

## **PLAYING RULES AND REQUIREMENTS**

All UGSA playing rules and requirements are set forth below.

### **1. Conduct**

- a. All managers and coaches are responsible for their own conduct as well as that of their players, parents and fans. UGSA will provide a Code of Conduct guideline for all coaches, players, parents and fans. A team will be penalized for behavior and actions by its coaches, players, parents and fans that is not consistent with the UGSA Code of Conduct. Umpires have the right to take whatever action is necessary to uphold the integrity of the game and league. UGSA will review improper conduct and impose penalties and/or sanctions as needed.
- b. Any ejections (player, coach or parent) shall result in an automatic one game suspension (minimum) to be served immediately.

### **2. Playing Requirements**

- a. Any rules not covered in this document shall refer to USA Standard Softball Regulations and can be referenced on any calls by our officials. District 10 USA. Refer to the USA Softball 2020 Manual on the website for any specific questions.
- b. Bases shall be 60' apart, with the pitching rubber at 35' (8U and 10U), 40' (12U) and 43' (14U and up).
- c. All games shall be umpired by one home plate umpire. The exception will be semi-final and championship playoff and tournament games.
- d. All players must have a common uniform, including a shirt with numbers. No player can wear a school uniform or any other uniform that does not match that of her UGSA team. Metal cleats are not permitted.
- e. Managers can opt to bat all players on the team. 8U, 10U and 12U Division teams have option to field 10 defensive players. If a team starts with 10 players, it must end with 10 players. The 10th player cannot be an infielder.
- f. A minimum of 8 players is needed to play an official game. A forfeit will occur when there are 7 or less players. A team may not finish a game with less than 8 players.
- g. A substitute player may be used if agreed upon by the opposing manager if an injury or illness occurs during the game. If a player is removed for one of these reasons that player's batting position is skipped in the lineup and will not be ruled an automatic out. Any player scheduled to arrive late or one that needs to leave early must be identified and announced no later than at ground rules prior

to game start. The late arriving player will be inserted at bottom of the lineup. A late arriving player not identified at ground rules will result in the disqualification of that player and an out will be recorded for each time that player is scheduled to bat during the game.

- h. Each game will be played with a new ball and another ball in good condition supplied by the home team. A 12" fluorescent with a .47 C.O.R rating will be used in all divisions with the exception of the 8U and 10U divisions that will use an 11" ball.
- i. **USA APPROVED BAT WEBSITE:**  
[https://www.teamusa.org/usa/~link.aspx?\\_id=015F4358A30B44368FC142350D112FFF&\\_z=z](https://www.teamusa.org/usa/~link.aspx?_id=015F4358A30B44368FC142350D112FFF&_z=z) Composite Bats are not allowed in the 8U division. The responsibility of Bat Check and Standards will be self-policed by the Coach's of each team as well as the Commissioner's of each town to follow the proper protocols. Anyone found in violation will be fined \$50.00 per bat if deemed appropriate by the UGSA Board. If you have any questions regarding a specific bat you may refer to the USA Website of Approved Bats as well as look up a specific bat on the website to see it's standards.
- j. All batters and base runners must wear helmets with chinstraps. Protective gear including catcher's gear must be NOCSAE stamped and approved. Any player removing her helmet while on base or in the field of play will be called out. Helmets must stay on until the player enters the dugout. Metal cleats are not allowed with the exception of the 18U/HS division.
- k. All catchers must wear catcher's helmet with throat guards or hockey style helmets with extended throat protection.
- l. Under no circumstances may any player (coaches/managers excluded) warm up a pitcher without protective headgear that includes throat protection.
- m. All batting lineups must be recorded in each team's record books indicating player's **first name, last name, and jersey number. Nicknames are NOT acceptable.**
- n. Lineup cards must be filled out for umpire and opposing team prior to game start.
- o. Only the **manager or acting manager** (designated at ground rules) is permitted to question the umpire on any rule interpretation or judgment call. Umpire calls involving balls, strikes, fair/foul balls, safe/out, etc. are not to be questioned whatsoever. Excessive questioning will result in automatic ejection at umpire's discretion of any manager, player, or fan in attendance at the game. Any protest to the umpire must be made before the next pitched ball. Ejections resulting

from excessive questioning of balls as stated above will not be an appealable offense and sanctions will stand as stated on code of conduct.

