

# SCOREKEEPER'S GUIDE

## GAME PROCEDURES

When you are the official scorekeeper, you should perform the following procedures:

### BEFORE THE GAME

- 1) Arrive at the field at least thirty (30) minutes before the game.
- 2) Bring pencils with erasers. Every scorekeeper makes mistakes, no matter how much experience he/she has. Using a pen asks for a mess. Also, if you draw lines for hit locations, it is helpful to use a red pencil to record runs scored.
- 3) Get the appropriate scorebook for the game you are scoring:
- 4) Get a line-up card from the coach of each team.
- 5) Fill in the line-up information in the next available blank pages in the scorebook. In all divisions the entire team bats, so the line-up card should list the entire roster (minus absent players). If a player arrives late, she is added to the end of the batting line-up. You may, but need not, record defensive positions if the coach lists them.
- 6) Fill in the other information about the game – home team, visiting team, game location, etc.
- 7) Find the umpire when he/she arrives. Introduce yourself and let him/her know where you will be sitting. You should sit somewhere near the backstop, between the home plate sides of the dugouts.
- 8) There is an inning/time limit for each game.
  - a) In the all divisions, games are either seven (7) innings or, no new inning will begin after 1 hour and 20 minutes, whichever occurs first.
  - b) The umpire usually will tell you when he/she is starting the “clock,” but if no indication is given you should write down the time that the first pitch is thrown, thus starting the “clock.” When this happens, check with the umpire between innings to make sure you both have the same “start time.” If there is a difference, the umpire’s start time is the official start time.

## DURING THE GAME

During the game, the official scorekeeper is responsible for keeping an accurate record of the game and for assisting the umpire when asked. In order to do this, you must remain focused on the game.

### During the Inning

- 1) Make sure you watch the whole play – do not write anything down in the scorebook until the play is over. Then, go from the batter backwards (up the column) marking each line-up position until you are caught up. A common mistake, for example, is to see a girl hit a single to left field, look down at the scorebook to mark the single, only to have something else happen on the field that you don't see.
- 2) **There are maximum numbers** of runs that can be scored in an inning, and when these numbers are reached you should make sure the umpire is aware of this fact.
  - a) In the 6/8/10U slow division, a team may only score five (5) runs per inning (10U can score unlimited runs in the 6 & 7<sup>th</sup> innings, after which the umpire will declare the inning over.
  - b) In the 12/15/18U slow division, a team may only score eight (8) runs per inning in innings one through four, and an unlimited number of runs can be scored in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> innings.
  - c) In all fast pitch divisions, a team may only score six (6) runs per inning in innings one through five, and an unlimited number of runs can be scored in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> innings.

### End of Inning

- 1) Record the runs, hits, errors and runners left on base for the half-inning just ending, at the bottom of the column for that inning.
- 2) Make an "X" in the score box of the batter who would have batted next in the line-up. This is to remind you that you need to move over to the next column (i.e. inning) when the team comes up to bat again.
- 3) Check your watch to make sure the game time has not expired.

### Mercy Rules

- 1) There is a “mercy rule” in all division levels: If, at the end of four (4) complete innings (of 3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead) if either team is leading by 15 or more runs, the game is declared over. If t the end five (5) complete innings (of 4½ innings if the home team is ahead), either team is leading by 10 runs or more, the game will be declared over.

### **AFTER THE GAME**

- 1) Don’t be in a hurry to leave, and don’t leave until you’ve completed the scoring process.
- 2) Record the final score of the game, making sure it is clear which team won the game.

## **HOW TO KEEP SCORE**

### **THE MOST IMPORTANT BASICS**

The task of “official scorekeeping” can seem a bit intimidating, but in all but very rare circumstances there are no controversial issues or circumstances that involve the official scorekeeper.

