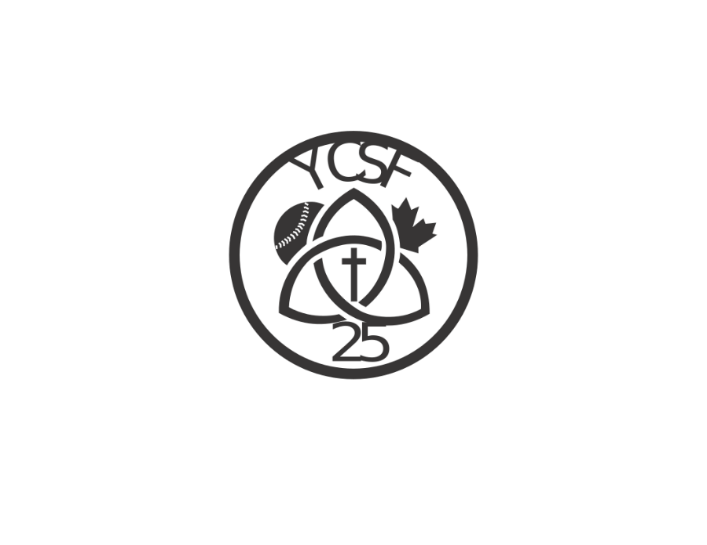
**York Christian Sports Fellowship Rules**

**Preamble**

The YCSF Slo-Pitch league will abide by the “Official Slo-Pitch Rules" as used by SPO (Slo-Pitch

Ontario) which read as follows. With overriding “York Christian Sports Fellowship rules and exceptions” in effect listed at the beginning.

**YCSF Specific Rules and exceptions**

1) Teams will meet at home plate for a brief prayer and/or devotional. Home and away teams are pre-determined by YCSF scheduler at the beginning of the season. The Home team in the first time slot is responsible for setup of the field, and the home team in final time slot is responsible for tear down of the field. All home team are responsible for providing 2 unblemished balls (1 new and 1 lightly used).

2) The start of a game may be delayed up to 15 minutes when the previous game was delayed due to rain. Calling a game due to inclement weather is at the discretion of the umpire at game time (exceptions: extreme weather warning, or tornado warning in the Whitchurch-Stouffville area).

3) Each game consists of seven (7) innings for both regular season and playoffs. For regular season, a minimum of 4.5 innings is required for an official game. For playoffs, on nights when:

A) 3 games are scheduled, a minimum of 5.5 innings are required for an official game.

B) Less than 3 games are scheduled, a minimum of 6.5 innings is required for an official game.

Any regular season or playoff game ended by the umpire due to inclement weather will be considered an official game if a minimum of 4.5 innings has been played.   
Games may end in a tie after 7 innings if an Open Inning has been called during the regular season.   
Any game called due to a player conflict by the umpire will be reviewed by the umpire, crew chief, and Executive to determine if the game should be replayed are stand as is.

4) Teams unable to field a minimum of eight (8) players within 15 minutes of the start of their game will forfeit the game and a score of 7 -0 will be recorded as the official score with the loss going to the defaulting team. If both teams do not have enough players then both teams will record a 7-0 loss. Teams not able to field the minimum number of players at the start of their playoff game will default.

5) Teams fielding the minimum number of 8 players at the start of a game shall be allowed to continue play with less than the minimum number of players if any of its players are unable to continue due to injury or illness. Teams shall not add players to their roster from other teams in the YCSF league.

6) Teams are obligated to lend a catcher to the opposing team when that team is playing with the minimum of 8 players. The provided catcher is only required to return the ball to the pitcher after a pitch, and is not to be part of the ‘live’ play. Teams are not obligated to lend a catcher during tournament or playoff play.

7) Players may be added to the bottom of the batting order any time after the start of the game.

The opposing manager/score keeper must be made aware of the addition to the batting order. If no notification is given to the opposing manager/score keeper prior to the joining batters first at bat, the joining player will be marked as an out.