- p. All games are subject to video recording and the league is authorized to use/release said recordings for whatever purposes the league deems appropriate.

### 3. Legal Players/Teams

- a. All Leagues must be covered under a group accident insurance policy and a general liability insurance program to be eligible.
- b. A player's age as of December 31<sup>st</sup> determines the age division a player is eligible to participate in.
- c. Teams enrolled in the UGSA must submit valid birth certificates for all rostered players by the first game of the playing season or the morning of a tournament.
- d. Each team shall maintain an official scorebook for each game. This book is subject to review by the UGSA in the event of a dispute.
- e. All protests must be filed within 24 hours of the game in question and must be done so in writing to the Board of the UGSA.
- f. Age Brackets. Player's age determined as of January 1st for the season to be played.

8U Division 10U Division 12U Division 14U Division High School Division

- g. All teams must submit a player roster before season starts on forms supplied by UGSA.
- h. All teams must have a roster comprised of players living within the team's **hometown drawing district**. The hometown drawing district can include players enrolled at a public or private school within that drawing district. If a public school, that district must also serve that town's children. Teams or organizations that overlap district boundaries **must** apply to the board for approval of players residing in intersecting districts.
  - i. All teams must represent a **hometown drawing district**, as defined by the UGSA upon the team's inaugural season. Teams may apply for a re-districting of their "hometown" once every three years if necessary. In the event that two teams consider the same district as their own, the team with the longest continuously running charter in that district shall be considered the hometown drawing district team in the event of a dispute. This does not apply to tournament play.

- i. Up to 3 “accepted” players are permitted on any team in 8U, 10U, 12U, and 14U Liberty divisions.
  - i. An “accepted” player must be clearly identified on the team roster form. An “accepted” player shall be defined as a player not considered part of a team’s hometown drawing district even if that player has been on a team outside her hometown drawing district in the past or a “B” level tournament enrolled player
  - ii. “A” level tournament enrolled players are **not permitted** on any team in 8U, 10U, 12U or 14U. Any “B” or “C” level player who competes in three (3) “A” level tournaments within a calendar year will be considered an “A” level tournament player
  - iii. “B” level players are not permitted on any Freedom division team
  - iv. 1 accepted player for Freedom if player comes from a town without a Freedom team and Board approves. There are certain requirements that will have to be met in order to be voted upon.
- j. HS Division **Only** Player Eligibility
  - i. An “A” level player may play for her hometown team and will not count as an accepted player. “A” level players may not play on any other roster or for any other town regardless of where she attends school.
  - ii. Any “B” or “C” level player does not count as an accepted player provided she is playing the hometown she resides in or in the town where the high school she attends is located.
  - iii. Up to 4 players outside of hometown drawing district are permitted on a HS team provided their hometown doesn’t have a team. This must be board approved
- k. A player enrolled on a Liberty team may not play on another Liberty or a Freedom team within the same age division. However, a Freedom player may **guest** play on a Liberty team provided she is also listed on that roster prior to season commencement. Upon playing in the fifth (5th) game that player will be permanently rostered on the Liberty team and may not play back on the Freedom team. This must be brought to your Commissioner’s attention prior to the games in which she is to play.
- l. A player may play on only one team within the same age division. However, a player may guest play on a Freedom or Liberty team in a higher age division for four (4) games providing she is on the roster at the start of the season. Upon the start of the (5th) game that player will be permanently rostered on that team in the higher age division and is not permitted to play on lower age division. This

must be brought to your Commissioners attention prior to the start of the games the player is playing.

