



SOFTBALL LOB BALL/SLO PITCH/THREE PITCH

Baseball (hardball) is not to be played.

Prior to the activity or game, the Program Leader is to assess the skills of the participants relating to the activity or game. Where a participant does not demonstrate a safe knowledge of the skills, the Program Leader must demonstrate proper execution of the skills or choose a different activity or game.

EQUIPMENT

- A fully stocked first aid kit is readily accessible.
- A working communication device (e.g. cell phone) is accessible.
- Determine that all equipment is safe for use.

BATS:

- Check wooden bats for cracks. All bats must have proper grips.
- Bats must comply with the relevant provincial or national rules (e.g. current Slo-Pitch Ontario Association (SPO) rules or Amateur Softball Association bat policy ASA2004).

BALLS:

- Use a softball that is appropriate to the skill level of the participants.

BASES:

- A safety bag is to be used at first base.
- The bases are to be properly secured.
- All equipment that is not in use must be kept out of the activity area.

PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT FOR PLAYERS:

- The catcher is to wear a mask with a throat protector if playing in front of the screen. If the catcher is playing behind a screen, this equipment is not required.
- The batter, on-deck batter, bat boy/girl, base runners and active base coaches must wear a properly fitting batting helmet with flaps covering both ears certified by a recognized safety standards association.

CLOTHING/FOOTWEAR

- All participants must wear appropriate athletic footwear (e.g. running shoes with a flat rubber sole that is secured to the foot). Running shoes with higher heels, wheels, rubber, plastic, metal cleats, open toes, or open heels are not appropriate.

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- Other than medical alert jewelry, jewelry cannot be worn.

▶ FACILITIES

- Determine that all facilities are safe for use.
- The activity site is well away from vehicle traffic.
- A pre-activity check of the playing field has been made for hazards (e.g. holes, severely uneven surfaces, glass, rocks etc).
- The playing field provides safe traction.
- Backstops and fences are checked for hazards (e.g. protruding posts or wires, holes in fences).

WHERE HAZARDS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED:

- Inform the Program Supervisor immediately.
- Select the safest alternative for the participants, cancel the activity, move the activity to another location or inform participants of the hazard and modify the activity to avoid the hazards (e.g. mark hazards with cones, cover holes in fence with mats).

▶ SPECIAL RULES/INSTRUCTIONS

- Participants with medical conditions and/or physical limitations have been identified with appropriate accommodations being implemented for their safe participation.
- An emergency action plan is ready for implementation in case of an accident or injury.
- Prior to the activity participants have been informed of:
- Possible risks associated with the activity,
 - Ways of managing the risks,
 - Established rules and procedures for safe participation.
- A pre-activity warm up and a post-activity cool down are included with the activity.
- Adequate liquid replacement is accessible for the participants.
- If more than one activity is going on, determine that there is a safe distance between the activities.
- Parents/guardians are aware of any off-site activity and the means of transportation used.

OUTSIDE ACTIVITY | WEATHER CONDITIONS:

- Know the emergency response to severe weather conditions (e.g. lightning, tornadoes) and provide appropriate instruction to the participants.
- Before activity take into consideration:
- The temperature of the day,
 - The length of time participants will be vigorously active.
- Participants are to be made aware of ways to protect themselves from:
- UV rays (e.g. hats, sunglasses, sunscreen),
 - Insects (e.g. mosquitoes repellent).

**SPECIFIC SOFTBALL SAFETY CRITERIA:**

- The participants are to be taught to lie down or drop the bat after hitting, not to release it during the follow-through of the swing.
- The role of the catcher is to retrieve a ball and return it to the pitcher. **The catcher is not intended to catch a missed pitch.**
- Non-fielding players are to be on the bench or in the designated area of the bench.
- Umpires are not to be positioned behind home plate; they are to stand behind the pitcher or the screen or outside the baselines.
- To avoid the dangers of a slipped bat, non-fielding players are to stand well back of the batter's box or behind a screen or fence. Keep fingers away from screen.
- Use a commitment line on the third-base line.
- All plays at home plate are to be forced plays.
- Tagging at home plate is not permitted.

IF PLAYING INSIDE A GYMNASIUM, ADHERE TO THE FOLLOWING SAFETY CRITERIA:

- The participants have been made aware of the location of fire alarms, fire exits and alternate escape routes.
- The playing area is free of all obstacles (e.g. tables, chairs).
- The playing surface provides safe traction.
- In the gym, check that all floor plugs are in place.
- Softball, baseball, aluminum, wooden or cricket bats may not be used. If a bat is used, it is to be foam, plastic or another low impact material.
- Use only low impact, limited bounce, low flight balls (e.g. whiffle, soft-skinned, paper, etc.).
- Check that the size of the gym can accommodate the activities and that the walls or stage do not present a safety hazard. Modify the activity, if necessary.
- Set boundaries for activities a safe distance from the walls.
- Games require a participant to hit for distance are not permitted.

► SUPERVISION

ON-SITE SUPERVISION IS REQUIRED

- The Program Leader circulates throughout the activity site and is always in visual contact of the participants.
- The Program Leader meets the criteria for effective on-site supervision (refer to the Resource Materials Section: Appendix B - Supervision).