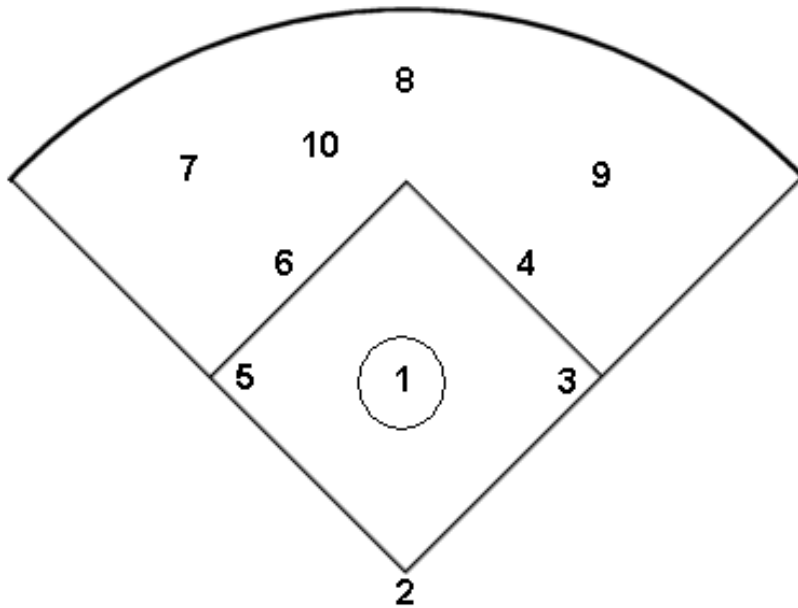
Generally, you should consider the following as the things you need to know at all times:

- 1) **What is the count on the batter?**
- 2) **How many outs are there?**
- 3) **What inning are we in?**
- 4) **What is the score?**

If you pay attention and know those four things at all times, and the scorebook accurately reflects those four things, there will be no issues 99% of the time.

## POSITION NUMBERS

Numbers designate defensive positions on a softball field. An important part of being able to comfortably keep an official scorebook is to be very familiar with these numbers. These numbers are shown below.

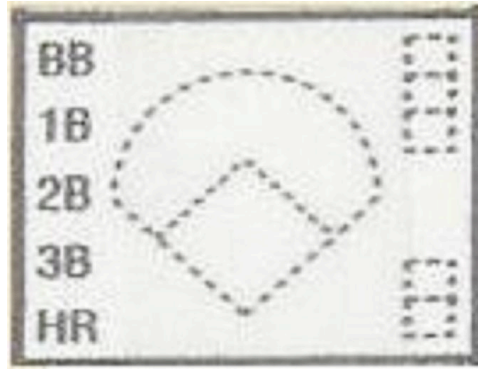


## Position Numbers

1	Pitcher
2	Catcher
3	1 <sup>st</sup> Base
4	2 <sup>nd</sup> Base
5	3 <sup>rd</sup> Base
6	Shortstop
7	Left Field
8	Center Field
9	Right Field
10	Rover (4 <sup>th</sup> Outfielder)

## THE "SCOREBOX"

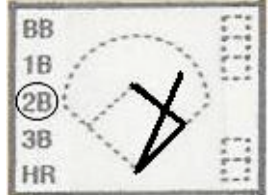
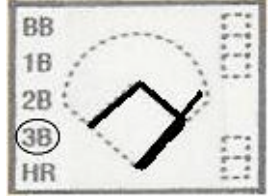
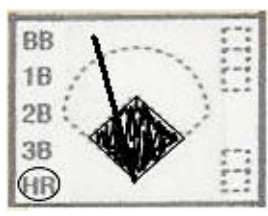
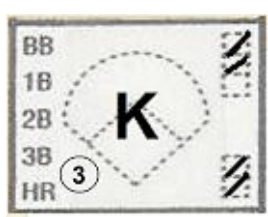
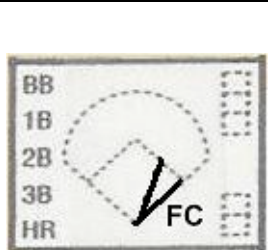
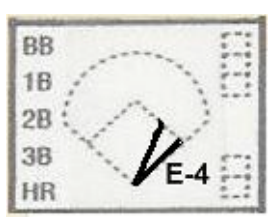
The primary element of the scorebook is what is sometimes called the “score box” – the box for each at-bat where the actions/progress of that player is recorded. Before going through all of the various score box notations. Below is an example:

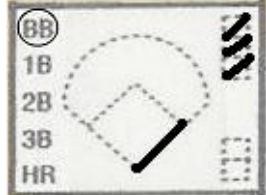
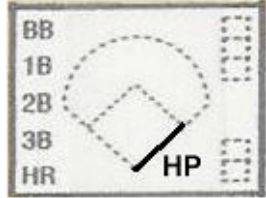
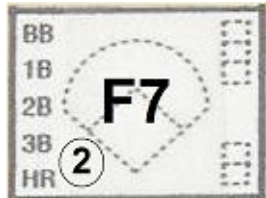
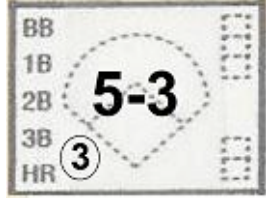
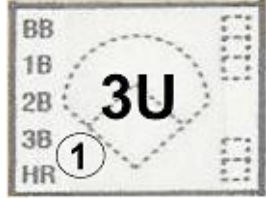
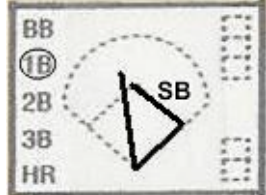


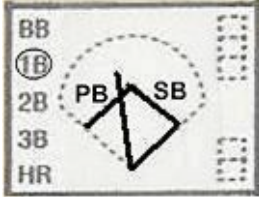
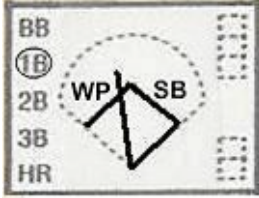
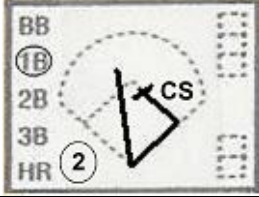
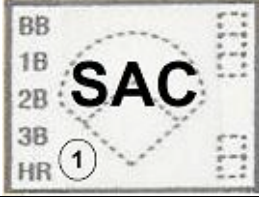
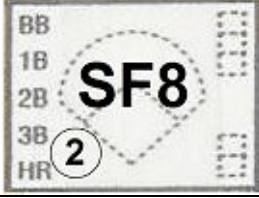

### SCORING NOTATIONS

Below is a description of the most common scoring notations.

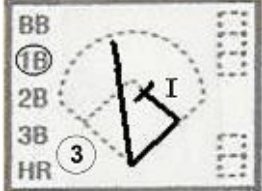
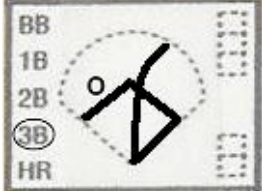
<b><u>DESCRIPTION</u></b>	<b><u>SCOREBOX</u></b>
<p><b><u>Balls and Strikes</u></b> Balls and strikes must be entered as they are pitched, and are recorded in the boxes provided in the score box (usually along the right side, but sometimes in the bottom-left corner). In the example to the right the count is three balls, one strike.</p>	
<p><b><u>Outs</u></b> Any time an out is made, the player who is put out (not the player who hit the ball, if different) is marked with the out number with a circle around it. There is no defined location for the notation in most scorebooks, but the scorekeeper should use a consistent location.</p>	
<p><b><u>Single – 1B</u></b> A single is awarded to the batter if she hits the ball, the fielders fail to put out the batter, the batter advances to first base safely, and advancing to first base is not the result of an error or fielder’s choice (see below). Circling the 1B along the left side of the scorebox denotes a single.</p>	