- m. A team roster may have no more than 16 players including substitute players for that season. Any additions to your roster after it has been submitted to UGSA must be board approved.
- n. A final roster date will be before your 4th game your roster will be locked. Once the final roster date is reached the team roster cannot be changed or amended.
- o. Any team participating in a game with a player not considered legal within UGSA by- laws will be subject to manager, coach, and/or team ejection from the UGSA.
- p. **ALL PLAYERS** in every division must play at least 50% of regular season games to be eligible for playoffs

#### 4. Duration of Game

- a. **Time Limit/Mercy Rule** Time limit and Mercy Rules remain the same. The only addition is the Hour and Ten Minute Announcement time which can be recognized by either team to the Umpire. At this Announcement time- it is recognized what exact inning the game is in-play and the score limit becomes unlimited at the TOP of the inning from that point on. **THIS DOES NOT MEAN THE GAME IS OVER!** Mercy rule is still in effect. The game may continue up until the 1hr 45minute time limit or the last inning and Declared by UMPIRE.
- b. Game time start will be noted on all schedules. Rosters must be exchanged along with lineup cards to umpire no later than 10 minutes before game start. If the field is not ready for play 31 minutes after scheduled game start time the game can be rescheduled or played if both parties agree. A forfeit will be recorded if a team with a minimum of 8 players does not arrive within 30 minutes after a scheduled game start. Provided there are at least 8 players, umpire, and coach/adult the game will start no later than 30 minutes after its scheduled start time.
- c. Games stopped due to rain or darkness and that have gone for at least 1 complete inning, but less than 5 innings (4 and ½ innings if home team is winning) will be considered incomplete and will resume play from the suspension until completed on a rescheduled date. Lightning strike rule is in effect. Visual lightning strike will delay game for 30 minutes. Umpire will stop play and relay procedures for clearing the field of play. Each lightning strike will restart the clock at 30 minutes until umpire gives the all clear. This is a NJ state rule and must be followed.

- d. Games will have a duration of 7 innings in the 12, 14U and High School divisions. The 8U and 10U divisions will play 6 innings. No new inning may commence after 1 hour and 45 minutes has elapsed following game start time. A new inning commences when the third out is called at the bottom half of any inning. There will be an additional 15 minutes for unusual delays (e.g. rain, lightning, injury, etc.). Games played under lights must end no later than 10:50 pm.
- e. All divisions will play to a five run limit (3 run limit at 10 Freedom) each inning until 70 minutes has elapsed. The home team will alert the umpire that at the conclusion of the inning, the game will become unlimited innings.
- f. In the event a scheduled umpire is 31 minutes late from game start time, the game can be rescheduled or if both managers agree a substitute umpire may be inserted.
- g. Any game that ends due to time limit will be considered an official game with the score recorded as of the last full inning completed, no matter how many innings have been played.
- h. Time permitting, tie games may continue for a maximum of 2 innings until a winner is declared. In the event time has still not elapsed after 2 extra innings have been completed the next and subsequent innings will be played under International Tie-Breaker rules until a winner is declared. Regular season games can end in a tie although all post-season games will be played until a winner is declared.
- i. Managers must encourage their players to move quickly on and off the field between innings so as not to delay the game. Pitchers will be permitted 5 warm-up pitches between innings.
- j. Any sight of lightning will stop play immediately and all player and coaches shall remove themselves from the field and to safety. The game will be considered suspended at that point and not continued until the umpire decides it is safe to resume play.
- k. All post-season games will be played to completion of innings with no time limit limitation. Tie- breaker rules will also apply.

## **5. Playing Rules**

- a. A fielding lineup for 8U, 10U, and 12U Freedom shall consist of 10 fielders (C, P, 1B, 2B, SS, 3B and 4OF). A fielding lineup for 12U Liberty and 14U to 18U shall consist of 9 fielders, with only 3 OF used.
- b. Free substitution is permitted in all division. However, all re-entries must be inserted into their original slot in the batting order. A starter or substitute player

may be re-entered only once in the lineup. DP FLEX player must be in 10th spot in lineup card and scorebook. It must be decided at ground rules if DP FLEX will be used.

