

2025 Clayton Seniors 68+ Softball Rules

Working draft

Ball:

- Any softball meeting the 12" maximum compression .375/.44 core with a composite leather cover are considered acceptable for league play.
- Each team provides a new ball and a good backup clearly marked for their team. These balls shall be placed in the pitching screen base at the beginning of the game.
- The pitcher will only pitch the batting team's balls, so that each team will hit their own balls and be responsible to replace balls lost over the fence.
- For the 2024 season, no softballs purchased from the company Short Porch shall be allowed.

Field:

- 70' baselines, 50' pitching rubber, 21" x 35" Strike Zone Mat, Home Scoring plate located 8' from home plate and 70 from 3rd base.
- 3rd baseline commitment line 30' from home scoring plate.
 - Exception: If a park can only accommodate a 65' baseline then it will be considered acceptable.

Players:

- A complete roster of all possible players for the year, including age and jersey number, shall be shared with all teams at their first meeting. (Only Players 58 or older). Players shall be prepared to show ID at any time. Copy of team rosters shall also be submitted to league via email to _____ by no later than March 31, 2025 in order for the rosters to be distributed to all team managers.
- A new player to a team during the year must present an ID at his first game and the league notified before his first game. Each team shall field 11 players and may have unlimited DHs, which can rotate in and out of the field as long as they are in the 1st inning lineup or have entered as a substitution.
- If a team does not have a minimum of 11 players, the opposing team may supply them with a player. If a player is injured during a game and cannot continue to play, if a substitute is not entered in the lineup, his spot in the batting order shall be skipped with no penalty. If a player voluntarily leaves a game and a substitute is not available, his spot in the batting order shall be considered an out. There shall be no blending of rosters during league games or tournaments.

Umpires:

- Umpire(s) shall be provided by each team (1 home, 1 field). Base coaches at 1st and 3rd are empowered to make calls in the absence of a field umpire.
- Calls at second base shall be first called by the home umpire or coach having the best view. If there is a question about a call at a base, the home umpire and field umpire or coach making the call shall get together to discuss what they saw. Defensive players shall not participate in this conversation, unless asked to do so.

2025 Clayton Seniors 68+ Softball Rules

Working draft

CSS League Rules:

The SPA rule book shall be used for our official rules for anything not covered by the following:

- 1) **STARTING COUNT:** Start w/0,0 Count with no courtesy foul. A pitch striking any part of the Strike Zone Mat will be considered a called strike. The legal height of a pitch is between six feet (6') minimum and twelve feet (12') maximum.
- 2) **RUNS PER INNING:** 5 runs max per inning 1-6, no limit in 7th.
- 3) **EXTRA INNINGS:** Limit 2 extra innings per game. Start inning 8 and if necessary, inning 9 w/previous last batter, or pinch runner if the pinch runner ran from home for that batter in the previous at bat, on 2nd base. If still tied after 9 innings a tie game is called.
- 4) **BASERUNNING**
 - i) No overruns of 2nd or 3rd base. Any runner overrunning 2nd or 3rd base can be tagged out.
 - ii) Sliding is allowed going to or coming back to a base. Sliding to take out a defensive player (i.e. a late slide; a pop-up slide; a slide ending beyond the base; a slide where the base is not within reach) is not allowed and the runner will be called out.
 - iii) **VEERING AWAY:** On an obvious force play at second or third, the runner must turn out of the base path opposite of the direction the fielder at the base is moving in order to avoid a collision, unless he slides. (refer to 4. ii).
 - iv) If the runner stays in the base path without sliding or veering away, thus obstructing the defensive player from making a clear throw to complete the double play, the umpire may call interference and declare the completion of the double play.
 - v) If the runner turns out as required to avoid a collision and the defensive player receiving the throw at second/third base drops the ball the runner shall be automatically awarded second/third base. The drop must be on the receiving of the ball and not on the transfer in order to throw the ball to first base. Even after a defensive player drops the ball, they may pick the ball up and complete their throw to another base in an attempt to throw out that runner. The runner may advance to next base, after touching that base.
 - vi) Runners on third base may step off into foul territory (but no closer to home) for the pitch to protect themselves from possible balls hit in their direction. Once the ball is in play, they must retouch third base before proceeding home or be declared out.
 - (1) If the runner is hit with a batted ball in foul territory the play is declared dead but the runner is not out.
 - (2) When the runner is in foul territory, he must give way to the defensive player making a play on a foul ball or be called for interference, making the batter out.
 - vii) Runners on first base may step off into foul territory for the pitch to protect themselves from possible balls hit in their direction. Once the ball is in play, they must retouch first base before proceeding to second base or be declared out.
 - (1) If the runner is hit with a batted ball in foul territory the play is declared dead but the runner is not out.
 - (2) When the runner is in foul territory, he must give way to the defensive player making a play on a foul ball or be called for interference, making the batter out.