<p><b><u>Double – 2B</u></b>  A double is awarded to the batter if she hits the ball, the fielders fail to put out the batter, the batter advances to second base safely, and advancing to second base is not the result of an error or a fielder’s choice (see below). Circling the 2B along the left side of the scoreboard denotes a double.</p>	
<p><b><u>Triple – 3B</u></b>  A triple is awarded to the batter if she hits the ball, the fielders fail to put out the batter, the batter advances to third base safely, and advancing to third base is not the result of an error or a fielder’s choice (see below). Circling the 3B along the left side of the score box denotes a triple.</p>	
<p><b><u>Home Run – HR</u></b>  A home run is awarded to the batter if she hits the ball, the fielders fail to put out the batter, the batter advances all the way around the bases, and advancing all the way around the bases is not the result of an error or a fielder’s choice (see below). Circling the HR along the left side of the score box denotes a home run.</p>	
<p><b><u>Strikeout – K</u></b>  A strikeout is when a batter receives three strikes before hitting the ball in play or getting on base through another means. Most scorekeepers designate whether the third strike was swinging or “looking,” with a backwards K designating a strikeout looking and a regular K designating a strikeout swinging.</p>	
<p><b><u>Fielder’s Choice – FC</u></b>  A fielder’s choice is recorded when the batter hits the ball and gets on base because the fielder attempted to put out another runner rather than the batter. A fielder’s choice is given only if it is clear that a decision to attempt to get the batter would have been successful absent an error, otherwise the batter is awarded a base hit. In the example to the right the batter hit a ground ball to shortstop, who threw to another base thus allowing the batter to reach first.</p>	
<p><b><u>Error – E</u></b>  An error is given to a fielder whenever a runner advances to a base that she would not have reached without a mistake by a fielder. The scorekeeper determines whether an error was made, not the umpire, coaches or fans. In youth softball, a lot of consideration should be given to the age/ability level of the players before an error is given.</p>	

<p><b><u>Base on Balls (i.e. Walks) – BB</u></b> Walks are recorded by circling the BB in the upper right corner of the score box. At the 8U level there are no walks – when a batter walks the coach pitches to the batter.</p>	
<p><b><u>Hit-By-Pitch – HP – Fast Pitch</u></b> A batter who is in the batter's box and is struck by a pitch is awarded first base. A notation is made near the line drawn from home to first base. Note: At the 8U level, when a batter is hit by a pitch the count is cleared and the coach pitches to the batter.</p>	
<p><b><u>Fly Out/Pop Out/Line-Out</u></b> When a ball is hit in the air, and is caught in the air for an out, the out can be recorded by simply writing the position number of the player who caught the ball. For clarity, it is sometimes better to indicate a fly ball by an "F" before the position number (e.g. F7), an infield pop fly with a "P" before the position number (e.g. P4), and a line drive with an "LD" before the position number (e.g. LD6).</p>	
<p><b><u>Ground Out</u></b> A ground out is written by writing the number of the position that fielded the ball, then a dash, then the position number of the player who caught the ball for the put out. The score box to the right shows a ground out to the third baseman (for the third out of the inning).</p>	
<p><b><u>Unassisted – U</u></b> When a player makes an out by fielding a ground ball and then tagging a base, or tagging a runner, then the player has made an unassisted out. This is denoted by placing a U after the position number of the player who made the unassisted out (usually the first baseman).</p>	
<p><b><u>Stolen Base – SB – Fast Pitch Only</u></b> A stolen base is awarded when the runner is successful at advancing a base on a pitch, and: a) there is either no passed ball or wild pitch; or b) the runner began the attempt to advance before a passed ball or wild pitch occurred.</p>	

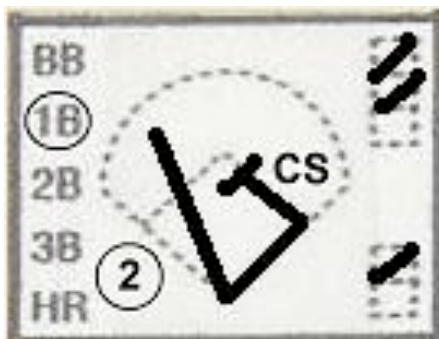
<p><b><u>Passed Ball – PB – Fast Pitch Only</u></b>  A passed ball is noted when a runner advances to the next base because the catcher did not catch a pitch that she should have caught.</p>	
<p><b><u>Wild Pitch – WP – Fast Pitch Only</u></b>  A wild pitch is given when a runner advances to the next base due to a pitch that could not be easily caught by the catcher.</p>	
<p><b><u>Caught Stealing – CS – Fast Pitch Only</u></b>  When a runner attempts to steal, and is thrown out, it is denoted as caught stealing. Use this indication regardless of whether it would have been scored a stolen base, passed ball, or wild pitch had the runner been safe.</p>	
<p><b><u>Sacrifice Bunt – SAC – Fast Pitch Only</u></b>  A sacrifice bunt is noted when a batter is thrown out at first after bunting the ball, and the bunt advances one or more runners to another base.</p>	
<p><b><u>Sacrifice Fly – SF</u></b>  A sacrifice fly occurs when a fly ball is hit and caught for an out, and a runner on base advances and scores a run by “tagging up.” The position number of the player who catches the fly ball is noted.</p>	
<p><b><u>Infield Fly Rule – IFR (Does not apply in 6/8/10U)</u></b>  An infield fly rule is called when there are runners on first and second, or bases loaded, with less than two outs, and the batter hits a pop fly to the infield. The umpire automatically calls the runner out, before the ball comes down, and the batter is out regardless of whether the player catches the pop fly. The position number of the player to whom the ball was hit is noted after IFR.</p>	



