



# USA SOFTBALL UMPIRE EXAM

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The examination consists of a series of questions covering rules and mechanics of the 2024 USA Softball Official Rule Book. Questions are true or false and multiple choice. Answers should be put on the answer sheet and returned to the grader or test committee. THE ANSWER SHEET SHOULD NOT BE RETURNED TO THE USA SOFTBALL NATIONAL OFFICE.

The abbreviations used in the questions follow the following: B (N) = Batter; R1 = runner closest to home; R2 is the succeeding runner; R3 is the runner on first base when the bases are full; S (N) = substitutes; CR (N) = courtesy runner(s); PC (N) = physically challenged player; and F (N) = fielder by number. F1 is pitcher; F2 is catcher; F3 is first baseman; F4 is second baseman; F5 is third baseman; F6 is shortstop; F7 is left fielder; F8 is center fielder; and F9 is right fielder. If F10 is used it would be the extra fielder in the slow pitch game.

This examination may be given to all USA Softball registered umpires under one of the following methods to be determined by your local state/metro USA Softball commissioner, local umpires association, local parks and recreation department, or military sports officer:

- 1) Under supervision without the use of the USA Softball Official Rule Book.
- 2) Under supervision using the USA Softball Official Rule Book.
- 3) With no supervision and using the USA Softball Official Rule Book.

Retain the question portion of this examination for further study. Use care in marking your answer sheet. PLEASE COMPLETE THE EXAM BEFORE \_\_\_\_\_

(Date)

After completing, mail or return the ANSWER SHEET ONLY to:

GRADER \_\_\_\_\_ STREET \_\_\_\_\_

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## GENERAL QUESTIONS

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- 1) A bat that does not meet the required specifications during compression testing is considered a/an?
  - a. Altered Bat.
  - b. Illegal Bat.
  - c. Non-Approved Bat.
  - d. Certified Bat.
  
- 2) Obstruction is an act by an offensive team member that impedes, hinders or confuses a defensive player attempting to execute a play. Contact is not necessary.
  - a. True.
  - b. False.
  
- 3) Which of the following are examples of a fair ball? A batted ball that:
  - a. Bounds or rolls past first or third base on or over foul territory then next touches in fair territory.
  - b. First hits the ground over foul territory beyond first or third base but rolls fair prior to being touched.
  - c. Hits the pitcher's plate and rolls untouched to foul territory before reaching first or third base.
  - d. Touches first or third base and lands foul beyond the base.
  
- 4) Any player eligible to play in the Junior Olympic program is considered an illegal player in an Adult Softball game.
  - a. True.
  - b. False.
  
- 5) Which of the following is an incorrect pitching distance?
  - a. All Youth Girl's and Boy's Fast Pitch - 43 feet.
  - b. All Adult Slow Pitch - 50 feet.
  - c. Men's Fast Pitch - 46 feet.
  - d. Women's Fast Pitch - 43 feet.
  
- 6) The back stop should be a minimum of \_\_\_\_\_ feet and a maximum of \_\_\_\_\_ feet from home plate?
  - a. 20/25
  - b. 25/25
  - c. 25/30
  - d. 30/35
  
- 7) Which of the following is NOT true about the pitcher's plate?
  - a. Shall be made of rubber or wood.
  - b. Shall be 24 inches long and 6 inches wide.
  - c. The back of the pitcher's plate shall be the prescribed pitching distance from the back point of home plate.
  - d. The top shall be level with the ground.
  - e. It shall be permanently attached to the ground.
  
- 8) The double base shall be used at first base, in all divisions of play.
  - a. True.
  - b. False.
  
- 9) Any bat that has "Official Softball" on the barrel and has either the ASA or USA certification mark is legal for use in any USA Softball game.
  - a. True.
  - b. False.
  
