



Return to Play Quick Guide



Arrival to Facility

Mandatory

- Players, parents, coaches and spectators must be made aware of the safety protocols in place
- Pre-screening must be completed by the designated volunteer before any participant is allowed on the field
- Teams must have their EAP complete for the facility
- The dugout/bench area should be sanitized prior to anyone stepping into the area
- First aid kit is recommended for the bench area stocked with masks and gloves to address any injuries or medical concerns

Recommended

- Staggered arrival time to minimize overlap with previous group
- Participants are strongly recommended to travel by household only
- A closed garbage bin is recommended at the bench area to dispose of tissues, wipes and other refuse

Practice

- Coaches should ensure their practice plan adheres to physical distancing guidelines
- Coaches should have enough sanitized balls to rotate through drills or schedule sanitizing breaks
- No equipment is to be shared, every player must bring their own glove, helmet, batting gloves, etc
- If bats are shared, the bat must be sanitized before it is to be used by another player
- Pitching and catching drills will be done in the same pairs between a single pitcher and catcher only
- No shared water bottles or team coolers
- No team huddles

- Participants should leave the facility immediately following practice and only within their household
- Players are encouraged to wash their equipment and shower once returning home

Athletes

- Athletes must report to their team's designated volunteer to complete their pre-screening check
- No equipment is to be shared, every player must bring their own glove, helmet, batting gloves, etc
- Players must keep their equipment within their own bag and keep bags separated in dugout/bench area
- No shared water bottles or team coolers
- No hand shakes or high fives
- No team huddles
- No spitting, sunflower seeds, gum or similar products

- Athletes should be educated on the safety protocols in place before arriving
- Participants should leave the facility immediately following activity and only within their household
- Athletes should sanitize hands frequently during activity whenever possible
- Players are encouraged to wash their equipment and shower once returning home

**All individuals must adhere to
physical distancing guidelines**

Spectators

Mandatory

- Spectators must only sit within household groups while maintaining physical distancing from other groups
- Spectators must stay within the spectator's designated area
- Spectators are not to come in to the area of play or dugout/bench area at any time

Recommended

- Spectators are encouraged to frequently wash hands or sanitize if soap and water are unavailable
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Coaches

- Coaches should ensure their players are adhering to safety protocols in place while in the dugout/bench area
- Coaches must report to their team's designated volunteer to complete their pre-screening check
- No shared water bottles or team coolers
- No hand shakes or high fives
- No spitting, sunflower seeds, gum or similar products
- Only one coach will be permitted from each team for the plate coaches meeting and must maintain physical distancing

- Coaches should sanitize hands frequently during activity
- Coaches should remain within the physically distanced coaches box on offense
- It is recommended coaches wear a mask when holding a players conference on field while maintaining distance
- Coaches should ask for time when having a conference with an umpire before entering the field and should wear a mask while maintaining distance

Umpires

- Umpires must report to the home team's designated volunteer to complete their pre-screening check
- Umpires must bring their own hand sanitizer to games
- Umpires must bring their own water
- No hand shakes
- No spitting, sunflower seeds, gum or similar products

- Umpires should not handle equipment during play, but umpires will still do pre-game equipment checks (preferably while wearing gloves)
- Physical distancing should be maintained when doing any lineup changes or conferences with coaches/players/umpires
- Umpires should maintain distance from players in position
- Umpires are encouraged to wash their equipment and shower once returning home

Post Activity

- No team huddles, meetings or celebrations
- No hand shakes
- Each team's designated volunteer and players should ensure their dugout/bench area is left clean
- Individuals should not congregate in common areas or the parking lot

- Players should exit the dugout/bench area as efficiently as possible
- Travel should happen within household members, there should be no carpooling
- It is encouraged that equipment be washed before the next activity

Best Practices

These best practices are highly recommended, but not mandatory:

- Associations/single affiliated teams should confirm with their municipality that adequate signage warning of physical distancing is displayed.
- Associations/single affiliated teams should ensure their municipality is servicing and monitoring washroom facilities (if applicable). If not, the association/team must do so themselves to current standards or they should remain closed.
- Associations/single affiliated teams should confirm concession stands have been permitted to open and are meeting all health authority requirements or they should remain closed.

Associations/single affiliated teams are to ensure that every participant (coaches, players, designated volunteers, officials) has signed the Softball Alberta Declaration and the Assumption of Risk Waiver and acknowledge they are following the required Return to Play checklist.

Umpires, Rules and Mechanics Recommendations

Umpire Mechanics

Slo-pitch Specific Mechanics:

- 2 umpire system, base umpire will start on the line at 1B
- Remove being in the slot. Umpires can be in front, behind or to the side of the catcher keeping the 2 m distance from the catcher.

Fastpitch Specific Mechanics:

- Plate umpire will position deeper than normal to call pitches.

The following apply to both slo-pitch and fastpitch:

- Umpires will still check equipment before a game. Bats should be placed outside the dugout away from players. Umpires should wear gloves during the pre-game equipment checks.
- Use of verbal exchange from safe distance when making lineup changes from coach to scorekeeper and opposing team is recommended.
- Umpires should maintain 2 m distance from any player as a starting position when rotated and/or counter rotated.
- Umpires should not handle equipment on the field during play.
- Umpire to umpire or umpire to coach interactions must happen 2 m apart.
- It is recommended that the catcher stay 2 m from home plate when dusting is needed.

Rule Modifications

These are temporary additions to current rules and not replacing any rules. These additions are subject to change. Refer to Softball Canada Official Rulebook 2019-2020.

- Rule 4, Section 1.c.1: Base coaches must always stay 2 m from a runner or batter they wish to talk to, including during offensive conferences.
- Rule 5, Section 9.b: Coaches holding defensive conferences should stay on the home plate side of the pitcher's circle and the pitcher/catcher should be on the opposite side while all maintaining 2 m distance from one another. All other players should remain in position and not participate in the conference.
- Rule 4, Section 9: It is recommended that only players and coaches be in the dugout. Players may also be out of the dugout in the extended bench area. The number of players and coaches in the dugout will depend on the size of the dugout because of the 2 m physical distancing.
- Rule 4, Section 9: Players should not be allowed to leave the dugout area to congratulate players when scoring or after homeruns.
- Rule 6, Section 6.b.3 (FP), Section 5.b.3 (SP): Pitchers should not be allowed to lick fingers.