- c. The U8 division will be coach pitch and follow Freedom rules and guidelines.
  - i. U8 Division will not be allowed to use composite bats in any games.
- d. U10 Freedom will have Modified Coach Pitch.
  - i. The first three batters of each inning will be kid pitch only, regardless of outcome. After the third batter, the rules revert to modified coach pitch (see article 2)
  - ii. If the pitch count gets to 4 balls on a batter a coach from the batter's team may deliver up to 3 additional pitches. If the batter does not put the ball into play after 3 coach pitches the batter is out. If the batter fouls off the 3rd pitch the batter can receive another pitch. Batter can continue batting if she continues to foul off pitches.
  - iii. Pitcher must remain in the pitchers circle on either side of the coach or behind the coach in order to field any hit balls.
  - iv. The current strike count on the batter remains the same when the coach takes over to pitch. Umpires will not call balls and strikes on any pitch from the coach. However, if the batter swings and misses a coach's pitch it will be a strike.
  - v. There are no walks in Modified Coach Pitch.
  - vi. If the coach touches a batted ball while pitching the ball will be ruled dead. All runners will to their previous bases and the batter will receive another pitch.
  - vii. Coaches must not encourage players to wait until the coach takes over to pitch before swinging at pitches.
  - viii. No stealing or bunting is allowed while a coach is pitching.
- e. Infield fly rule is used in 12U, 14U and High School divisions only.
- f. Stealing of any base is permitted in all divisions except 8U. In addition, 10U Liberty and Freedom divisions cannot advance to home plate unless on a batted ball, bases loaded walk, or hit by pitch. There are no continuous walks in the 8U or 10U divisions.

- g. Base runners may not leave the base until ball is released from pitchers hand. Runners leaving a base before the ball is released from the pitcher's hand will be called out. Once the ball is put into play after being pitched it is considered a live ball and runners can advance until the pitcher receives and secures the ball within the pitching circle.
- h. Drop third strike applies to all divisions except 8U and 10U.
- i. An offensive player may not collide with a defensive player who has the ball in her possession or is waiting to make a play (e.g. catch, tag, throw, or force out). Any offensive player who, in the judgment of the umpire, collides with a defensive player waiting to make a play will be called out. Any offensive player that maliciously and intentionally runs in to a defensive player waiting to make a play will be ejected from the game and will be subject to the procedures of the UGSA by laws.
- j. A courtesy runner with two outs (or 4 runs scored during a 5 run limit inning) in an inning is optional for pitcher on base and **mandatory for a catcher on base**. The courtesy runner shall be determined as the player who made the last recorded out.
- k. A team will be permitted 3 defensive conferences per seven innings. On the 3rd conference the pitcher must be removed and replaced for the remainder of the game. There is one additional defensive conference permitted for each extra inning played. Changing pitchers is not considered a defensive conference.
- l. A team will be permitted only one offensive conference per inning.
- m. Fake tags (in order to deceive the runner) are not permitted and are considered unsportsmanlike conduct. Player and manager will be subject to ejection from game.
- n. All base runners are bound under the obstruction rule.
- o. Any player or manager that intentionally throws a batter any other equipment is subject to ejection. First offense-team warning, thereafter players will be called out by umpire.
- p. Slide or Veer is in effect during all plays at any base. This must be brought up at ground rules and will serve as your first warning, the second can result in player ejection. Players are expected to be knowledgeable and versed on how to properly slide or veer.
- q. Bunting is permitted in all divisions. Fake-Bunt-Slap is not permitted in 8U or 10U division. Penalty for 1st offense is a warning. On 2nd offense player will be called out. No bunting is allowed in 10U Freedom while the coach is pitching.



r. Slap hitting is allowed in 12U, 14U and HS divisions.

