



## U9 7 VS 7

**This modified set of rules were developed by Softball Quebec and adopted by Softball New Brunswick in 2020. This game play is the logical continuation of the Learn to Play / Timbits Softball program.**

### ***Objectives of the program***

In order to make softball developmentally appropriate for all ages, Softball New Brunswick has adopted the following rules for U9 and U7 play. We are confident that this new way of playing in this age group will allow young athletes to develop while being engaged and having fun.

Here are some goals we believe we can achieve through this program:

- To promote the game by making it more engaging.
- To increase opportunities to hit, to run the bases and to make defensive plays.
- To increase activity for each player on the field.
- To increase the retention rate of players (i.e.: to increase the player interest in softball)
- To decrease competitiveness and soften the notion of victory vs defeat
- To create a suitable environment to learn the basic rules of softball and develop technical abilities.

In addition to playing more during a game, the athlete will have better support from coaches in their development due to smaller team sizes (maximum of 10 athletes). Coaches must provide training periods so that players learn the basic rules of softball. This environment also helps develop the fundamental principles of the game:

- Batting
- Throwing
- Catching
- Running the bases
- Defensive plays

### ***Principles of the game***

- Minimum of 6 players – maximum of 10 players – per team
- 5 full-innings per game
- Pitcher's plate is at 30 feet
- Bases are at 45 feet
- The ball is an 11-inch RIF softball
- No limit of runs in an inning; the inning ends with the 7th batter
- No run differential

### **On Defense:**

- Maximum of 7 players on defense:
  - 1 player will be positioned at the pitcher's defensive position.
  - The 7th player must be positioned on the outfield side of the baseline.
  - Other players will be positioned at their normal defensive position on the infield, including the catcher position.
- Maximum of two coaches are authorized to be behind the baseline so they can facilitate the understanding of the game.
- Coaches from the defensive team should be behind the catcher to assist in retrieving the balls to keep the pace of the game.
- With two (2) outs, a coach must implement the two out catcher rule so the catcher can begin getting their equipment on. This will speed up the game.
- After each inning, teams must rotate players so that nobody stays on the bench for two consecutive innings.
- A player cannot be at the same defensive position for more than 2 innings per game (including the player-pitcher). Any violation of this rule will result in the coach being required to move the identified player into a new position.
- When a team has more than 7 players, coaches can use the outfield for workshop and practice.

### **Pitcher:**

- A player can only pitch up to 1 inning per game. Must change pitchers each inning.
- Maximum of 7 pitches per batter
  - Players may pitch a maximum of 4 called balls per batter. If the batter still hasn't either hit the ball or struck out, the coach then will come in to pitch a maximum of 3 more pitches. If the batter hasn't hit or struck out after 7 pitches, the batter is out.
- If a coach-pitcher is hit by a batted ball, the ball is dead. A pitch is credited to the batter and the batter continues his at-bat. Runners return to the base they occupied at the time of the pitch.

### **Protective equipment:**

Facemasks are mandatory for all defensive players.

### **On offense:**

- All players must be on the starting lineup, up to a maximum of 10 players.
- Each inning, 7 batters will come to bat, regardless of the number of outs made during the inning.
- An inning is over when the 7<sup>th</sup> batter finishes their at-bat and when all defensive play is

over.

- All players will bat in the order they are listed. If a team has more than 7 players, the second inning will begin with player 8 batting first and continue to the end of the lineup before returning to the top of their order.
- If a team has only 7 players, they will start the next inning with the second batter in their lineup (i.e., second inning will start with the second batter leading off, etc.)
- Stealing is allowed:
  - Base runners may steal on any legally pitched ball when it has crossed home plate.
  - A player can only advance one base on a steal attempt.
  - Player cannot advance to home on a steal, passed ball, or wild pitch – must be batted in or forced home by a walk or is part of a continuation play (ie. Overthrow)
- No walks will be granted
- No bunting will be allowed
- Infield fly rule will not be used.

#### **When a player is pitching:**

- Strikes will be called by the umpire, with the batter being put out after 3 strikes.
- A maximum of 7 pitches will be delivered to each batter, after 4 called balls, an offensive coach will pitch to finish the at-bat up to 7 pitches (no more than 3 pitches).
- On the 7th pitch, if the batter hits a foul ball, the batter will get one final pitch that will decide the outcome of the at-bat.

#### **Advancing of runners on bases:**

- Runners cannot advance on a throwing error which is made in an attempt to retire a runner.
- Runners cannot leave their base before the ball is hit or the batter swings at the pitch. In the event of a violation (i.e., lead off), the ball is dead and all runners must return to their base.

#### **End of an inning:**

- If the 7th batter of the inning puts the ball in play, the inning is over when an out is made or when the 7th batter stops at a base (stops running).
- No runs are scored if the out is a force play
- In the event that an inning ends with the 7th batter stopping at a base, any run(s) that cross the plate after the 7th runner has stopped will not count (i.e., this is a timing play)

#### **Ball in play – batter 1 to 6 of an inning:**

- When a batted ball is hit directly over the infield (baseline) without touching the ground, the batter and the runners can take up to 2 bases, at their own risk.
- When a batted ball is hit on the ground and then goes to the outfield: the batter and the runners can take up to 2 bases, at their own risk.
- When a batted ball is hit in the infield, the batter and runners can take 1 base, at their own risk.
- In every situation, the batter and runners can be put out.

