

Softball is a popular game in America. This game is invented by a member of Farra-gut Boat club George W. Hencoce in Chicago. This game began in the year 1920. This game was played in open air in Canada after that it became more popular

Up to 1895 this game was played with different names like Kitten ball, Diamond ball. Mush ball, Fatt Ball, big ball, Night ball recreational ball, play ground ball etc.

In 1900 first time official rules of the game were framed. In 1908 National rules were declared. First time in 1908 competition was organised by National amateur play ground ball association. First time this game was declared as soft ball by Walter Hensen, YMCA and National recreation congress in 1926. International committee was formed in 1933 to frame a simple and effective rules of the game. who framed standard rules of the game. Upto 1950 this game became more popular. First time world championship for women was organised in Melborn (Australlia) is 1956, where is for men it was organised in Maxico city in 1966.

Soft ball game in India was started by Shri Dasharathmal Mehta of Jodhpur (Rajasthan). He was a member of American library. So he studied American books and literature of soft ball in library. He made softball game famous as recreational game among youth of Jodhpur. This game was spread in 1954. Dasharathmal Mehta has framed softball association on 21st November, 1961. First Inter state soft ball competetion was held under the banner of softball Association of India in 1967. In this tournament teams of Rajasthan, Delhi, Maharashtra and Andra Pradesh took part with the effort of YMCA game was spread in India.

Indian team had participated in Asian championship which was held in Japan in 1985. Men and women team had participated in Phillipaince in 1997.

This game has more recreational aspect. Because of small ground and less costly equipment the game became very famous.

This game is managed by International softball federation at world level, Head office of federation is situated in Gklahoma (USA).

(1) Ground : Softball ground is like kite shape. Diameter of ground is 225 feet (68.96 mts) for men and 200 feet (60.96 mts) for women. It shall be levelled and unobstructed area, which is shown in figure.

(6) Batter shall stand in batter box with slager (bat) is compulsory. Both sides of home plate 7 feet (2.3 mts) long and 3 feet (0.91 mts) wide letter box is drawn.

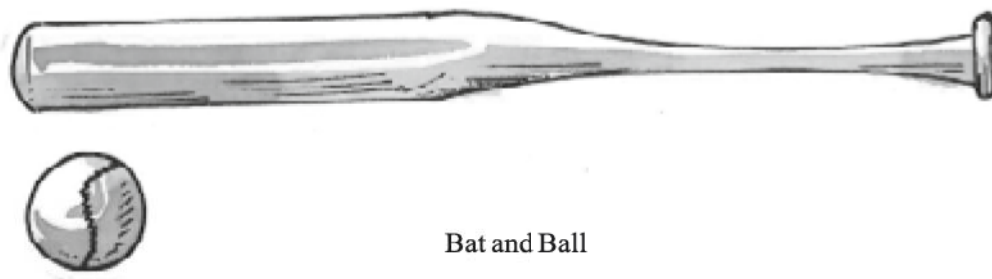
(7) Catcher box shall mark behind the home plate and letter box. The measurement of catcher box is 10 feet (3.05 mts) long and 8 feet 5 inches (2.57 mts) wide.

(8) Behind the end line of first and third base 8 feet (2.44 mts) away from the home plate parellel to base line 15 feet (4.51 mts) long coaches box is marked.

(9) Home plate shall be five sided figure. The width of plate is 17 inches (43.18 cm) long straight line is of 8 inches (21.59 cm) and bent line is of 12 inches (30.48 cm)

(10) Other bases except home plate are of 15 inches (38.10 cm) square.

(2) Equipment : Following equipments are used for soft ball.



