

SOFTBALL DEFINITIONS

ASA	Amateur Softball Association (ASA). The British Softball Federation recognizes the "ASA Rule Book" for Slowpitch Softball.
Assist	A play by a fielder which helps to put out a base runner or batter. For example, a ground ball is hit to the shortstop who throws to first base to get the batter out. The shortstop is credited with an assist; the first base player is credited with the putout.
At-Bat	An offensive player's turn at bat.
Backstop	A fence behind home plate used to stop balls that get past the catcher (not always used in Slowpitch Softball).
Ball-and-Strike Count ("The Count")	The number of balls and strike on the batter.
Base	The three white bags located at the 1st, 2nd and 3rd base positions. A double base (Safety Base) is often used at first.
Base Hit	A ball batted into the field of play which enables the batter to reach base without any put-out or error being made by the defensive team.
Base Lines ("Foul Lines")	The lines which start at home plate and go out at a 90° angle, separating fair and foul territories.
Base-on-balls (A "Walk")	When a batter is awarded four balls, she proceeds automatically to first base.
Base Path	A (notional) three foot wide path between the bases.
Bases Loaded	There are base runners on all three bases.
Batter's Box	Rectangles marked on the ground on either side of home plate in which the batter stands, depending on whether she is right-handed or left-handed. Hitting the ball without both feet remaining in the batter's box results in the batter being called out.
Batting Average	The number produced when a player's at-bats is divided by the number of hits (walks do not count as an at-bat). A player coming to bat 10 times and getting three hits has a batting average of .300.
Batting Order	The order in which the players in each team go up to bat.
Choking Up	Gripping the bat higher up the handle to achieve better bat control.
Dead Ball	A ball hit, thrown or carried outside the playing area; or when time is called by the umpire.
Delivery	The action of the pitcher when pitching the ball.
Diamond	The whole field of play – the infield plus the outfield.
Double	A base hit where the batter makes it to second base.
Double Play	A play in which two put-outs are achieved.
Error	A missed opportunity by a fielder to make an out or to stop runners advancing around the bases. Example: a ball is hit on the ground towards the shortstop, but goes through her legs instead of being caught and thrown to a base.
Fair Ball	A batted ball hit into the field of play.
Fair Territory	The area of the field within the base lines in front of and including home plate.
Fielder's Choice	When a fielder (defensive player) makes an out on a base runner rather than on the batter when both options are possible.

Softball Terms and Definitions

Fly Ball	A ball batted into the air.	Pitching Plate	The rectangular rubber slab from which the pitcher pitches the ball. The pitcher must have one foot in contact with the pitching plate as the ball leaves her hand.
Force Play	When there are no open bases behind a base runner, she will be forced to advance to the next base when the batter hits the ball into play. This runner can then be put out if the ball is thrown to a fielder standing on the base to which she is advancing. No tag is required (see Tag Play below).	Run-Batted-In (RBI)	The batter who hits the ball which enables a runner to score is credited with an RBI – except when the batter has hit into a double play or when the run scores because of an error made on that hit.
Foul Ball	A ball hit outside fair territory. If a foul fly ball is caught in Foul Territory – the area between a Base Line and the Dead Ball Line – the batter is out.	Rundown	This occurs when a runner is caught between two bases while fielders attempt to tag her out.
Foul Territory	The area of the playing field between the Base Lines and the Dead Ball Lines, including the area behind home plate.	Sacrifice Fly	This occurs when the batter hits a ball into the outfield which is caught, following which a runner is subsequently able to score without being put out.
Grand Slam	A home run hit with the bases loaded.	Safe	A call made by an umpire to indicate that a batter or runner has made it to a base without being put out.
Ground ball ("Grounder")	A ball hit along the ground (either rolling or bouncing).	Single	A hit where the batter makes it to first base.
Hit in the Hole	A ball hit on the ground between the 1st and 2nd base players or between the shortstop and 3rd base players.	Slide	The action of a base runner sliding into a base or home plate to avoid a tag.
Home Plate	A five-sided plate laid on the ground between the batter's boxes, across which the pitcher must pitch the ball. To score a run, a base-runner must touch home plate after completing a journey around the other three bases.	Southpaw	A left-handed player. The term usually refers to left-handed pitchers.
Home Run ("Homer")	A hit which enables the batter to get all the way around the bases and back to home plate (thus scoring a run) without stopping and without the fielding team making an error.	Strikeout	When three strikes are called against a batter, the batter is out. In Slowpitch Softball, hitting a foul ball with two strikes already called against the batter has the effect of a Strikeout.
Home Team	The host team. The home team always bats second in each inning.	Strike Zone	An area above home plate between the top of the back shoulder and the knees of the batter, through which the pitched ball must pass for a strike to be called by the umpire.
Illegal Pitch	This is called by the umpire when a pitched ball either travels too fast, exceeds 12 feet, fails to achieve a height of 6 feet or is judged in any other way to be an unfair delivery. An illegal pitch is automatically a ball against the pitcher – unless the batter chooses to swing at it, in which case the effect of the swing (a hit or a strike) takes precedence.	Switch Hitter	A batter who can bat left or right handed.
Infield	That part of the diamond bounded by the four bases (including home plate). In practice, the infield is slightly larger than simply the area inside the baselines.	Tag Play	The act of a fielder tagging a base runner with the ball either in her hand or glove. When a base runner is not forced to advance (because there is an open base behind her), she can only be put out by being tagged before she reaches base; simply standing on the base with the ball will not do. See Force Play, above.
Interference	Normally, the act of a batter or runner impeding a fielder.	Tagging Up	The act of a runner returning to or remaining at the base she was occupying when a fly ball is hit. The reason for tagging up is because the runner can advance after the catch providing she has legally tagged up.
Line Drive	A well-struck fly ball travelling on more of a flat line than a high arc.	Time Out	The umpire calls "Time Out" once each play has finished, indicating that the ball is dead.
Obstruction	Normally, the act of a fielder impeding a batter or runner.	Triple	A base hit where the batter makes it to third base.
On-Deck Batter	The next batter due up after the batter currently at the plate.	Triple Play	A play in which three put outs are achieved. Triple plays are rare!
Out	Putting out a batter or runner.	Umpire	The official who adjudicates the game.
Outfield	The area of the playing field (diamond) beyond the infield.	Visiting Team	The visiting team always bats first.