position.

6. The Game.

6.1. STARTING TIME. A team with fewer than 8 players at the scheduled start time of the first game of the evening leagues shall be permitted a 10-minute grace period. The game shall begin as soon as an 8th player arrives. The game time limit shall be calculated from the scheduled starting time. Managers and the umpire may agree to start prior to the scheduled time.

6.2. TIME LIMITS. The game is played to 55 minutes. The full inning that starts after 55 minutes is the unlimited and final inning. (All games must have an unlimited inning). In the final game of the evening on a lighted field, because of the 10:45 PM curfew, the final and unlimited inning shall be declared for a full inning started at 10:15 PM if the 55-

minute threshold has not been reached. If an inning is not completed when the field lights are switched off, the game will revert to the last full inning.

Point of Emphasis: The timepiece kept by the umpire will serve as the definitive resource for time supervision. **No exceptions.**

6.3 TIE GAME. In evening league games, if the score is tied when the inning declared to be the last has been played, the game shall be recorded as a tie. Tie games shall not continue beyond the inning declared to be the final inning, nor shall a tie game be replayed.

6.4. FIVE-RUN LIMIT. In all leagues, three outs or five (5) runs, whichever occurs first, shall end an inning.

6.4.1. The 7th inning will be declared the unlimited run inning. An exception occurs when the 55-minute warning is given and the umpire states that the NEXT inning will be the FINAL (and unlimited) inning.

6.5. MERCY RULE. If a team leads by 15 or more runs, after the opposing team has batted in the 5th or 6th inning, the game shall end.

6.6 FLIP FLOP RULE. The rule will apply in any game when there is a 10-run differential in favor of the visiting team at the start of the "open inning." The home team will remain at bat and become the visiting team.

6.7 RUNNER RULE. If a player at bat walks and he is going to have a runner, the batter may return to the dugout without touching first and the runner can go to first. Similarly, when a home run is hit over the fence, the batter and any runners on base shall score without having to advance to the next base.

6.8 EQUALIZER RULES.

6.8.1. 50+, 55+ Equalizer Rule: A vs. B or B vs. C: The lower division team has a choice of 5 runs or an extra defensive player. A vs. C the lower division team gets BOTH 5 runs and an extra defensive Player. In all situations if the lower division team wins with the equalizer in the first game, they forfeit it in the second game. In A vs. C only one of the handicaps is lost. Team must announce which to opposing manager.

6.8.2. 60+ Equalizer Rule: The A teams will spot the B teams 5 runs per game.

7. Pitching Regulations.

7.1. The pitching arc shall be between 6 feet and 12 feet. Umpires shall verbally call an illegal pitch while it is in the air.

7.2. In all leagues, the batter shall start with a 1-1 ball-strike count and be allowed one courtesy foul after 2 strikes.

7.3. An intentional walk may be issued at any time by pitcher's declaration.

7.4. A foul tip is a batted ball that goes directly from the bat, not higher than the batter's head, to the catcher's hands or glove/mitt, and is legally caught by the catcher. A foul tip is a strike; a batter with two strikes who hits a foul tip shall be called out. Any foul ball reaching higher than the batter's head and then caught shall be called an out. A foul ball that is not caught is a dead ball, but shall also count as a strike, except in the case of leagues using the 1-1 starting count, when a batter with two strikes is allowed one courtesy foul without consequence.

8. Base Running.

8.1. REACHING FIRST BASE. The defensive player shall use the normal (inside) bag. The batter-runner shall use the double (outside) bag or mat if there is a play at first base and may use the inside bag only if the ball is not playable at first base or to avoid colliding with a defensive player moving into the base path. A batter-runner otherwise touching the inside bag shall be called out. A defensive player may use the outside bag only if drawn by the throw to the foul side of first base.