8) If a player leaves the game for any reason, the opposing manager/score keeper must be notified before the leaving player’s next turn at bat. If no notification is given prior to next batter stepping into the batter’s box, the leaving player will be marked as an out.

9) A maximum of three substitutions or courtesy runners shall be allowed to replace a batter who has safely reached base. The courtesy runner is any player on the line -up sheet. If all three courtesy runners have been used, and the batter due up is still on base as a courtesy runner, an automatic out is assigned for the at bat. In the event of a base -running injury where the injured player has to be removed from the game, and all 3 courtesy runners have already been used, then the last player on the batting team to record an out will be the substitute base -runner.

9 B) In the event a player requires a pinch hitter (runner for an injury from home plate) prior to the start of the game, the using team will lose one courtesy runner for the game. If the team requires more than one, the subsequent number will be taken away from the number of courtesy runners the team can use. A pinch runner must be the player that was the last recorded out. A pinch runner needed for an injury that occurs during gameplay will not cost the team a courtesy runner.

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| --- | --- |
| Number of pinch runners | Number of courtesy runners allowed if pinch runner used |
| 0 pinch runners | 3 courtesy runners |
| 1 pinch runner | 2 courtesy runners |
| 2 pinch runners | 1 courtesy runner |
| 3 pinch runners | 0 courtesy runners |

10) Maximum Batter Rule – A maximum of ten batters are allowed to bat in any inning – 2 exceptions (see below). The batting team is responsible to declare when the last batter is batting. If the last batter is not identified prior to the first pitch to him, the batter is out and the inning is declared over with no runners advancing. Otherwise, the inning will end by either of the three following

a) having the last batter score a run,

b) record the third out during the normal play of action, or

c) have the ball thrown to the catcher where the catcher must touch some part of the plate for the inning will be declared over.

A batter who is declared the “last batter”, and is pitched eight balls before three strikes during his at bat, is awarded a homerun with all runners advancing to home plate safely.

Exceptions:

a) The maximum (batter rule is modified when a team has less than ten players (i.e. 8 or 9) so that the maximum number of batters in any inning not declared “open inning” will be the number of players on the lineup card for the game.

b) Last Inning – At exactly twenty minutes prior to the start of the next game (7:40; 9:10; & 10:40) the umpire will call, “Next Inning WILL be the final inning!” This means the inning currently being played will be finished using the standard maximum batter rule, and the following inning will be the last inning (open inning - maximum batter rule shall not apply). Once, “Next Inning WILL be the final inning!” is called, the final inning must take place and regardless of time no other new inning will be allowed.

11) Home Run Rule (over the fence): Maximum number per game per team is five. All subsequent over the fence home runs are foul balls. Once a team has reached the maximum of five, a plus/minus 2 rule system will be put into effect. Teams playing above five homeruns must be plus or minus 2 home runs of the other team for it to constitute a homerun. This means if team A has hit 7 homeruns and team B has hit 6 homeruns, team A will be eligible to hit an eighth home run, but a ninth would be a foul ball.

12) Anticipation is allowed to the base runners on the batters swing.

13) YCSF uses the home plate board. The board is 24 by 36 inches and made from a durable plywood and painted grey. There is a safety line at home plate (the extension of the first base line through to the backstop) to avoid collisions. For scoring, the runner need only cross the safety line before the defending team touches any part of the plate while in control of the ball. The runner will be called out if he touches the board, and safe if the catcher tags the runner at home.

14) Pitchers must start and finish their pitch with at least one foot on the pitching rubber. They can be in front of, or behind the rubber. Pitches landing on any part of the board are considered strikes. A pitched ball must arc a minimum of six feet and a maximum of twelve feet. Otherwise, the umpire will call ‘illegal pitch’ prior to the ball reaching the batter. If the umpire calls ‘illegal pitch’ and the batter chooses to swing at the pitch, the ball is considered ‘live’ and all play will be treated as a ‘legal pitch’

15) If a pitcher attempts to pitch to a batter and pitches four balls, the batter is awarded first base.