2025 Clayton Seniors 68+ Softball Rules

Working draft

5) COURTESY RUNNERS

- i) When running from home the runner starts behind line as shown in the field specifications located on page 6.
- ii) No team on offense shall utilize more than four (4) pinch runners in innings one through six. Subsequently, no more than six (6) pinch runners may be utilized in the seventh inning or any subsequent open innings.
- iii) A player may only be a courtesy runner once per inning, except in the 7th or later inning.
- iv) If a team bats around in the 7th or later inning, the same player must again run for the SAME batter (if needed) as in the first time through the line-up. (NOTE: You cannot courtesy run for a courtesy runner.)
- v) A courtesy runner on base when due at bat is ruled out and must come off the field but may still bat and maintain place in batting order.
- vi) A courtesy runner does not have to be in the lineup. (A player sitting on the bench may be a courtesy runner)

6) SUBSTITUTIONS AND RE-ENTRY: shall follow the SPA rules.

- i) SPA RE-ENTRY RULE: The original starter may be withdrawn from the game and re-entered once, provided that the re-entered player occupies his/her original position in the batting order. Substitutes may not be re-entered.
- ii) NOTE: The original player and his/her substitute cannot be in the game at the same time except as courtesy runners. Violation of the re-entry rule results in the use of an illegal substitute. The penalty for use of an illegal substitute shall be the immediate ejection of the illegal substitute when the violation is brought to the attention of the umpire by the offended team. Violation of the re-entry rule is handled as an appeal.

7) FORCE PLAYS AT HOME: The defensive player need only be in contact with any part of the strike zone mat and in possession of the ball.

8) PITCHING SCREEN

- i) A Pitching Screen must be used. The screen must be 3' portable type.
- ii) Corner of the screen shall be placed whereas it covers a minimum of ½ of the width of the pitching rubber. The screen may cover as much as all of the rubber, but not be moved wider than a minimum of covering ½ of the width of the pitching rubber.
- iii) The screen shall be placed in front of the rubber exactly a distance of five feet (5') and shall not be moved during the inning unless to accommodate a left- or right-handed pitcher.
- iv) A batted ball hitting the screen is dead and a strike. If the batter has two strikes the ball is dead and the at bat continues.

9) PITCHING REQUIREMENTS

- i) Pitcher must start delivery of pitch making contact with the pitching rubber or up to 6 feet behind the rubber.
- ii) He may step outside of his box with his throwing motion provided that at the time of the release of the ball at least one foot is either in contact with the pitching rubber, or behind as allowed and that

2025 Clayton Seniors 68+ Softball Rules

Working draft

foot cannot be outside of two imaginary lines drawn perpendicular to the outside corners of the rubber.

- iii) A six (6') foot mark shall be established behind the rubber by the field crew prior to the start of the games.
 - iv) Pitchers cannot wear a batting glove on their pitching hand.
 - v) The pitcher shall present the ball and pause at least one second before pitch delivery (No quick pitches or running to make the pitch)
- 10) **TIME LIMITS or MERCY RULES:** No time limits or mercy rules apply. However, to expedite play, if a team scores a fifth run in an inning and the ball goes past the outfielders, let the team coming on the field retrieve the ball, instead of the on-field team having to chase down a ball. This supports speeding up the game. Additionally, it is requested that teams have their lineups ready, decide who will provide their team's umpiring support, try to move off/on the field in an expedient manner and definitely have a plan for substitute runners so the defensive team doesn't have to spend time waiting on the substitute runners to be provided. It is also requested that teams try to limit the between game breaks to around fifteen minutes.
- 11) **FLIP-FLOP RULE:** Flip-Flop rule will be used. If the home team is behind by 7 runs or more at the end of 6 innings, the home team will bat first in the 7th inning.
- 12) **MINIMUM AGE:** The minimum age limit for a player to be able to participate in league play is sixty-eight (68) years old. A player must be 68 years old by the end of the calendar year in which they participate.
- 13) **FOUL BALLS:** A foul ball/tip legally caught by a defensive player will be considered as an out regardless of the height of the foul ball/tip.
- 14) **TEAM EQUIPMENT:** For the safety of all players bats, balls and equipment shall be kept outside the fence, or inside the dugout.
- 15) **LEAGUE RAINOUTS:**
- i) It will be the responsibility of the team closest to a playing venue to determine if games can be played there. The manager of that team will notify the other team manager(s) as early as possible if games cannot be played. For games played in Clayton/Rabun County, Athletic Director, Amy Caraway, does not want to have communication with more than one person. So, Doug Turner and Amy will communicate, and Doug will notify the 4 team's managers (via text and/or email) playing that day if the fields will not be playable. Keep in mind that the Clayton fields drain well, and they can have them ready to play most days, unless it is raining hard that morning. League Rainouts will be made up on the rain out date and/or one of the three holiday dates that are available on the schedule and agreed upon by the team managers. As a third option, a league rainout may be made up on a non-league date.

2025 Clayton Seniors 68+ Softball Rules

Working draft

- ii) Late notification of games being postponing due to “lack of players” for reasons other than Covid or other health reasons which may affect the whole team, or the opposing team. It was determined that teams who postpone games for “lack of players” inside of a forty-eight (48) hour window of game time would be required to forfeit the game and take the two (2) forfeit losses.

YEAREND TOURNAMENT:

The yearend tournament format will be determined at a later date as declared by a majority vote of the team managers. A decision will be made, at a later date, regarding the use of paid umpires for the year-end tournament.

For a roster player to be eligible to play in the tournament, they must have played in parts of 3 league doubleheaders (3 different Mondays) during the year. (i.e.: players cannot be added to the roster for the tournament).