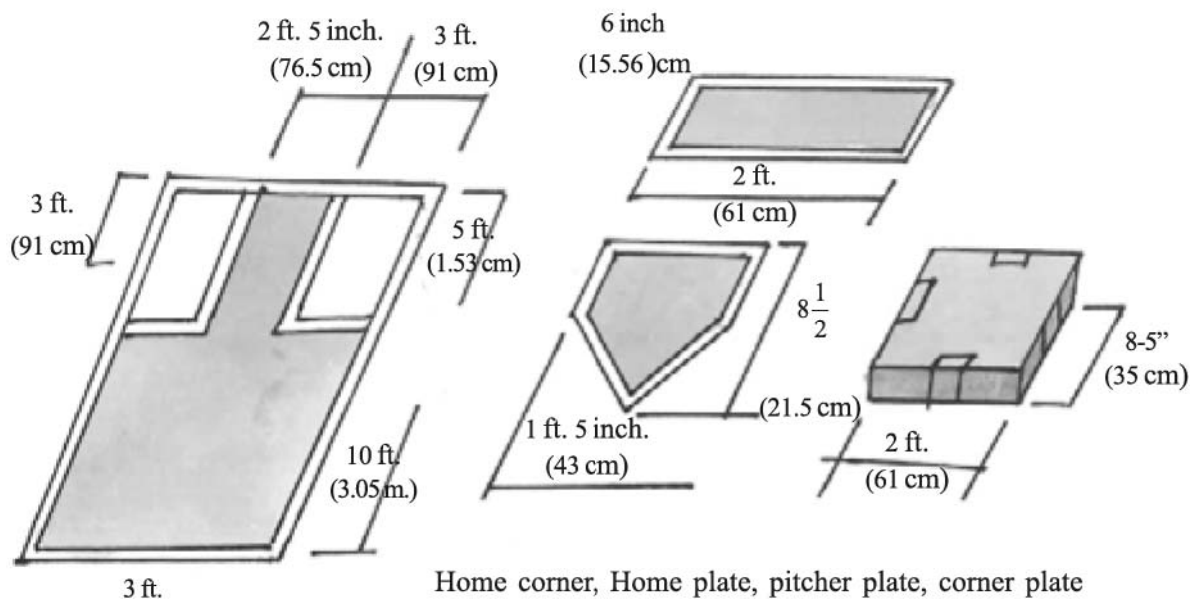
Bat and Ball

(i) Slager (Bat) : To hit the ball, a bat is used. The bat shall be round and shall be smooth. Front part of the bat is thick and end part shall be thin. Maximum length of bat is 34 inches. Diameter of thick part of bat is 2.5 inches. Bat shall be of metal, bumboo, plastic, fibre glass, ceramic or any other composite materials surface shall be soft and safe, shall to have a safety knot of a minimum of 0.6 mm protruding at a 90 degree angle from the handle. Approved bat by ISF shall be used.

(ii) Ball : Ball shall be a regular, smooth - seamed concealed stitched and flat surface ball. Shall have a centre core made of either no. 1 quality long, fibre kapok, 4 mixture of cork and rubber, a polymerethane mixture circumference of the ball shall be better $11\frac{7}{8}$ inches and $11\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Weight shall be between 6 once and $6\frac{3}{4}$ ounces shall be smooth - seamed, concealed stitched or flat surface ball. If cover of ball is made of synthetic material is allowed. ISF approved ball shall be used in compation.

(iii) Home Plate : Plate shall be made of rubber or suitable material. It shall be a five sided figure. Plate is 17 inches wide, long straight line is of $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches and bent line is of 12 inches.

(iv) Pitcher's Plate : The pitcher's plate shall be of rubber or wood. Plate is 2 feet long and 6 inches wide. The top of the pitcher's plate shall be level with the ground. It is 46 feet away from the home plate for men and 40 feet for women.



(v) Base Plate : The bases plate other than home plate shall be of 15×15 inches square. Thickness shall not be more than 5 inches and shall be made of canvas or other suitable material. The bases shall be securely fastened in position.

(vi) Gloves : Any player may wear a gloves.

(vii) Shoes : A shoe shall be considered official, if it is made with either canvas or leather.

(viii) Masks (Head Guards) : All catchers must wear masks, throat protector and helmet. Head guards shall be made of leather and net.

(ix) Chest Guard : Catcher, home plate officials and women players shall wear the chest guard . It protects chest and abdomin. It shall be made from cotton, foam, rubber or thermocol and it is covered by canvas. To fix the guard belts are used. Players also use skin guards.

(3) Skills : Following are the main skills of soft ball game. It includes throwing, catching pitching batting, fielding, bunting, base running. In our syllabus only throwing, catching and pitching are included, but when players play the game they will also use other skills. During games teachers should taught these skills.

(1) Throwing : If throwing action is weak or lack of accuracy it spoils the game. The ball should be thrown correctly and fast. There are different types of throwing.

(i) Over head throw : Right handed thrower, player should keep left hand near the bent foot. While throwing use the body weight, keep left hand forward and throw the ball and bring right leg forward.

(ii) Side arm throwing : Throwing action is as per the overhead throw, but the ball should be thrown by side way.

(iii) Underhand throwing : Bring right hand backward to forward near the knee. Keep left leg forward and bring left hand forward and all keep right leg forward. This action shall be performed in rhythm and fast.