8.2. SLIDING AND DIVING. Advancing runners sliding or diving into first base or the scoring plate shall be called out. Runners advancing to second or third base and runners returning to any base may legally slide or dive. Runners overrunning any base (except for a batter-runner who overruns first base and attempts or feigns an attempt to advance toward second base) shall be in jeopardy of being tagged out. A runner who overruns a base need not re-touch that base to advance to the next base.

8.3. OUT BY TAG. A runner may be tagged out at any base other than home plate.

8.4. ADVANCING TO HOME. A runner advancing from third base and crossing the commitment line is:

8.4.1. awarded home if he/she is tagged by a defensive player, or touches the scoring plate (or, if none, crosses the scoring line) before a defensive player in possession of the ball touches home plate.

8.4.2. out if a defensive player in possession of the ball touches home plate before the runner touches the scoring plate or crosses the scoring line.

8.4.3. out if he/she re-crosses the commitment line or touches or crosses over home plate or the strike zone mat. No defensive appeal is required.

8.5. COURTESY RUNNERS. A courtesy runner is a runner who replaces a batter who has already reached base safely. In addition, the Women's Monday night and Men's 60+ leagues may identify no more than two players per game who are permitted to use a courtesy runner from home plate. Both players must be identified before the game starts.

8.5.1. A courtesy runner shall replace a base runner only when the ball is dead. A courtesy runner becomes a base runner when he/she touches the appropriate base. A courtesy runner cannot replace a batter reaching first base if a pitch has been thrown to the next batter until that at bat is completed.

8.5.2. A player may not be used as a courtesy runner more than once per inning. A player shall be called out if he/she becomes a courtesy runner more than once in an inning.

8.5.3. A courtesy runner shall not replace another courtesy runner except in case of injury, in which case the original courtesy runner shall be removed from, and may not reenter, the game.

8.5.4. A courtesy runner on base when it is his/her turn to bat shall be called out as the base runner, but shall take his/her turn at bat.

8.5.5. Courtesy runners who run for batters shall leave from a point behind a line parallel to the third base line that is extended from the scoring plate to the backstop.

8.5.5.1. If a courtesy runner from home plate leaves before the ball is hit, or the batter advances toward first base by more than halfway, the batter shall be ruled out. The ball shall be dead, and runners shall return to their bases previously held.

8.5.5.2. A batter who has a courtesy runner from home plate shall be called out if he/she interferes with a defensive player trying to make a play near home plate.

9. Umpires.

9.1. MCRD shall provide USA (ASA) umpires for evening team leagues.

9.2. If the assigned umpire has not arrived by 10 minutes after the scheduled start time, the game shall begin without an official umpire and shall be completed. An assigned umpire arriving after the game has begun shall complete it. The game time limit will not be adjusted and will be calculated from the scheduled starting time. In the case of the evening team leagues, MCRD shall not be responsible for payment to a volunteer or unauthorized umpires.

9.3. If the umpire does not arrive or arrives late, teams shall notify MCRD immediately by phone.

10. Protests.

10.1. Misapplication of Rule Protests shall be submitted to the league commissioner within 48 hours. The MCSSA protest committee chaired by the MCSSA president will address the protest in consult with the umpire's association. At the time of the protest, misapplication of a specific league rule must be alleged and stated to the umpire who will sign the scorebook. The protesting team shall make a payment of \$50 to their Active Montgomery Account in order for the protest to be heard. A favorable decision will warrant return of the \$50 fee.

10.2. Player eligibility protests must be submitted in writing to the MCSSA president within 48 hours after the completion of the game. The protest of an ineligible player must

be made during the game played, with the umpire informed of the protest. No fee is required.

10.3. A team using an ineligible player shall forfeit all games in which the ineligible player participated.

11. Score Reporting and League Standings.

11.1. Both managers shall report the game score(s) by email on the same day as games played, but not later than 24 hours later, to the league Commissioner who will verify scores and send to MCRD Director within 24 hours of receipt.