s. **8U Adjustments**

- i. Coaches Pitch from the Rubber. Coach pitching is not allowed to coach his team during play.
- ii. One player, as the defensive pitcher will be placed to the right or left of the pitcher (coach) with at least one foot in the 8ft radius of the mound. The outfielders must start the play on the grass.
- iii. No bunting, no slap bunting (fake then swing away or slap), no stealing, no infield fly, no dropped third strike
- iv. Base runners cannot leave the base until ball is hit.
- v. Play is stopped on a batted ball once any defensive player has control of ball inside the pitcher's circle.
- vi. Players less than half way to the next base will be required to return to the previous base. Once the ball is in the pitchers circle the play will be considered dead, therefore no play is to be made on the runners.
- vii. Batters/Runners may attempt to get as many bases as possible on hits to the outfield.
- viii. A player can advance on an overthrow. However a player is liable to be put out while attempting to take an extra base unless the ball has been ruled out of play or the play has been considered dead by the umpire. If the ball has been ruled out of play a player may only advance 1 base.
- ix. Each batter will be given a maximum of 5 pitches to try to hit the ball into play. No balls or strikes will be called. If the ball has not been hit into play after 5 pitches the batter is out. If the batter fouls the 5th pitch, they will receive another pitch & will continue as long as they continue to foul the pitch. Three strikes and you are out. A caught foul tip is handled as a strike unless it is hit above the batters head and caught; it is then considered an out. The catcher must be in a true catcher's position behind home plate before the pitcher pitches the ball.
- x. No other coaches other than the coach who is pitching will be allowed on the field. No defensive coaches will be allowed on the playing field. (One exception is coach standing behind catcher to expedite game)
- xi. Catcher will return ball to pitcher, Catcher must wear full gear. Catcher must start in a true catcher's position. A coach may stand behind home plate to expedite getting the ball to the pitcher. Coach may not assist on a ball in play.

- xii. There is no runner advancement on any overthrow made by an infielder to the outfield.
- xiii. An outfielder must start on the grass and may not make a play at any bag.
- xiv. On an overthrow to first or third- any ball that lands in the outfield is considered no advancement. Any ball that goes out of play will be considered one base advancement for any baserunner. Any ball that remains in the infield (fair or foul) is considered a live ball.

## 6. 10U Rule Changes

- a. **Batter Rules for 10u Freedom Modified Coach-** At the coach's pre-game, it shall be established that for each inning only the first 3 batters to start each half inning for each team will only be allowed to be granted a walk if the pitch count becomes 4 balls. The first 3 batters shall remain kid pitch only. There after regardless if 1,2 or 3 of the first 3 batters did or did not walk the 4<sup>th</sup> batter and on shall only get to base on a batted ball or hit by pitch.
- b. **Stolen Bases for 10U Freedom-** It remains that at the 10u Freedom & Liberty Levels, Second and Third Base are options for stealing. In addition 10u Freedom will now allow 1 stolen base per inning to Home Plate. This will allow a run to be created not by a batted ball. If the attempt is successful and run is scored the Home Plate Steal option is used for that inning. If the attempt is unsuccessful by the offensive team they are allowed to try to steal again. The Home Plate Steal only becomes unavailable on a successful steal. Again this option becomes available each inning 1 time for each team.

## 7. Runs and Scores.

- a. There is a limit of 5 runs per inning or 3 outs whichever comes first. 10U Freedom has a 3 run per inning limit.
- b. Last inning is unlimited when declared by umpire.
- c. Mercy Rule: A team ahead by 10 or more runs after the 5th inning (4 ½ innings if home team is ahead) will be declared winner.
  - i. At 8U level, mercy will can be 12 runs after 4 innings.

## 8. Pitching Regulations

- a. **Pitching Position Required for a Legal Pitch** The pitcher is considered to be in the pitching position when she has her hands apart, her pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate, both feet on the ground within the 24-inch

length of the pitcher's plate, the hips in line with first and third bases, and the catcher in position to receive the pitch.

- b. In distinguishing the pitcher's feet: The pivot foot is the one that maintains contact with the pitcher's plate, absorbs the body's weight, pushes off against the plate during the initial step phase of the pitch, and drags along the ground during the final phase of the pitch.
- c. The stride foot is the one that starts **on or behind** the pitcher's plate and extends forward toward home plate as the pitcher steps to deliver the pitch to the batter. The stride foot must land on or within the lines of the pitcher's lane.
- d. The pitcher may not take the pitching position on the pitcher's plate without being in possession of the ball, and she may not simulate the pitching position with or without the ball when near the pitcher's plate.
- e. The pitcher is considered to be in the pitcher's circle when both her feet are within the circle or on the lines.
  - i. **Taking the Signal-12u to H.S.** Before starting a pitch, the pitcher must comply with the following:
    1. Be in the proper pitching position required for a legal pitch, including any part of each foot in contact with the ground or pitcher's plate completely within the 24-inch length of the pitcher's plate.
    2. The stride foot may be on or behind the pitcher's plate as far back as desired.
    3. Once the pitcher initially sets the toe of her stride foot, she may not step back any farther to increase the distance behind the pitcher's plate.
    4. Hands must be separated.
    5. The ball must be held and remain in one hand, either bare or gloved, in front of, at the side of or behind the body.