(2) Catching : A catch is a legally caught ball which occurs when the fielder catches a batted or thrown ball with his hands or gloves. A batted ball or ball is thrown by his team mates is caught will help in making player out or it also helps stopping the runs. This is a part of fielding skills. When ball is coming down the player has to think of height and speed of ball and accordingly he should run at proper place. Sometime catching action should perform moving front or back. If possible both hands shall be used to catch the ball. Keep both the palm closer both thumbs and small fingers are joined and keep other fingers open and make a cup shape. As soon as ball touches the hands take hands little back to reduce the speed of ball and should catch the ball. Sometime bending down or over head ball shall of caught by bending forward and taking jump.

(3) Pitching : As bowler is important in cricket to make a player out, same way pitching is also important in soft ball.

A pitch is the act performed by the pitcher in delivering the ball to the batter. It is called pitching. While performing pitching pitcher shall keep both the legs on the plate, catch the ball with both hands, extends hands towards batter. While throwing the ball, keep left leg forward, take right hand backward and forward then leave the ball between knees and shoulders of batter, ball should have also passed over the home plate.

The action of pitching should be performed with alertness. If pitcher delivers right of effective ball then batter can not hit the ball easily. Pitcher shall spin the ball or throwing the ball fast to make a batter confused.

(4) Officials in Softball : Following are the officials in softball :

(1) Home Plate Umpire

(2) Base Umpires

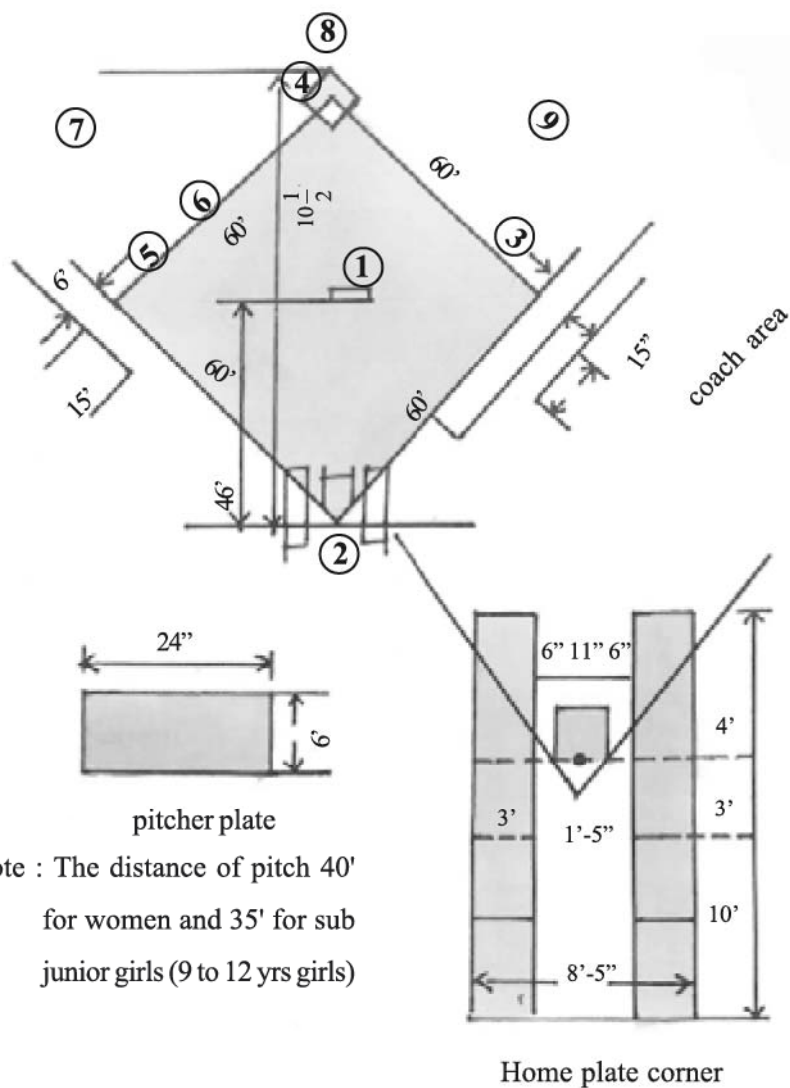
(3) Scorer

(5) Rules of Softball Game and competition :

Players and Substitutes :

(1) Team : A team consists of 9 players, 6 substitutes, one manager and a coach.

Position of the players : A team shall consist of 9 players in the following positions - It is also shown on the ground by numerical value.



- (1) Pitcher
- (2) Catcher
- (3) First Base-man
- (4) Second Base-man
- (5) Third Base-man
- (6) Short Stop
- (7) Left Fielder
- (8) Centre Fielder
- (9) Right Fielder

(3) Line up Sheet : Official line up sheet is to be completed and submitted to the official scorer by the coach manager duly signed.