Intentional walks are allowed. The pitcher will call for an intentional walk before he throws any pitches to the opposing batter. The opposing batter will be awarded first base on the first intentional walk. Any subsequent intentional walks to any player on the same team will result in second base being awarded. Regardless of how many intentional walks have already been given, if the pitcher does not make a reasonable attempt to pitch to the batter, the umpire will award second base to the batter.

16) YCSF uses Worth Hot Dot (.52 COR) softballs

17) Only YCSF bats will be used during regular season and playoff games. New bats will be provided at the discretion of the Executive.

18) Players will not be allowed to harass the umpire in any way. The umpire will be authorized to eject any player without warning for endangering others, being abusive to the umpire or any other participant. The offending player is to immediately gather his belongings and leave the playing field, not to interact with the game in progress in any way. The offending player may quietly wait in a car.

19) The coach will accept the umpire’s decision as final and if clarification is needed then only one team representative can approach the umpire on an appeal. Any violation of this will be just cause for the ejection of the offending player.

20) Any player ejected from a game may receive a two game suspension at the discretion of the

Executive after consulting with the Umpires, team Reps and the offending player. If the same player is ejected a second time then he will automatically be suspended for two games and possibly all future games until such time as he can appear before the Executive and produce "just cause" as to why he should be allowed to play in this League.

21) The Executive has the authority to administer permanent or temporary suspensions at any time with the consultation of the Umpires, involved players and team reps.

22) Team uniforms are not required, but where possible are encouraged. All team members are expected to wear the respective team colours to help differentiate players on the field. Team managers can determine and enforce team colours. Caps are not required, but encouraged.

23) Tie breaker rules for the playoffs. If two teams end the season with the same winning percentage the tie breakers will go in the following order. Head to head, head to head run differential, overall run differential.

**Slo-Pitch Ontario Official Rules**

**Playing Field**

Bases are 70 feet apart (all divisions).  
Pitching distance is 50 - 60 feet.  
Pitching Box is 2 feet wide by 10 feet long. Its front edge shall be in a line between home plate and second base and 50 feet from the back corner of home plate.  
Batter’s box is 7 feet by 3 feet.  
Double base shall be used at first base.  
Coaches' Box is 15 feet by 5 feet and 12 feet back from the foul line.  
Strike Mat / Home Plate:  A 2 feet by 3 feet mat.  
All Masters / All Seniors / All Coed / All D & E: A safe line at home plate and a commitment line 21 feet from home plate shall be used.

**Equipment**

Minimum uniform shall be identical shirts with identifiable ten (10) cm high numbers on the back.  
Gloves may be worn by any player. Trappers may be worn by the catcher, pitcher and first baseman only.  
Shoes may not have metal cleats.  
Caps, if worn, must face forward.

Bats:  Must be approved by SPO. See SPO website for Approved Ball list.  
Balls: Mens: Restricted flight 12”. See SPO website for Approved Ball list.  
           Womens: Restricted flight 11”.  See SPO website for Approved Ball list.  
           Optic yellow colour is recommended, but white is also acceptable.

Helmets: Approved helmets may be worn by any player. They must match in colour any caps worn.

Approved equipment cannot be unnaturally altered or changed, for example icing, cooling, warming or heating of any equipment. Warming devices for bats are not approved.

A flare or cone grip now may be attached from the factory, or a commercially-produced flare or cone may be attached to the bat by the player, provided it is installed properly to the bat. The flare or cone must be permanently attached, or attached with safety tape. The bat must meet all requirements of Rule 3, Sec. 1 (Softball Canada) after installation to be considered legal. Any tape applied to the safety grip must be a continuous spiral.  An attachment may not extend beyond the end of the bat. The grip must demonstrate that the bat will not slip through the hand. Officials may deem unacceptable any grip and attachment they feel is unsafe.

**Team**

The batting order shall consist of a minimum of 10 players.