- 10) The grip shall not be less than \_\_\_\_\_ inches and not more than \_\_\_\_\_ inches from the knob.
  - a. 6/15
  - b. 8/15
  - c. 6/12
  - d. 8/12

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- 11) A shoe shall be considered official if it is made of either canvas or leather uppers or similar material. Which of the following divisions are allowed to wear round metal spikes during their games?
- Junior Olympic Fast Pitch 16U and 18U.
  - Coed Slow Pitch.
  - Men's Fast Pitch.
  - Both a. and c.
  - None of the above.
- 12) Only offensive players may wear a helmet and/or face guard while in the on-deck circle, batting or as a runner.
- True.
  - False.
- 13) All player uniform shirts must have at least a six-inch number of a contrasting color on the back.
- True.
  - False.
- 14) Which of the following is NOT a true statement regarding the DP/Flex?
- The Flex can bat for the DP.
  - The DP can just play defense and the Flex can just play offense since the two are interchangeable.
  - The DP can play defense.
  - The option to use the DP/Flex must be made known prior to the start of the game.
- 15) To start a game under the SHORTHANDED RULE which of the following apply?
- A game may begin or finish with one less than required to start.
  - The vacant position must be listed last in the batting order.
  - An out will be recorded when the vacant position in the batting order is scheduled to bat.
  - All of the above.
- 16) (JO FP or Slow Pitch) A team has elected to use an EP. The EP is listed as the 6th batter in the lineup. Which of the following is true?
- The EP must be listed as the last batter.
  - The EP may play defense at any position.
  - The EP can be substituted for at any time by a player who has not yet been in the game.
  - The EP can be dropped or resumed at any time during the game.
  - Both b. & c.
- 17) When playing short-handed and a substitute arrives, the substitute has the option of entering the line-up in the vacant spot or waiting to enter later in the game.
- True.
  - False.
- 18) Which of the following is true about an unreported substitute that is discovered while at bat?
- The unreported substitute is officially in the game and called out.
  - The unreported substitute is replaced with the proper batter.
  - The unreported substitute is officially in the game and assumes the ball and strike count and all action stands.
  - The unreported substitute is disqualified and replaced with the proper batter.
- 19) Which of the following statements is true about conferences?
- Each team can only have one defensive conference per inning.
  - Each team has seven offensive conferences that may be used anytime.
  - A coach requesting time and talking to a defensive player other than the pitcher is not considered a conference.
  - A team cannot carryover unused defensive conferences into extra innings.
- 20) If a player is disqualified a team can play shorthanded, however if a player is ejected and the team does not have enough players, play cannot continue and the game is forfeited.
- True.
  - False.

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- 21) A run shall score if:
- The third out is recorded on a runner forced out due to the batter becoming a batter-runner.
  - A succeeding runner is put out on appeal at a base they were not forced to advance to after the lead runner has touched home plate.
  - The third out is a live ball out on a runner passing another runner prior to the lead runner touching home plate.
  - The runner who scores is put out on appeal.
- 22) A sign language interpreter assisting a hearing-impaired participant is allowed in the dugout, on the field of play but is required to pass a background check to do so in JO games.
- True.
  - False.
- 23) A game that is not considered regulation or stopped at a National Championship shall be resumed at the exact point where it was stopped.
- True.
  - False.
- 24) On the first pitch of the inning, B1's entire foot is completely out of the batter's box and touching the ground when contact is made between the bat and the ball. The ball then goes directly into the stands, behind home plate. The umpire should rule:
- A dead ball and B1 is declared out.
  - A foul ball and a strike on B1.
- 25) The batter shall not step directly in front of the catcher to the other batter's box while the pitcher (FP) is taking the signal or (SP) is in position to pitch, or anytime thereafter prior to the release of the pitch.
- True.
  - False.
- 26) R1 is on 2B. B2 has a count of 2-1 when a strike comes down the middle. As the umpire calls the strike, F2 thinks it is the third strike and throws the ball to F5 to throw it around the infield. What is the proper ruling?
- The ball remains live. The umpire should signify a ball on the batter for delay of game. R1 may advance at their own risk, with the liability of being put out.
  - The umpire should call "dead ball" and signify a ball on the batter for delay of game. Return R1 to second base if they have advanced. Before resuming play, announce the count as 3-2.
  - The ball remains live. R1 may advance at their own risk, with the liability of being put out. When the pitcher has the ball, the umpire should announce the count as 2-2.
  - The umpire should call "dead ball" award R1 third base and add a ball to the count of the batter for delay of game. Before resuming play, announce the count as 3-2.
- 27) The on-deck batter may loosen up with no more than two official softball bats, an approved warm-up bat or a combination not to exceed three.
- True.
  - False.
- 28) A ball curves into the batter's box and contacts B1's waist as they are swinging at the pitch. What is the proper ruling?
- The umpire should declare a "dead ball" and award B1 first base as they were hit within the batter's box.
  - The ball remains live and the batter is charged with a strike, if it is strike three B1 is out.
  - The umpire should declare a "dead ball" and charge B1 with a strike, if it is strike three B1 is out.
  - The ball remains live and B1 is awarded a ball since the ball hit them while they were swinging at it.
- 29) The runner is out and the ball is dead immediately in all of the following, EXCEPT:
- When the runner interferes with a fielder attempting to make a play on a fair batted ball.
  - When the runner intentionally interferes with a fielder or a thrown ball.
  - When a runner physically assists another runner.
  - When the runner intentionally contacts a fair ball that an infielder has missed.
- 30) With 2 outs, R1 on 3B and R2 on 2B, B5 hits a triple scoring R1 and R2, but R2 misses 3B. B6 enters the batter's box but before a pitch is thrown, the defense appeals R2 missed 3B. The umpire should rule:
- R2 is out and no run scores.
  - R2 is safe because B6 entered the batter's box prior to the appeal.
  - R2 is out and R1's run counts.
  - R2 is safe because the appeal was made after R2 entered the dugout area.