ii. Look-Back Rule 12u-H.S

1. The look-back rule is in effect when the ball is live, the batter-runner has touched first base and the pitcher has possession (for example, has the ball in her hand or glove, under her arm or chin, or between her legs) and control of the ball within the pitcher's circle.
2. When a runner is legally off her base after a pitch or as a result of a batter completing her turn at bat and she is in motion as the pitcher takes possession of the ball within the pitcher's circle, the runner may continue moving forward in the direction she is going without stopping; or she may immediately and directly go back in the other direction.
3. If the runner is stopped as the pitcher takes possession of the ball within the pitcher's circle, the runner must **IMMEDIATELY** and **DIRECTLY** go forward or back. **(If the runner proceeds {as long as the pitcher has possession} to the next base- it is the runner's obligation to continue and if the runner stops, that runner shall be called out unless play action was made by the pitcher.)**
4. Only windmill or sling shot style pitching will be permitted. Pitched ball must be made by underhand delivery.
5. A pitcher can hit no more than 3 batters in one inning or a maximum of 5 batters for the entire game. Pitcher must be immediately replaced after hitting the 4th batter in an inning or 6th batter during the game.
6. For safety reasons there will be no pitching, fielding, or hitting activity in the live ball areas in the field during ground rules or pre-game meeting between umpire and managers.

9. Game rescheduling.

- a. Rescheduling must be done within guidelines established by UGSA. Managers must contact opposing team within 48 hours to reschedule.

- b. All game changes must be presented to and approved by the division commissioner. Umpire cancellations and game re-scheduling will be the responsibility of the team manager. All contacts will be forwarded to the umpire and chief of UGSA.
- c. Season start and ending dates will be announced at the managers meetings. For spring seasons, ALL games must be completed by deadline in order to be seeded properly. Any game cancellation due to weather related conditions must have a new makeup date given to the UGSA **no later than 48hrs after cancellation was made**. The [schedule@ugsasoftball.com](mailto:schedule@ugsasoftball.com) email MUST be contacted only after the final game date/time has been established. If an umpire arrives at a game that was not cancelled the team responsible for cancelling will pay the total umpire fee. Games not played by the dates given will be forfeited.
- d. Once a game schedule has been entered into the system a team will have 48 hours to double check and make sure all game days, times, locations are correct. Following this the schedule will be considered FINAL. A \$25 fee will be charged for any changes made after the final schedule is established. Any and all changes must be sent to both [schedule@ugsasoftball.com](mailto:schedule@ugsasoftball.com) and the current President.
- e. ALL fines must be paid prior to playoffs, if fines aren't paid, the team will not be seeded and a forfeit will be awarded. For fall, the fines that occur would have to be paid before the next season in which you are applying to play.
- f. Games changes must be in the following format or they will not be recorded;  
  
**Age division, home team/away team, original date/time/location and change(s) to be made**
- g. Game day cancellations. Head coach MUST contact UIC by text, call or email as well as send email to appropriate addresses with the proper information. Failure to do so will result in team being responsible for payment to umpire that shows up for the game.
- h. Scores- During spring season scores are to be sent to [scores@ugsasoftball.com](mailto:scores@ugsasoftball.com) and must be sent within 48 hours. If a score isn't received, then a 1-1 tie will be entered. If a team wants this changed to the actual score a \$25 fee will be charged.. The score must be reported properly (.ie. divisions, teams, time) or it will not be recorded. During fall season reporting of game scores is not required because there are no playoffs. However, they can be reported if desired. **THE WINNING TEAM IS RESPONSIBLE FOR REPORTING THE SCORE**

Notes:

### **Start of the Pitch**

Rolling (not tossing) the ball is legal as long as contact is maintained with the hand (including the wrist).