**Extra Players**

Teams may use unlimited "EXTRA PLAYERS(S)". The total number of regular players (10) and extra players may not exceed the number of players on the team's legal roster (maximum 20). If more than 10 players are on the batting order, any 10 may play defense.

a.    If a player is unable to continue in the game and no legal substitute is available when he is due up to bat, he is declared out and play continues with the next batter in the batting order. If, with 2 out, the batter before the missing player is walked (intentional or unintentional), the automatic out is waived and the next batter will bat. (This does not apply if the player is declared unable to continue just prior to the team's offensive half of the inning.)  
b.    The manager of the player unable to bat is responsible for notifying the plate umpire of this situation. Failure to do this will result with the manager being ejected.  
c.    A team must have a minimum of ten (10) players to start and to continue the game. If a team has less than ten (10) players the game is forfeited. A team may not add extra player(s) at a later time.

d.    Short Handed Rule (optional): Teams may start a game with a minimum of nine (9) players. However, an out shall be declared when the tenth position in the line-up is scheduled to bat. A tenth player may be added to the tenth position any time before the end of the game. Any team that starts a game with ten or more players may drop to the minimum of nine players to finish the game. All vacant spot(s) in the line-up will be declared an out every time that line-up position is due to bat.

e.    A team may not add extra player(s) at a later time. Any player that leaves the game for any reason may not return to the game. If a player is ejected from the game for any reason leaving the team with less than ten players, the ejected player's team must have a substitute available to replace the ejected player or that team will forfeit the game. *Exception:* A player, who has left the game under the blood rule, may return. 

**Substitutions:** Any player in the batting order may be replaced during any stoppage of play with a legal rostered player not already in the batting order. Each starting player may re-enter the game once in the same position in the batting order.  Substitutes must be listed on the lineup card.

**Blood Rule**

Any participant (player, coach or umpire) who is bleeding or has blood on his uniform may not participate until the bleeding is controlled and his soiled uniform changed. The replacement uniform need not conform to the official team uniform. If the cleanup and/or uniform change can be accomplished quickly, play would be suspended until the participant is ready to play. If this cannot be done quickly, the player is removed from the game and replaced by a Replacement Player (may not be a player listed in the batting order) who may act for the removed player for the remainder of the inning in progress and the following complete inning. When the player has had the bleeding controlled and the soiled uniform replaced, he mustresume his place in the game. Should he not be able to return to the game within the time described, an official substitution must be made. The use of a Replacement Player is not counted as an official substitution, meaning, the player may leave the game again and be re-entered (if a starting player) and also the player that was used as the replacement for him is still a legal substitute and may be used later in the game. If a player is removed due to blood and the team does not have a legal substitute/replacement available when needed, his place in the batting order is simply missed and there is no penalty.

**Courtesy Runner**

a.    A team may use a maximum of three (3) courtesy runners per game.  
       Exceptions: 35+ & 40+ (4);  50+ & 55+ (7 - same runner may not run twice); 60+, 65+ & 70+ (Unlimited).

b.    The courtesy runner must be on the official roster and listed on the official line-up.  
c.    The courtesy runner must be announced to the home plate umpire before he takes his place on the base.  
d.    If the courtesy runner is due up to bat, the team may:

i)     use another courtesy runner and have the original courtesy runner come to bat; OR  
ii)    use a substitute or utilize the re-entry rule (if applicable) to go up to bat leaving the original courtesy runner on base; OR  
(iii)  if i) or ii) is not implemented, the batter is ruled out but remains on base as the courtesy runner and the next batter in the lineup comes to bat.

**Starting The Game**

A coin toss, with the winner determining which team will bat second.

**Duration**

A game consists of seven innings. The game ends if the team batting second has scored more runs in six innings or before the third out in the last half of the seventh inning than the other team has scored in seven innings. A tied game will continue with extra innings until one side has scored more runs at the end of a completed inning, or until the team batting second scores more in their half inning before their third out. A game stopped by the umpire will be considered complete if five innings (four and one half innings if the second batting team is leading) have been completed. 

**Mercy Rule**

A team shall be declared winner if they are12 or more runs ahead of the opposition after five or six innings if the visiting team or after four and one half, five and one half or six and one half innings if the home team. A team may voluntarily withdraw from the game if they are losing by 15 or more runs any time after 3 innings (2½ innings if home team).