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- 31) A runner is out when they physically pass a preceding runner before that runner has been called out. If this is the third out of the inning, any runs scored prior to the out for passing a preceding runner count.
- True.
  - False.
- 32) With 1 out and R1 on 2B, B3 hits a ground ball single into right field. As R1 is advancing home, F9 throws the ball to F2 but R1 beats the tag. R1 misses home plate and is pushed back to touch the plate by the on-deck batter. B3 is advancing toward 2B when this happens. What is the proper ruling?
- The ball remains live, R1 is out for being physically assisted, their run counts.
  - The ball remains live, R1 is out for being physically assisted, and their run is nullified.
  - Dead ball, R1 is out and their run is nullified for being physically assisted back to home plate. B3 is returned to 1B.
  - Dead ball, R1 is out for being physically assisted back to home plate but their run counts. B3 is returned to 1B.
  - None of the above.
- 33) After being declared out or after scoring, an offensive player interferes with a defensive player's opportunity to make a play on another runner. What is the proper ruling?
- The ball is dead.
  - The runner closest to home is out.
  - Runners must return to last base touched at the time of the interference.
  - All of the above.
- 34) Which of the following is NOT true about an obstructed runner?
- If the obstructed runner does not violate one of the five exceptions, they may not be called out between the two bases where they were obstructed.
  - They are protected until they reach the base which would have been reached had there been no obstruction.
  - The minimum award is one base past the point where obstruction occurred.
  - If the obstructed runner is put out prior to reaching the base which would have been reached had there been no obstruction, the ball becomes dead and the obstructed runner and all other runners are awarded the base(s) they would have reached had there been no obstruction.
- 35) With bases loaded, R1 at 3B legally leads off with the pitch. F2 throws the ball in an attempt to pick off R1 but the ball is deflected by F5 and enters dead ball territory. The correct ruling is:
- All runners are returned to the base occupied at the time of the pitch.
  - Since the play was made on R1 they are awarded home, but all other runners remain at the base occupied at the time of the pitch.
  - Since this was a throw of a pitched ball, all runners are awarded one base only.
  - All runners are awarded two bases from the time of the throw.
- 36) With R1 on 2B and no outs, B2 hits a deep fly ball that F8 jumps to catch right at the fence in the outfield. After securing the catch F8 falls over the fence into dead ball territory as R1 is tagging up at 2B. What is the proper ruling?
- The ball is dead, B2 is awarded 1B as F8 carried the ball into dead ball territory. R1 remains at 2B.
  - The ball is dead, B2 is ruled out on the catch, R1 is awarded 3B as F8 unintentionally carried the ball into dead ball territory.
  - The ball remains live, B2 is out on the catch, R1 is entitled to advance with liability to be called out.
  - A delayed dead ball is called, B2 is out on the catch, R1 is protected to 3B but can attempt to advance home with liability to be put out.

