

Indoor

Indoor Softball is played by two teams with a minimum of eight players each. Only eight players will take the field at one time, but you can have an unlimited number of batters, which bats in the designated order. (6 players for U12).

The basics of Indoors are simply a variation on Slowpitch. The PITCHER pitches the ball to a BATTER who hits it and runs around as many bases as possible before the ball is brought under the control of the defensive team. The aim of the game is to score more POINTS than the opposition. Meanwhile, the defensive team is trying to get batters and baserunners OUT in all the same ways they do in softball:

- Strike outs
- Fly outs (balls that are hit in the air and caught – including, in Indoors, balls caught off the walls)
- Force outs
- Tag plays

The Indoor Softball area is usually defined by its venue. Indoors can be played in gyms, sports halls or similar. The ball continues to be 'live' (in play) off the side walls. If the batted ball hits the CEILING or any ceiling fixtures at any height then the batter is out and the ball called dead (players do not advance).

Indoors is two innings long and innings are not defined by the number of outs, but rather by time. Each half inning is usually four to six minutes long – the duration is flexible as long as it is applied evenly to each half inning. The length will be set in the final program. Players still bat in a pre-arranged order. Bunting is not allowed.

Playing Area

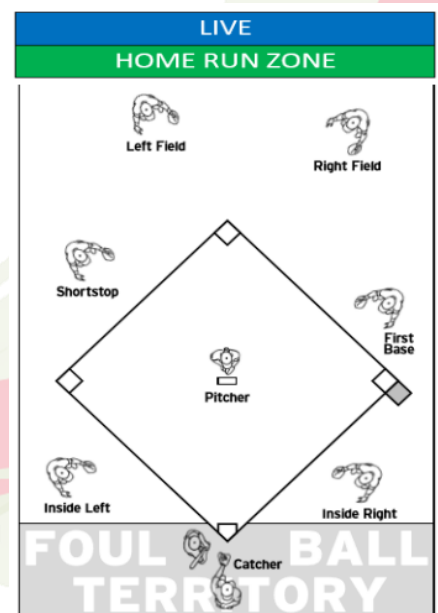
A Softball diamond should be laid out within the parameters of the venue with Home Plate, First Base, Second Base and Third Base as usual. There are no hard and fast rules about distances except that bases should be a 'reasonable' distance apart – 12 metres is fairly standard – although there doesn't have to be much space left for the OUTFIELD.

From the front of Home Plate, a straight line is drawn across the court (see diagram) and the area behind the line is the only FOUL BALL territory – everything else is FAIR TERRITORY! The foul ball territory is where batters line up preceding their turn at bat. Given the limitations of gyms, it's also where everyone leaves their bags, bats, water, etc., and so this general chaos can lead to DEAD BALL situations.

It is also worth noting that Indoors by its very nature is a fast, energetic game. The emphasis is on hitting and running which means that the umpire is much less likely to call a pitch a ball!

Also, it is a game that lends itself to aggressive baserunning and the umpire will not call TIME until it is clear that no baserunners have a chance for further advance.

If the ball is hit into Fair Territory, it remains live at all times even if overthrown into Foul Ball Territory (unless it becomes tangled in the general team debris or obstructed by the offensive team waiting to bat – then the play will be called DEAD BALL and all baserunners will be awarded the base they were running to at the time of the overthrow).



Playing the Game

Each batter receives only one pitch from the Pitcher (U10 three pitches). The pitch is a “coach like” pitch without windmill windup. Normal strike zone.

- If the batter does not swing and the pitch is a STRIKE, the batter is out.
- If the batter does not swing and the pitch is a BALL, the batter advances to First Base.
- If the batter swings and hits the ball into Foul Ball territory or if it rolls back into Foul Ball territory without any defensive player touching the ball, the batter is out.
- The batter is also out if they step on Home Plate in the process of hitting the ball or if the batted ball hits the batter runner off the bat or the bat hits the ball.
- Any baserunners are out if a batted ball hits them when they are not in contact with a base and the ball has not been in contact with a fielder.
- The batting team continues to bat in order for a set time and then the fielding team comes into bat for the same time (one inning). Each game is two innings long. OUTS are made in all the ways listed above.
- A HOMERUN is scored if the batter hits the back wall below a specified height which depends on the venue. (Homeruns are subject to local “ground rules”)
- A homerun has the effect of scoring all runners on base, they simply return to the end of the batting line-up (they do not have to touch all the bases).
- The umpire calls TIME when it is clear that no baserunners have a chance for further advance.

Scoring the Game

All teams must provide a scorer to cover games designated to that team per session. Indoor Softball scoring is more complex than in outdoor and points are scored for the following:

- 1 point for each batter who safely reaches First Base – the batter gets 1 additional point for each base they reach on their turn at bat (even if they stop at each base before advancing on an overthrow or misfielded ball, etc.).
- Baserunners do not get points as they advance to the next base on another batter’s turn at bat, except for the following circumstance:
 - 1 point is given for each baserunner who safely comes home.
 - 5 points are scored for a Homerun + 1 point for each runner on base when the Homerun was hit (a point is subtracted if the batter is caught off the back wall). (Homeruns are subject to local “ground rules”)
- 1 point is deducted for each OUT made by the defensive team.

Note that these rules make it possible for a team to have a negative points score.

Equipment

- Pitchers must wear mask
- Batters must wear helmets
- The catcher must as minimum wear helmet (can be batter helmet)