NOTE: All E divisions & Seniors 50+, 55+, 60+, 65+ & 70+:  A maximum of 5 runs per inning may be scored. (Exception: 7th inning and in the event of a tie after the 7th inning, any subsequent inning). If, with runners on base, a player hits an over the fence home run which scores more than the allowable 5 runs per inning, the home run will count towards the team's Home Run total.  A team 17 or more runs ahead after 3½ (if the home team) or 4 innings (if the visiting team) shall be declared winner.

**Forfeits**

A game shall be declared a forfeit if a team fails to field the required number of players prior to or during the game, refuses to continue the game after a suspension of play, intentionally tries to delay or hasten the game, or intentionally violates a rule of the game after being warned by the umpire. A forfeit shall be declared if a player, ejected from the game by an umpire, does not leave the park when directed to do so. When a player is ejected and must leave the ball park, that player must move far enough away so that they may not be seen or heard by the participants of the game and may not participate with the game in any manner.

**Profanity**

Any team member openly using profanity during a game shall be ejected from further participation in that game.

**Jewellery**

(Youth Only) A batter or runner is ruled out immediately if discovered wearing exposed jewellery. Any advance by other runners as a result of this player batting the ball is nullified. If, after making a play, a defensive player is discovered wearing exposed jewellery, the manager of the offensive team may take the result of the play or have the play nullified, and have the batter return to bat with the same count as before the infraction and all runners must return to their previous base. In all cases, the player must remove the jewellery. 

NOTE:  Facial jewellery may not be covered with tape.

NOTE:  It is strongly recommended that no jewellery of any type be worn in any SPO play.  If worn, each player is solely responsible for any injury/damage that may be caused by this jewellery. The umpire may have any player remove any jewellery or equipment that he deems dangerous.

**Scoring**

A run is scored when a player safely touches, in order first base, second base, third base and home plate. A runner may not score ahead of a preceding runner who has not been retired. A run may not score if the last out of an inning is a force out or a preceding runner declared out. The score of a forfeited game shall be 7-0 in favour of the team not at fault.

**Home Run Rule**

A limit of over the fence home runs will be used in all divisions. A batter hitting a ball over the fence in a game in excess of the limit shall be ruled out. Any ball touched by a defensive player which then goes over the fence in fair territory shall be a four base award and not considered a home run. If a player hits an over the fence home run but then misses a base and/or does not score it will count towards the team home run total. If a batter is ruled out because of the excessive home run rule, the ball is dead, no runs may score and all runners must return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch.

Mens: A – 7; B – 5; C – 3; D – 2; E – 1.  
Womens: A – 7; B – 5; C – 3; D – 2; E – 1.  
Mens Masters 35+, 40+, 45+: Competitive – 5; Intermediate – 3; Recreational – 1.  
Mens Seniors 50+, 55+, 60+, 65+, 70+: 3.  
Womens Masters and Seniors: 2.

Walk Off Home Run: On any fair-batted ball hit over the fence (touched or untouched) for a home run, the batter and all runners are credited with a score. The batter and any runners do not run the bases but go directly to their team area.

**Pitching**

Before each pitch, the pitcher must stand with one foot (pivot) within the pitcher's box, facing the batter with the ball held in one hand. This position must be maintained for 1 - **5** seconds.

The delivery starts when the pitcher makes any motion of his windup after the required pause. A step may be taken in any direction simultaneous with the release of the pitch provided the pivot foot remains in contact with the box until the pitch is released.

The pitch shall be delivered with an underhand motion and at a moderate speed. Any type of windup is legal provided the ball is pitched immediately after the pitching motion, there is no stoppage or reversal of motion, there is not more than one revolution in a "windmill" pitch, and the windup does not continue after the delivery of the ball. Any infraction of these rules shall constitute an illegal pitch. No pitch is declared if the pitcher pitches:

•    during a dead ball;  
•    before the batter and/or umpire are ready;  
•    when a runner is out for leaving a base too soon.

The ball is dead after a strike or ball is called. (Runners may not advance.)