### **FAST PITCH QUESTIONS**

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- 37) Which is a true statement about a Fast Pitch pitchers delivery?
- The pitching delivery rules are the same for Boy's and Girl's Fast Pitch.
  - In Women's and Junior Olympic having both feet in the air results in an illegal pitch.
  - Pushing off from anywhere other than the pitching plate results in an illegal pitch.
  - The pitching delivery rules are the same for Men's and Women's Fast Pitch.
- 38) In Fast Pitch, a no pitch is declared when:
- A player, manager or coach calls time, or employs other words or phrases, or commits any act while the ball is live for the obvious purpose of trying to make the pitcher commit an illegal pitch.
  - The runner is called out for leaving a base prior to the pitcher releasing the ball.
  - The pitcher pitches during live ball play.
  - a. and b. only.
  - All of the above.

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- 39) In a Fast Pitch game, with 1 out, R1 on 2B, B3 has a 2-2 count. F1 decided to intentionally walk B3 to set up an infield fly situation. In order to walk B3 they must:
- Notify the plate umpire to put B3 on 1B.
  - Legally deliver a pitch outside of the strike zone.
  - Legally deliver two pitches outside of the strike zone.
  - Intentionally commit two illegal pitches for ball three and four.
- 40) In a Fast Pitch game, the batter is out when:
- There is 1 out, R1 on 1B and F2 drops strike three.
  - There are two outs and strike three is caught by F2.
  - There is 1 out, R1 on 1B and F2 catches strike three.
  - All of the above.
- 41) In Fast Pitch, a pitched ball, not swung at nor called a strike, touches any part of the batter's person including their hands or clothing. What is the proper ruling?
- The ball is dead.
  - The batter is awarded first base if they made an attempt to avoid being hit.
  - If the batter did not make an attempt to avoid being hit, they are awarded a ball and remain at bat unless it is ball four.
  - All of the above.
- 42) How long does a Fast Pitch pitcher have to release a pitch after receiving the ball or after the umpire indicates, "play ball"?
- 5 seconds.
  - 10 seconds.
  - 20 seconds.
  - There is no time limit.
- 43) In Fast Pitch, when can a runner legally begin advancing on a pitch?
- When the ball reaches home plate.
  - When the ball is batted.
  - When the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
  - None of the above.

## MECHANIC QUESTIONS

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- 44) In a one-umpire system with multiple runners on base, move out from behind the plate toward the middle of the diamond and read the play. With runners on 2B and 3B, glance and see the runner from 3B touch the plate while moving to the middle of the diamond. If the throw goes to the plate, open up to the throw and move toward the plate, obtaining the best angle and distance possible. Stop, read the play and make the call.
- True.
  - False.
- 45) In a one-umpire system, with R1 at 1B and a base hit to the outfield the umpire should:
- Move out from behind the plate and into the middle of the diamond.
  - Be prepared for a possible throw to 2B or 3B
  - Read the outfielder and if the throw goes to 3B move toward 3B getting the best angle and distance possible for a tag play. Stop, read the play and make the call.
  - All of the above.
- 46) In a two-umpire system with no runners on base, a ground ball is hit to the infield. The Plate Umpire (P) should trail the batter runner no more than 1/3 of the way to 1B in fair territory and read the play. Responsible for any play at 3B and at Plate. The Base Umpire (B) should step into fair territory, at an angle 90 degrees to the path of the runner, but no more than a 45-degree angle from the foul line and let the ball take you to the play. Responsible for any play at 1B and 2B.
- True.
  - False.
- 47) Whenever a pick-off attempt is made, the base umpire should?
- Move at an angle that will take them directly towards the base in order to close the distance for the call.
  - Continue moving while the play develops so that they get as close to the play as possible.
  - Use a strong "Sell" call for every pick-off play to convince others they got the call correct.
  - Move parallel to the baseline, get the best angle & distance possible. Stop, get an unobstructed view of the play, then make the call.