11.2. League standings shall be determined, at the league's discretion, by won-lost percentage or standings points. Standings points, if used, shall be awarded as follows: win, 2 points; tie, 1 point; forfeit, -1 point. For pre-announced forfeits, there will be no subtraction of points. If weather cancels a forfeit, the forfeit is nullified.

11.3. A tie in league standings shall be broken using the following criteria: a. Head-to-head record. b. Division record. c. Head-to-head run differential. d. Fewer runs allowed in division games. e. Fewer runs allowed in all games.

12. Disciplinary Action.

12.1. RESPONSIBILITY. Team managers shall bear responsibility for the conduct of their team and spectators.

12.2. EJECTION. A player, manager or coach ejected from a game shall be suspended for the remainder of that game and the team's next game. MCSSA shall have the power to discipline further any individual ejected more than once during a season.

12.3. TECHNICAL OUT. As a sanction against those teams or individuals whose behavior is unacceptable, but the umpire judges that ejection is too severe a penalty, the umpire may invoke a technical out against the offending team.

12.3.1. Offense: If the team at bat is guilty of unsporting behavior, the umpire may enforce an out against them. If this is the first or second out of the inning, the game continues with the batter and base runners being unaffected; an additional out is simply added to the team's total. If the technical out is the third of the inning, the next inning will resume with the batter who would have batted had the out not been called. In this case the batter will begin with a new ball/strike count.

12.3.2. Defense: If the team in the field is guilty of unsporting behavior, the umpire may invoke the technical out rule by reducing by one the number of outs that the defense will have when they come to bat.

12.3.3. Two consecutive technical outs may not be assessed against the same team. At least one pitch (legal or illegal) must intervene. An ejection for any unsporting behavior must be accompanied by the charging of an out against the offending team.

Appendix A: ASA Non-Approved Bats for Evening Team Leagues

MONTGOMERY COUNTY RECREATION

2023 USA Softball Non-Approved Bat List with Certification Marks

Revised March 23, 2023

This is to inform all teams that participate in Montgomery County Recreation Softball Leagues, the following lists of bats are illegal for the season. All NSA, USSSA and ASA bats that have official certification (2000, 2004 or 2013) marks/stamps and the bat performance rating of 1.20 will be allowed in all adult softball leagues. All senior bats are considered illegal.

Approved bats shall be considered altered if they are rolled, shaved, repainted, weighted or modified to change their characteristics from how produced by the manufacturer. Identifying the bat by means of laser marking, engraving or painting the name or number of the player will not make the bat an altered bat.

240-777-6840 • Hablamos Español • www.mocorec.com

Bass Quake Easton SCN1BH Easton SCN3 Easton SCNSB Easton SCN7B Easton SCN9 Easton SCX2 Synergy Easton SCX3 Louisville Slugger FP1369 Louisville Slugger SB34 Genesis Miken MSF Freak Miken MSUM Ultra Maxload Onyx First Born - ES2P21 Worth QESTFP Worth WWSC Wicked Comp. (SP Only) Worth XGold Worth XWICKX Wicked (SP Only)	Combat VIRSP3 Lady Virus Easton SCN1B Easton SCN4B Easton SCN6B Easton SCN8 Easton SCX14 Easton SCX22 Synergy 2 Louisville Slugger FP136 Louisville Slugger FPC305 Catalyst (-8) Louisville Slugger SB404 Miken MSU Ultra Nokona Tomahawk Schutt Red/Silver Schutt Bat Worth SBWK(Wicked) Worth WWSA Worth XPST4	Easton SCN1 Easton SCN2B Easton SCN5 Easton SCN7 Easton SCN8B Easton SCX14B Easton SCX24B Louisville Slugger FP1368 Louisville Slugger SB304 Louisville Slugger SB73V TPS Voltage Miken MSU2 Ultra II Onyx Battle Ground - ESBCA242 Worth EST9 Worth SBWKA Worth XEST9X Worth XRed
---	---	---

Please use this link for updates on non-approved bats: <https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Softball/Certified-Equipment/Equipment-Bats>