**Batting**

Players must bat in the order listed on the batting order. If a player's turn at bat has not ended when his team's half-inning ends, he is the first to bat in the next half-inning. The batter must take his position within the batter's box within 10 seconds. Substitutes must bat in the position in the batting order of the person they replace. A strike is a legally pitched ball that makes contact with the mat, any pitched ball swung at and missed by the batter, or a batted ball that is ruled foul. A ball is a legally pitched ball that lands outside the strike mat and not swung at by the batter or an illegally pitched ball that the batter does not swing at. All batters in Mens A, B and C, Womens A and B/C, Mens Masters 35+, 40+ and 50+ (Competitive and Intermediate), Mens Masters 55+ and Coed A and B shall start with a 1-1 (1 ball and 1 strike) count.

A batted ball may be classified as one of the following:

•    fly ball - a batted ball that has not yet touched the ground or any object other than a fielder;  
•    line drive - a fly ball that is batted sharply and directly into the playing field;  
•    bunt - a tapped ball not swung at but met with the bat;  
•    chopped ball - a batted ball intentionally directed downward so that the ball bounces high into the air;  
•    ground ball - a batted ball that touches the ground, an umpire (in fair territory), or a runner (after a fielder has had a chance to make a play on it);  
•    infield fly - a fair fly ball that can be caught by an infielder with a normal effort.

Batted balls are ruled fair (batter and runners may advance) or foul (a strike) by the umpire.

An illegally batted ball occurs when the batter steps on the mat or has his foot on the ground completely in front or behind the mat when the bat contacts the ball.

A batter shall be ejected from the game if he is discovered to be using an altered bat or a non-approved bat after entering the batter's box. The ejected player is suspended for the remainder of the tournament with a review by the Disciplinary Committee. A second offence will result in a minimum of one year suspension.

**NOTE:** An altered bat is one that has had its physical structure changed, including, but not limited to:

1.   the bat has had the surface of the barrel or the taper changed in any way such as by sandpapering or applying a solvent to the surface such as fingernail polish remover or by any other means;  
2.   the bat has had the plug or the knob removed/replaced or changed in any way;  
3.   the bat has had anything removed or added or inserted to the inside or outside of the bat other than tape at the handle or knob;  
4.   the bat has been repainted.

Other examples of an altered bat would be changing or replacing manufacturers' markings or replacing the handle of the metal bat with a wooden handle.

Cracked, worn, or damaged bats are not altered bats, but will be removed from play. Such cracked, worn, or damaged bats will not result in a player suspension unless the player returned the offending bat into play after it has been removed.

**Running**

The batter may proceed around the bases:

•    when he hits a fair ball;  
•    after four balls or an intentional walk;  
•    after interference by the catcher.

When the batter runs to first, he may overrun first base and safely return to the base provided he does not try to advance to second base. In Seniors 60+ and older, the runner may overrun all bases.

On the batter's first attempt at first base on and play is made a first, he must use the orange portion of the Double Base. Once the batter has safely reached first base, he must now use the white portion. The defensive player always uses the white portion.

A runner may run the bases:

•    when a fair ball is caught;  
•    when a caught fly ball is first touched;  
•    when the ball is overthrown and remains in play.

A runner is advanced:  
•    when a fair batted ball goes out of play (2 bases awarded from the time of the pitch);  
•    when a thrown (2 bases) or batted ball (3 bases) is contacted by a thrown glove (awarded from the time of the pitch);  
•    if forced when the batter is awarded a base on balls;  
•    when a live ball is carried or dropped out of play (1 base awarded from the time the ball became dead);  
•    when the ball is overthrown and goes out of play (two bases awarded from the time of the throw);  
•    when a defensive player obstructs the runner as he progresses around the base path; The umpire will award the placement he felt the runner would have made has there been no obstruction.

All awarded bases are from the last base legally touched and must be touched in the proper order. 

**A runner must return to the base:**

•    when the pitcher is ready to pitch. (If he is not in contact with the base, he is declared out for a leadoff);  
•    when a foul ball is hit;  
•    when the batter or another runner interferes with the defensive team (unless forced by the batter being awarded first base);  
•    when the ball is batted illegally;  
•    when a fly ball is caught. He may advance when the ball is first touched by a fielder;  
•    during a live ball, a runner may return to touch a base unless he has left the field of play or a succeeding runner has scored. He must proceed in reverse order touching all intervening bases;  
•    during a dead ball, a runner may return to touch a base.