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- 48) The starting position for the base umpire in a two-umpire system with R1 on 3B and R2 on 1B is 18-21 feet behind 2B to get the best angle and distance for runners leaving the bases early.
- True.
  - False.
- 49) With bases loaded in a three-umpire system with a fly ball toward the first baseline that no umpire chases, which of the following statement(s) are correct?
- Plate umpire has R1 tagging up at 3B, U3 has R2 tagging up at 2B and U1 has R3 tagging up at 1B.
  - U3 has R1 tagging up at 3B, U1 has R2 tagging up at 2B and R3 tagging up at 1B and Plate umpire has no tag up responsibilities on this play.
  - U3 has R1 tagging up at 3B and R2 tagging up at 2B, U1 has R3 tagging up at 1B and Plate umpire has no tag up responsibilities on this play.
  - U3 has R1 tagging up at 3B, U1 has R2 tagging up at 2B and Plate umpire has R3 tagging up at 1B.
- 50) In the three-umpire system with runners at 2B and 3B and a fly ball to center field, U1 is responsible for:
- Pick up the flight of the ball and glance at your partners.
  - Pick up the flight of the ball, glance at your partners, move parallel to the flight of the ball to get an unobstructed view. Stop, see the play and make the call.
  - Move inside the diamond, buttonhook and see the batter runner touch 1B.
  - Move inside the diamond and buttonhook, see the runner at 2B tag up and see the batter runner touch 1B.

### **ALTERNATIVE SLOW PITCH QUESTIONS**

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- 51) Which of the following is NOT a true statement for the pitching delivery in Adult Slow Pitch?
- The delivery is a continuous motion.
  - The pivot foot does not have to remain in contact with the pitching plate until the ball is released.
  - The pitch must be delivered from the throwing arm side of the body.
  - The pitcher shall not continue with any pitching motion once the pitch is released.
- 52) Which statement is NOT correct concerning a legal delivery in the Slow Pitch Game?
- The pitcher shall not continue any pitching motion after the ball is released.
  - The pitcher has 10 seconds to release the next pitch after receiving the ball or the umpire saying play ball.
  - The speed of the pitch is left entirely up to the judgement of the umpire; the pitch shall be released at a moderate speed.
  - The ball shall be delivered with a perceptible arc and reach a height of 6 feet from the ground, while not exceeding a maximum height of 10 feet from the ground (excluding Senior Slow Pitch).
- 53) Which of the following is true about a courtesy runner in Adult Slow Pitch?
- They are officially in the game when reported to the plate umpire.
  - If a courtesy runner is used, the courtesy runner CAN NOT be replaced by a substitute.
  - A courtesy runner may not run for an existing courtesy runner except for injury.
  - All of the above.
- 54) In Slow Pitch a "No Pitch" is declared by the Plate Umpire when?
- The pitcher pitches during the suspension of play.
  - A runner is called out for leaving a base prior to the ball reaching home plate.
  - When a pitch is delivered before a runner has retouched their base after being legitimately off that base.
  - All of the above.
- 55) (Slow Pitch with stealing) When can a runner legally advance to the next base?
- The ball reaches the front edge of home plate.
  - When a pitched ball is batted.
  - Until the pitcher has possession of the ball in the infield and all playing action has ceased.
  - All of the above.
- 56) Which of the following is NOT true about a courtesy runner whose turn at bat comes while on base in a Slow Pitch game?
- The player who the courtesy runner is running for will be called out.
  - The courtesy runner will be removed from the base and take their turn at bat.
  - The runner who the courtesy runner is running for will return to run.
  - A second courtesy runner or a substitute is not permitted at this time.

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- 57) In Slow Pitch, what is the proper ruling when a pitcher attempts a quick return of the ball before the batter has taken a position in the batter's box or when the batter is off balance?
- The ball is dead and no pitch is declared.
  - An illegal pitch is declared.
  - The ball is dead and the pitcher is warned. An additional offense results in the pitcher being ejected.
  - None of the above.



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