

RULE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SCHOOL BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL

The baseball rule is the first column in each numbered item and the softball rule is in the second column.

1.	In baseball, a player is in play if one foot is in even if the other foot is out.	In softball, a player must have both feet in play.
2.	A starting or relief pitcher must pitch to one batter or they cannot return to the mound.	A pitcher may be replaced before pitching to one batter with no penalty.
3.	Bases are 90 feet apart; fences are 300 feet.	Bases are 60 feet apart; fences are 200 feet.
4.	The pitching distance is 60 feet 6 inches; the batter's box is 6 feet by 4 feet.	The pitching distance is 40 (43 in FL) feet and the box is 7 feet by 3 feet.
5.	The on deck circle should be 37 feet from home plate.	The circle should be 30 feet away.
6.	The ball is 9 inches with a COR of .555.	The ball is 12 inches, COR .47 and 375 lbs. of compression.
7.	Non-wood bats must be BESR approved; wood bats may have a roughened handle or a safety grip.	Bats must be ASA approved and all must have a safety grip.
8.	Each player must wear a cap or helmet.	Caps, headbands, or visors are optional.
9.	The pitcher cannot have white or gray exposed shirt sleeves or any distracting item on either hand or arm.	The pitcher cannot wear any distracting item on the pitching hand, arm, or either thigh; the sleeves do not matter.
10.	The coach or the catcher may request an intentional walk.	The pitches must be thrown until the batter has four balls.
11.	A thrown ball is caught if it is in the glove even if the ball is touching the ground.	A thrown ball in the fielder's glove must be picked up from the ground before it is a catch.
12.	A foul tip can be caught by any infielder after it touches the catcher's glove.	A foul tip can only be caught by the catcher.
13.	A runner on a force play is out if they do not slide directly toward the base or run away from the fielder.	There is no requirement to slide on a force play but the runner is out if they interfere.

14.	The strike zone is from half way between the shoulders and the waist to the knees.	The zone is from the forward armpit to the top of the knees.
15.	Substitutes cannot re-enter the game.	All players can re-enter once.
16.	A designated hitter can be used.	A designated player/flex option can be used.
17.	The coach must be in team uniform to enter the playing field.	The coach may be in team uniform or proper coaching attire.
18.	Team Warning /Ejection Rule 3 section 3 so many differences it is	Team Warning /Ejection Rule 3 section 6 impractical to list each one.
19.	A balk is a dead ball.	A delivered illegal pitch is a delayed dead ball.
20.	A pitch dropped during the motion is a balk.	A dropped pitch is a ball and is live.
21.	A pitcher has 8 warm-up pitches upon entry; 5 before each following inning.	The pitcher has 5 warm-up pitches on entry and before each inning
22.	Not reporting a legal substitute to the plate umpire is not penalized.	Not reporting a sub is a team warning the first time and each one after that is restricted to the dugout.
23.	There is no time limit.	Junior varsity games may have a 90- minute time limit.
24.	The batter must keep one foot in the box between pitches.	The batter may step out subject to the 10-second rule.
25.	When the batter interferes with the catcher's play on a runner, the runner is out if there is less than two outs; with two outs, the batter is out.	The batter, who interferes with a catcher's play, is out in all situations.
26.	The batter-runner may stop or retreat to avoid or delay being tagged out.	The batter-runner is out if they step back to delay a tag.
27.	A walked batter is out if they are tagged after overrunning first base.	A walked batter may overrun 1st base safely if they do not fake toward 2nd.

28.	An obstructed runner gets a one base award.	An obstructed runner gets only where they would have safely advanced.
29.	The third strike on a batter can be caught by another infielder after it touches the catcher's glove.	The catcher must catch the third strike.
30.	A runner on base is out if hit by a batted ball in front of the infielders.	A runner on base is not out if hit by a batted ball unless they intentionally get hit or interfere with a play.
31.	A thrown ball that goes out of play on the first play by an infielder is a 2 base award for each runner from their position at the time of the pitch.	A thrown ball that goes out of play from any fielder is a 2 base award for each runner from their position at the time of the throw.
32.	Wood bats are 2 3/4 inches or less in diameter; all non-wood bats are 2 5/8 inches or less.	All softball bats are 2 1/4 inches or less.
33.	A team that goes down to 8 players cannot return to 9 players.	A team that goes down to 8 players can return to 9 players if another eligible player arrives.