**Dismissals**

A batter is out. The ball is dead and no runners may advance if:

•    he has three strikes;  
•    he illegally bats the ball;  
•    he bunts or chops downward on a pitch;  
•    a fielder deliberately drops a fly ball with at least a runner on first base and less than two out;  
•    he enters the batter's box with an illegal or altered bat;  
•    the batter before reaching first base, retreats towards home plate to avoid a tag;  
•    the batter hits an over the fence homerun in excess of the team limit;  
•    the batter is discovered to be wearing exposed jewellery (Youth only).

A batter is out. The ball is alive and runners may advance if:

•    his fly ball (fair or foul) is legally caught;  
•    on a fair ball not caught on the fly, the ball is held by a fielder while touching first base before the batter touches first base;  
•    he hits an infield fly with less than two out and runners on first and second or first, second and third.

A runner is out, and the ball is dead if:

•    on a pitched ball, he leaves the base before the ball has reached the plate, hits the ground or is swung at by the batter;  
•    he fails to return to his base following a halt in play;  
•    while off the base, he is hit by a fair batted ball before it has passed an infielder and no other fielder is in a position to make a play;  
•    he deliberately runs into a fielder who has the ball and is waiting to tag him;  
•    he interferes with an attempt to field a ball or with a thrown ball;  
•    the runner is discovered to be wearing exposed jewellery (Youth only).

A runner is out, and the ball is alive if:

•    he runs more than 1 meter outside the established basepath to avoid a tag;  
•    on a force out, the fielder, while holding the ball, touches the base before the runner;  
•    while off his base, he is touched with the ball held by a fielder;  
•    he overtakes a preceding runner;  
•    a coach physically assists him.

A runner is not out if:

•    he is touched by a fielder who does not have or does not maintain control of the ball;  
•    he runs outside the baseline to avoid interfering with a fielder fielding a ball;  
•    he is unintentionally hit by a batted ball while on a base;  
•    he is unintentionally hit by a batted ball while off a base, if no fielder has a chance to field the ball.

Note: A batter or runner is not out if the fielder making a play on him uses an illegal or (Youth only) is discovered to be wearing exposed jewellery.

**Explanations**

***Basepath*** - An imaginary line from the runner to the base to which he is advancing.

***Catch****-* A catch is not completed until the fielder securely holds the ball in his hand or his glove (which is properly worn on his hand) long enough to prove he has control of the ball and any release of the ball is voluntary or intentional. If the ball has hit anything other than the fielder or another fielder, it cannot be a caught fly ball.

***Commitment Line*** - A line in foul territory drawn 21 feet from the back of home plate and perpendicular to the third base line. When a runner crosses this line by touching the ground beyond the line but does not reach home plate, he shall be called out when the ball is legally held by a defensive player in contact with home plate. Runners, who have not crossed the line or who cross the line but must tag up on a caught fly ball, may return to third base.

***Fair Ball***- A batted ball that is touched while on or above fair ground, stops on fair territory within the infield, contacts a base, bounces over first or third base, or first lands on fair ground beyond the infield.

***Foul Ball*** - A batted ball that is not fair.

***Inbounds***- The ball or a player is in bounds until they touch the ground or an object that is outside the designated playing area.

***Interference*** - An offensive team player may not do anything to confuse, distract or hinder a fielder making a play.

***Obstruction***- A defensive player may not hinder or restrict a runner from progressing from base to base unless fielding a batted ball, holding the ball, or about to catch the ball.

***Safe Line*** - A line drawn in foul territory starting at the top left-hand corner of home plate perpendicular to the third base line. A runner attempting to reach home must do so by touching the ground in foul territory on or beyond the SAFE line. Sliding into home plate is not allowed. The runner is out if he touches home plate whether or not a play is being made. A runner is not out if the plate is touched in an attempt to avoid a collision.