(4) Uniform : All players on a team shall wear uniforms alike in color, trim and style. All players of the team shall wear same colour T-Shirt, full pant or half pant. Shoes are compulsory for all the players-men can wear caps and women can wear head bands. An Arabic number of contrasting colour at least 15 cm (6 inches) high must be worn on the back of all uniform shirts.

(5) Play :

(1) A team must have the 9 players present in the team area to start or continue a game.

(2) The choice by the first or last bat in the inning shall be decided by a toss of a coin.

(3) Players of batting side shall sit on the bench.

(4) Fielding team shall take the position on the ground. Pitcher near the pitching plate, catcher in catchers box, first base runner on first base, second base runner on second base, third base runner on third base short stopper near the pitcher, left fielder at left side ground, center fielder in the centre of the field, right fielder at right side ground..

(5) A regulation game shall consist of seven innings. Each team shall play seven innnings alternative.

(6) Three players of batting team declared out then inning of that team is over. Full run till third player declared out shall be recorded.

(7) One run shall be scored each time a runner legally touches first, second third bases and home plate before the third player out of the inning.

(8) The batting order of each team must be on the score sheet before game start. The batting order must be followed through out the game. The first batter in each inning shall be the batter whose name follows that of the last player who completed a turn at bat in the preceding inning.

(9) If required substitution shall be made during the half inning.

(10) Team which scores more run at the end of game shall be declared winner.

(11) A full seven innings need not be played if the team second at bat scores more runs in six innings or before the third out in the last of the seventh inning.

(12) A game that is tied at the end of seventh innings shall be continued by playing additional inning. The team which scores more runs shall be declared winner if till tie remains, then one inning shall be played untill one side shall score more runs.

(13) If game is delay due to darkness, rain, fire or for any other reason, then plate umpire may forfeit the game. In this situation if five or more complete innings have been played or if the team second it bat has scored more runs then the other team has scored in five or more innings. A regulation tie game

shall be declared if the score is equal when the game is called at the end of five or more completed innings.

(6) The Rule of Pitching :

(1) Must have both feet on ground within pitching plate. The hips shall be in line with first and third bases and both feet must be in contact with the pitcher's plate. After having the ball in both hands in the pitching position (Minimum 1 sec and Maximum 10 sec) he removes one hand from the ball, takes a backward and forward swing and returns the ball to both hands in front of the body. The delivery must be an underhanded movement. In the act of delivering the ball, the pitcher may take one step with the leading - non-pivot foot simultaneously with the release of the ball.

(2) Pitcher shall not pitch the ball, if catcher is not in catcher's box.

(3) Pitching ball must pass over the home plate and between the knees and shoulders of batter then it is count as correct ball or strike otherwise it shall be ball.

(4) Pitcher while pitching shall not allow any bandage, sticker, adhesive or greasy substances on the hands or finger.

(5) The delivery must be an underhand motion with hand below the hip and wrist shall not further from the body than the elbow.

(6) When batter takes his position in batter box and home plate umpire shall declare 'play', then only pitcher shall deliver the pitching.

(7) Pitcher shall not throw the ball to the base after he shall take the position on the pitching plate.

(8) When game is stopped for any reason and pitcher shall pitch the ball. It shall not count the pitching.

(9) While delivery, if pitcher loses the ball from his hand, then the base runner can move to next base on his responsibility.

(10) In the opinion of the manager or coach if pitcher is not performing correct delivery he can request the plate official to change the pitcher.

(11) Before start of inning or any time during the game the team wants to change the pitcher, then game shall be discontinued. Change of pitcher shall be completed within one minute.

(7) The Rules of Batting :

(1) The batting order of each team must be according to the score sheet / line up sheet.

(2) Batter shall enter in the batter box with standard bat only.

(3) Batter shall take position in batter box for batting.

(4) Batter shall take one step forward without touching the homeplate.

(5) While fielding catcher or fielder shall throw the ball but he shall not hit the ball.

(6) When pitcher has delivered incorrect ball or foul ball, then batter can not hit.

(7) When correct ball is delivered, then only batter should hit the ball.

(9) In the following situation batter shall not be out :

(1) If incorrect ball shall hit and batter shall run.

(2) Ball is declared incorrect ball.

(3) If throwing ball is stopped by manager or coach.

(4) If home plate umpire shall obstruct the ball.

(5) If batter shall miss the ball to hit and touches to his any part of body.

(6) Because of the obstruction if batter or base runner shall call back to his position.

(10) In the following situation batter shall be out :

(1) If batter shall not enter the batter's box within a minute after a call by umpire.

