

Softball (Team & Skills)

Revised 2025

Special Olympics
Iowa



Registration Entries



Entry forms are available online at www.soioowa.org

- Competitions tab > click on Participation Forms > Scroll to Softball

Conference/State Competition Entries

- Entries can be emailed to: registrations@soioowa.org
- After your entries have been put into GMS you will be sent a Delegation Report
 - Review the report and return to the State Office with any corrections
- **Any athlete who participates at regional competition and places may compete at the state tournament**

Softball Skills



Individual skills competition is based on four events

- Base Running
- Throwing
- Fielding
- Hitting

Rules:

- Special Olympics Iowa will follow Amateur Softball Associations Slow Pitch rules.
ASA rules for Softball can be found on our website under the Softball page

Equipment

- Only bats marked by the manufacturer as “Official Softball” may be used
- A 30 cm (12”) optic yellow softball must be used
- Non-metal cleats **may** be worn

Competition



- Individual skills competition is not for athletes who can already play the game
- The athlete's final score is determined by adding together the scores achieved in each of the four events
- Athletes will be pre-divisioned according to their total score from those four events
- Each event is diagrammed with the suggested number and placement of volunteers who will administer the event. It is also suggested that the same volunteers remain at the event throughout the competition so that consistency is provided



Event #1: Base Running

Equipment:

- Three bases, home plate, stop watch

Purpose:

- To measure the athlete's base running ability

Description:

- Bases are set up like a baseball diamond and positioned 19.81 meters (65 feet) apart. The athlete is instructed to start at home plate and run around the bases as fast as possible, touching every base en route

Scoring:

- The time starts when the athlete leaves home plate and stops when the athlete returns to home plate after circling the bases. The time elapsed in seconds is subtracted from 60 to determine the point score. A penalty of five seconds for each base missed or touched in improper order shall be assessed. The best score of two trials is recorded



Event #2: Throwing

Equipment:

- Regulation field, two measuring tapes, softballs, two small cones or marking stakes

Purpose:

- To measure the athlete's ability in throwing for distance and accuracy

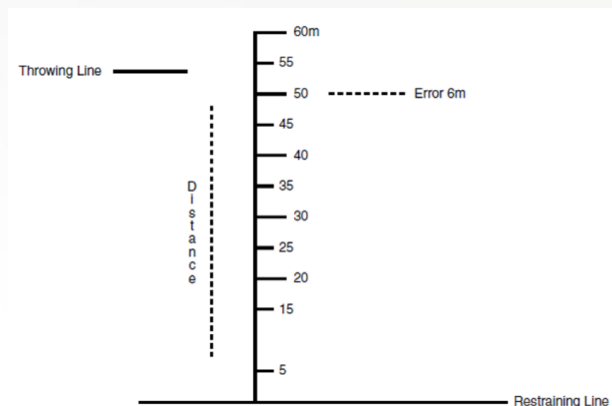
Description:

- The athlete stands behind the restraining line, back far enough to take one or more steps in preparation for throwing. The athlete has two trials to throw the softball as far and as straight as possible down the throwing line, without stepping over the restraining line. The better of the two throws is measured and recorded as the athlete's score. If an athlete steps on or over the line before releasing the ball, the trial must be repeated. There will be a maximum of two repeats

Event #2: Throwing



Scoring: The net throwing score equals the throwing distance, measured at a point on the throwing line straight across from (perpendicular to) the spot where the ball landed, minus the error distance, the number of meters the ball landed off target, away from the throwing line. The player's score is the better of the two throws. Both error scores and distance are measured to the nearest meter; for example, if a ball lands even with (perpendicular to) the 50-meter point on the measuring tape, but is six meters off to one side, the player's score is 44 points (Distance thrown [50] minus number of meters off target [6] results in a net score of 44 meters). Athletes score one point per meter; for example, 44 meters equals 44 points. If the score falls between meters, the score should be rounded down; for example, 44.73 equals 44 points





Event #3: Fielding

Equipment:

- 30.5 cm (12 inch) softballs, measuring tape, chalk/line, cones

Purpose:

- To measure the athlete's fielding ability

Description:

- The athlete will stand between and behind the two cones. The official must throw the ball on the ground to the athlete, between the cones. The throw to the athlete must hit the ground before the 6.10 meter (20 inch) chalk mark. The athlete may move aggressively toward the ball. If the thrown ball is outside of the cones, the throw must be repeated. Each athlete gets five fielding attempts per trial. Each athlete receives two trials