#### **Ball in play – 7th batter:**

- When a batted ball is hit by the 7th batter of an inning, all play will cease (i.e., runners must stop running) when the ball is returned to the pitcher in the pitcher's circle.

### **Outs:**

- No out limit per inning (7 batters will come to bat at each inning)

### **Batter hit by a pitch when a player is pitching:**

- o The batter is awarded first base if the umpire judge there was a minimal effort from the batter to get out of the way.
- o If a 3<sup>rd</sup> batter is hit by a pitch during an inning, the team must replace the pitcher. In this case, a pitcher who already pitched in the game can be used.
- o If the 7<sup>th</sup> batter of an inning is hit by a pitch, the ball is dead and the pitch doesn't count toward the 7-pitch limit and the batter continues the at-bat. If the batter is injured, the next batter in the lineup will take finish the at-bat. This won't change the batting order for the next inning.

### **Scoring of runs:**

- o Runs scored in each inning by each team will count, but they do not constitute the final score of the game:
  - The team who scores the most runs in an inning will win the inning and 1 point is awarded for the final score.
  - If the inning is tied, no point is scored for this inning
  - If an inning cannot be completed, no point is scored for this inning.
- o There is a maximum of 5 points per game for the winning team
- o This method prevents large discrepancies in the final score of the game.
- o This method also enables a team who, per example, lost an inning 7-0 to still have a chance to win the game.

### **Game Tie Breakers**

- If the game runs into the time limit and it ends in a tie, the tie will be broken by reverting back to the total runs scored by each team
  - o If the teams are still tied, the game will end in a tie.
- **Points**
  - o Wins – 2 points
  - o Ties – 1 point
  - o Loss – 0 points
- After the round robin, if there is a tie, the tiebreaker will revert to the criteria outlined in the SNB Rules and Regulations

### **Time Limit**

- Games will run on a 2-hour time limit
  - o No new inning will begin after 1 hour and 45 mins

### **IMPORTANT NOTE:**

A league or association who wants to use T-Ball can do it in their own league or association.

## FAQs

**What if I have way more than 7-10 players** – The 7 VS 7 game structure allows a team to play with a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 10 players. However, if a team has 14-15 players, SNB's recommendation and suggestion would be to split the team in 2 and play each other. OR if you have 14 players and a team is coming from another association with 14-15 players also, each team can split up their rosters, and have 2 games going on at once (One in the infield, one in the outfield). This also allows more coaches to be engaged, and the players to have more at bats).

**U11 teams are still encouraged to order Timbits Softball T-Shirts through Softball Canada. We urge you to order early to ensure getting the same colour for each player.**

### Game Batting Order Examples for 7 Players, more than 7 players

## Game Principles – Batting order with 7 players

◇ The first batter of an inning always changes, so the 7<sup>th</sup> batter of an inning changes also. (rotation)

| Inning 1 |           |   |
|----------|-----------|---|
| 1        | Diego     | 1 |
| 2        | Cassandra | 2 |
| 3        | Gilles    | 3 |
| 4        | Hugh      | 4 |
| 5        | Mike      | 5 |
| 6        | Angela    | 6 |
| 7        | Kristin   | 7 |

| Inning 2 |           |   |
|----------|-----------|---|
| 1        | Cassandra | 2 |
| 2        | Gilles    | 3 |
| 3        | Hugh      | 4 |
| 4        | Mike      | 5 |
| 5        | Angela    | 6 |
| 6        | Kristin   | 7 |
| 7        | Diego     | 1 |

| Inning 3 |           |   |
|----------|-----------|---|
| 1        | Gilles    | 3 |
| 2        | Hugh      | 4 |
| 3        | Mike      | 5 |
| 4        | Angela    | 6 |
| 5        | Kristin   | 7 |
| 6        | Diego     | 1 |
| 7        | Cassandra | 2 |

## Game Principles – Batting order with more than 7 players

| Line up |            |    |
|---------|------------|----|
| 1       | Diego      | 1  |
| 2       | Cassandra  | 2  |
| 3       | Gilles     | 3  |
| 4       | Hugh       | 4  |
| 5       | Mike       | 5  |
| 6       | Angela     | 6  |
| 7       | Kristin    | 7  |
| 8       | Chantal    | 8  |
| 9       | Mike Néron | 9  |
| 10      | Stéphane   | 10 |

| Inning 1 |              |   |
|----------|--------------|---|
| 1        | <b>Diego</b> | 1 |
| 2        | Cassandra    | 2 |
| 3        | Gilles       | 3 |
| 4        | Hugh         | 4 |
| 5        | Mike         | 5 |
| 6        | Angela       | 6 |
| 7        | Kristin      | 7 |

| Inning 2 |            |    |
|----------|------------|----|
| 1        | Chantal    | 8  |
| 2        | Mike Néron | 9  |
| 3        | Stéphane   | 10 |
| 4        | Diego      | 1  |
| 5        | Cassandra  | 2  |
| 6        | Gilles     | 3  |
| 7        | Hugh       | 4  |

| Inning 3 |            |    |
|----------|------------|----|
| 1        | Mike       | 5  |
| 2        | Angela     | 6  |
| 3        | Kristin    | 7  |
| 4        | Chantal    | 8  |
| 5        | Mike Néron | 9  |
| 6        | Stéphane   | 10 |
| 7        | Diego      | 1  |

## On Defense



# On Defense Inning 2, 4 and 5