(2) If fielder catches the ball, which is not a foul tip.

(3) If three strikes are over.

(4) If ball shall hit by batter and ball shall reach to first base runner before batter reaches to first base.

(5) If ball shall hit by batter and ball shall catch by any fielder.

(6) While hitting the ball, if he leaves the box.

(11) Rules of Runner Out :

(1) A fair batted ball is caught and base player leaves the base.

(2) If ball shall hit by batter and ball shall reach to first base player before batter reaches to first base.

(3) While running towards the base, if he hits the ball by foot intentionally.

(4) If ball reaches to first base runner before batter reaches to base.

(5) If batter shall not touch the base.

(6) If hit ball is caught and base runner does not return back to their original base and inbetween he his touched by ball.

(7) Base runner shall run before pitcher pitches the ball.

(8) If batter runs ahead of base runner.

(9) In motion if runner after touching the base goes forward he shall not declare out but he further want to run towards second base, then he shall touch the first base.

(12) No ball, foul ball, Dead ball :

(A) No Ball : No ball shall be declared if pitching ball should not pass over the home plate, above the shoulders, below the knees, touches the ground before reaches to batter, if he leaves the pitching plate while ball delivered from the pitcher's hands.

(B) Foul Ball :

- (1) Hit ball goes out of ground.
- (2) Hit ball after touching first and third base and goes out of ground.
- (3) Hit ball touches the officials or players who are out side the grounds.

(C) Dead Ball :

- (1) When the ball is batted illegally.
- (2) When pitcher shall be ready for pitching and batter shall leave the batter box.
- (3) When not pitch is declared.
- (4) When pitched ball touches any part of the batter's body or clothing.
- (5) Hitted ball goes to foul zone.
- (6) Before pitcher pitching the ball base man starts running, he shall be declared out.

(13) Scoring of Runs :

- (1) One run shall be scored each time a runner legally touches first, second and third base and home plate before the third batter shall declared out of the inning.
- (2) If batter being forced to run towards first base and first base runner has to run forward and if he without touching the next base runs forward shall be declared out.

Exercise

1. Answer the following questions in detail :

- (1) Why does chest guard used in softball game ? How is it made of ?
- (2) Describe the throwing skill in Softball.
- (3) Explain the catching skill in Softball.
- (4) What do you mean by pitching in Softball ? How is it performed ?

2. Write short notes :

- (1) Home Plate

- (2) Slager (Bat)
- (3) Ball
- (4) Base Plate
- (5) Uniform of Soft Ball players.

3. Answer the following question in one or two sentences :

- (1) How many players are required to start the game of Soft Ball ?
- (2) How many innings shall be played in Soft Ball ?
- (3) How pitcher shall stand before pitching ?
- (4) When correct pitching is called ?
- (5) Which position batter should take while pitching ?

4. Answer the following questions by selecting correct choice from the options given below :

- (1) What is the measurement of Soft Ball square ?
 - (A) 40 feet \times 40 feet
 - (B) 60 feet \times 60 feet
 - (C) 50 feet \times 50 feet
 - (D) 55 feet \times 55 feet
- (2) What is the maximum length of slugger (Bat) ?
 - (A) 25 inches
 - (B) 30 inches
 - (C) 34 inches
 - (D) 40 inches
- (3) How many sided home plate is ?
 - (A) 5
 - (B) 4
 - (C) 3
 - (D) 2
- (4) What is the measurement of base plate ?
 - (A) 8 inches \times 8 inches
 - (B) 10 inches \times 10 inches
 - (C) 12 inches \times 12 inches
 - (D) 15 inches \times 15 inches
- (5) Where is the centre fielder will take position ?
 - (A) Behind the second ball on the ground
 - (B) On the second base
 - (C) On the third base
 - (D) On the first base
- (6) Where the player numbers should be shown ?
 - (A) In front of T Shirt
 - (B) Left side of T Shirt
 - (C) Right side of T Shirt
 - (D) Back side of T Shirt
- (7) What is the measurement of number on the T Shirt ?
 - (A) 4 inches
 - (B) 5 inches
 - (C) 6 inches
 - (D) 7 inches

- (8) What is the distance of pitching plate from the home plate for senior men ?
(A) 40 feet (B) 45 feet (C) 46 feet (D) 35 feet
- (9) Where does batter stand ?
(A) On the base plate (B) On the pitcher's plate
(C) In the batter box (D) In the home plate
- (10) When pitcher starts pitching ?
(A) When home plate umpire given order of play (B) When catcher is in catcher box
(C) When team manager declares (D) When team captain declares

Activity

- Draw softball ground and indicate the positions of fielders.

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