A ball dropped by the pitcher before her hands have come together and then separated shall be live and the base runner(s) may advance with liability to be put out.

While in the pitching position and taking the signal, the pitcher must take or appear to take a signal.

The signal need not come from the catcher.

After receiving the signal, the pitcher's hands must come together in view of the plate umpire for not more than five seconds.

The pitch officially begins and cannot be discontinued once the hands have separated after coming together.

The pitching motion consists of the start of the pitch, windup, step/stride, and delivery.

### **Step/Stride**

The pitcher must take only one step/stride forward toward home plate as she delivers the pitch.

A portion of the stride foot must remain in contact with the ground at all times before beginning the forward step.

Note: Once the pitcher has established her stride foot, simply dropping or rocking onto her heel is not a violation.

It is legal to slide the pivot foot forward or across the pitcher's plate provided contact with the pitcher's plate is maintained.

Exception: Physical contact with the pitcher's plate may be lost if all of the following apply:

The pivot foot is in contact with the pitcher's plate when the pitcher turns, twists or bends her pivot foot; If the pivot foot has not reduced the distance to home plate; and

The pivot foot must remain in contact with the ground; however, rocking onto either the toe or heel is allowed ♦

### **Leaping is not allowed**

The pitcher may not become airborne on the initial drive from the pitcher's plate.

The pivot foot must slide/drag on the ground.

The pitcher is not allowed to hop or drag to a replant (crowhop), gain a second starting point and push off her pivot foot. Once having lost contact with the pitcher's plate, the pivot foot may trail on the ground but may not bear weight again until the pitch is released

### **Delivery**

The delivery phase of the pitch begins when the hands separate and ends with release of the pitch.

In delivering the ball to the batter, the pitcher must comply with the following: Once the hands have separated and the pitching arm begins the clockwise motion that will result in the release of the pitch, not more than 1½ revolutions of the pitching arm may occur. The pitcher's step/stride to the batter must be continuous.

The pitch shall be released under hand and the hand shall travel below the hip.

The release of the pitch and follow-through of the hand and wrist must be forward.

The pitcher may not make another arm revolution after releasing the ball

A base on balls or a dropped third strike is treated as a base hit as long as the batter-runner continues past first base.

When the pitcher takes possession of the ball within the pitcher's circle:

A runner standing off her base must immediately return to the base she last occupied or advance to the next base

A runner who starts back to the base she last occupied or starts forward toward the next base shall not stop or reverse direction.

A runner may not step off any base after stopping at it.

The batter-runner, after overrunning first base, may not retouch the base and advance toward second base.

The batter-runner, after overrunning first base, must immediately return nonstop to first base or, if she does not retouch first base, must make an attempt to advance to second.

If after passing the base, the batter-runner is heading back toward first base within the baseline extended, she may make a decision to go to either base.

However, stepping beyond the extended baseline in foul territory commits her to first base while stepping beyond the baseline toward the second-base side commits her to second base.

The batter-runner may round first base, stop, and make an immediate decision to advance or return without again stopping or reversing direction.

Once the runner has determined a direction, she may not reverse direction unless the pitcher or throw the ball from within the pitcher's circle or carry the ball outside the pitcher's circle

Has one foot completely outside the pitcher's circle, on the ground, while in possession of the ball

Sets the ball on the ground or no longer has the ball in her possession and control (including handing it to another player)

Makes a play on the runner or another runner

Note: When the pitcher's circle is not visible, the umpire must use good judgment in determining if she would or would not be in the circle.

The pitcher is considered to have made a play if: **She fakes a throw**

Note: Raising the throwing arm into throwing position is considered a fake throw regardless of whether the pitcher's arm moves forward.

She makes any aggressive body movement toward the runner (for example, steps toward the runner, head and body fakes toward the runner)

There is no obligation on the part of the pitcher to look, fake or throw in order to force the runner to comply with the look-back rule The obligation to comply rests solely with the runner.