Scoring:

- The athlete receives five points for a clearly fielded ball (either caught in glove or trapped against the body, but off the ground); two points for a ball that is blocked; zero points for a missed attempt, for a maximum score of 50

Event #4: Hitting



Equipment:

- Batting tee, 30.5 cm (12 inch) red-stitch restricted-flight softballs, bat, measuring tape, and chalk

Purpose:

- To measure the athlete's ability to hit for distance when hitting off a batting tee

Description:

- The athlete will stand in a regulation-size batter's box (2.31 meters (7 feet, 7 inches) by 99 cm (3 feet, 3 inches). The athlete is instructed to hit the ball off the tee. The athlete receives three attempts

Scoring:

- The distance of the longest hit shall determine the athlete's final score. The distance of a hit is measured from the batting tee to the point where the ball first touches the ground. The distance of a hit is measured to the nearest meter; for example, one meter equals one point; 46 meters equals 46 points. If the score falls between the meters, scores should be rounded down, for example 46.73 equals 46 points

Softball Skills Final Score



- An athlete's final score is determined by adding together the scores achieved in each of the four events which comprise the Individual Skills Competition

Team Softball



Events:

- Team
- Coed
- Unified

Equipment:

- Bats marked by the manufacturer as “Official Softball” may be used
- A first baseman’s trapping-type mitt may be worn by first baseman and catchers only
- The catcher must wear a one piece helmet and mask
- All batters and base runners must wear a batter’s helmet
- A 30 cm (12 inch) optic yellow softball must be used
- Non-metal cleats **may** be worn

Team Softball



Competition:

- Team softball competition does not follow the age categories for divisioning. It is an open age competition, which means teams consist of athletes of all ages
- Rosters are 10-15 players
- The game consists of 7 innings with a 1 ½ hour playing time limit
- Extra innings are played if needed
- The game is considered complete if after three full innings of play one team leads the other by 15 runs or more, or five full innings of play one team leads the other by 10 runs or more
- If a batter is using the tee the pitcher will stand on the rubber and the outfielders need to be on the grass

Team Softball



Competition:

- Division III, IV, and Developmental may use a tee and bat. When the batter steps up to the plat they must choose bat or tee. No changes at bat will be allowed
- In Division IV after an athlete pitcher pitches four balls a coach will come in and pitch three pitches
- There will be no walks. Batter will not be allowed to switch to tee after receiving pitch
- The ball must be pitched in an underhand motion and should travel in an arc that is no less than 1.83 meters (6 feet) and no greater than 3.66 meters (12 feet). Pitcher must have one foot on rubber to start pitch
- A carpet extension is used to determine a strike or ball. If the ball lands on the plate or carpet in correct arch, it is a strike. If the ball lands on the black of plate, it is a ball

Team Softball



Competition:

- At bat starts with a one and one count. Four balls constitute a walk and three strikes constitute an out. If the batter has two strikes and fouls off the third pitch, he/she shall be declared out
- In the Developmental division coaches will pitch to their own batters. There will be only four pitches from the coach, or the batting tee. The batter starts with a one and one count and can strike out
- In Division IV and Developmental, three outs or 10 batters will indicate the end of an inning
- As a safety precaution athletes in Division I and Division II are not allowed to use the tee
- An appeal play is defined as a play in which an umpire is unable to make a decision unless he/she is requested to do so by a coach or player. The appeal can be made if a coach or player asks the umpire to make a ruling

Team Softball



Competition:

- The umpires are empowered to make all decisions on the playing field. If a protest is made, it shall be brought to the Softball Rules Committee who will then make a final decision. A protest may only be made if it questions the applicability of the rules. No protest will be considered which pertains to any judgement call made by an umpire
- If a coach touches a runner while the ball is still in play, that runner will be declared out. Coaches are required to stay within the boundaries of the coaches' box
- In the Developmental division, the defensive coach can be on the field behind 2nd base
- In Division IV, after the 10th batter bats and the pitcher has the ball in the vicinity of the mound the ball will be considered dead. Runners may advance to the base they are headed for
- A player can only occupy one spot in the batting order. If a player is replaced in the batting order he/she can only come back into that same slot in the order, and only one re-entry allowed. Moving defensive positions not a substitution. Players can switch defensive positions at will

Quiz



- Click the link to take the quiz
- [Softball \(Team & Skills\)](#)