<p><b><u>Interference – I</u></b>  Interference occurs when a base runner interferes with a fielder, or a ball in play hits a base runner. The base runner is out; no fielder is mentioned in the score box.</p>	
<p><b><u>Obstruction – O</u></b>  Obstruction will be called when a fielder hinders the progress of a runner. Each base awarded due to an obstruction call is denoted by an O.</p>	

**MORE DETAILED EXAMPLES**

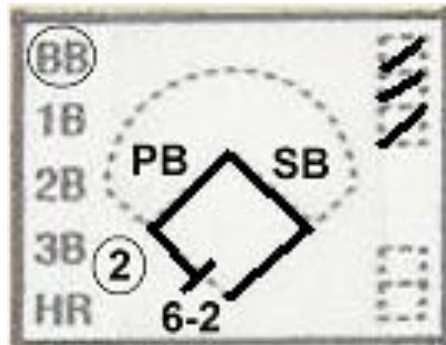
*The box below reflects a player who, with a two balls and one strike count, hit a single to left field, then was subsequently thrown out attempting to steal second base (i.e. caught stealing), for the second out of the inning.*



*The box below reflects a player who, with a three balls and two strike count, hit a ground ball to second base (i.e. 4) who fielded the ball and threw to first base (i.e. 3) for the third out of the inning.*



*The box below reflects a player who walked on four pitches, stole second base, went to third base on a passed ball, then was thrown out at home, for the second out of the inning, when a batter hit a ground ball to the shortstop.*



## A COMPLETE INNING

The chart below shows an entire half-inning, where seven girls came to bat, and how the score boxes would look at the end of the inning.

<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>SCOREBOXES</b>
<p><b>First Batter:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The batter walks on five pitches.</li> </ul>	1	
<p><b>Second Batter:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With a one-and-one count, the runner on first base steals second.</li> <li>With a three-and-two count, the batter hits a double to right-center field, scoring the runner from second base.</li> </ul>	2	
<p><b>Third Batter:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With a three-and-one count, the batter looks at strike two and the second batter is caught attempting to steal third base.</li> <li>The third batter then strikes out, swinging.</li> </ul>	3	
<p><b>Fourth Batter</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On the first pitch of the at-bat, the batter hits a triple down the left field line.</li> </ul>	4	
<p><b>Fifth Batter</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With a two-and-two count, the batter hits a ground ball to shortstop, and the shortstop makes an errant throw over the first baseman's head, allowing the batter to go to second base and the runner to score from third.</li> </ul>	5	
<p><b>Sixth Batter</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With a three-and-one count, the batter hits a "blooper" single to center field, moving the runner on second base to third base.</li> </ul>	6	
<p><b>Seventh Batter</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With a one-and-one count the batter grounds out to the first baseman. (Note: no run is recorded for the runner on third base [player #5], even if she crosses home plate before the third out is made, because the third out was a force out).</li> </ul>	7	
<p><b>TOTALS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>2 Runs</b></li> <li><b>3 Hits</b></li> <li><b>1 Error</b></li> <li><b>2 Left-on-Base</b></li> </ul>	8	