



VSS Rules Summary April 2022

This document is intended to provide VSS managers and umpires with a summary of the VSS and SSUSA rules used for VSS games. This is a summary only intended to aid in the explanation of certain less understood/more complicated rules. The full VSS rules and a link to the SSUSA rules are available from the VSS website.

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1. Equipment

- Players must wear team jerseys and league hats (or no hats)
- Pitchers must wear a mask
- All bats must have a VSS sticker
- Age 70+ may use a senior bat
- A player under 70 will be called out if they take a stance in the batter's box with a senior bat.
(VSS rules Section L)

2. Lineup

- All healthy players present in uniform must play at least two innings in the field unless they have an exemption from the board.
- All healthy players present in uniform must be in the lineup.
- Substitute players and pool players must bat at the bottom of the lineup.
- Players arriving after the start of the game must be added to the bottom of the lineup.
- Players leaving during the game will not be outs unless they have been ejected.
- Teams are allowed unlimited field substitution.
(VSS rules: Section N)

3. Pitching

- The arc of the pitch should be between 6' and 12' from the ground (VSS rules: Section H)
- The pitcher's box is 50' from the front of home plate, extending back 10', and 2' wide. (SSUSA section 2.3)
- The pitcher must have some portion of one foot in contact with the pitcher's box before starting pitch delivery. (VSS Rules section H)
- The pitch count shall start as 1 ball and 1 strike. (VSS Rules section H)
- A second foul ball on third strike shall result in the batter being called out. (VSS Rules section H)

Umpiring Pitching

- An "illegal pitch" should be called when the arc of the pitch is not between 6' and 12' from the ground
- A 12' pole has been placed behind the backstop to assist the umpires
- The infield umpire who can view the 12' pole should call illegal high pitches.

4. Hitting

- Players are limited to one over the fence home run per game. Any additional balls hit over the fence will be doubles. (VSS Rules section D)
- After receiving one walk in a game, players have the option to take first base on subsequent walks or may continue to remain at bat continuing with the same strike count. (VSS Rules section D)

5. Commitment Line:

- Once a runner's foot touches the ground on or past the commitment line, the runner is committed to advancing to the scoring plate and may no longer be tagged out. (VSS Rules section J, SSUSA section 8.8)
- If a player crosses the commitment line and then retreats back to third base, they should be called out. (VSS Rules section J, SSUSA section 8.8)
- The one exception is in the instance of a fly ball that is caught where the runner is allowed to return to third base to tag up. (VSS Rules section J)

6. Scoring Line:

- All plays at home are force plays.
- A player may not be tagged out after crossing the commitment line.
- A second home plate is used as the scoring line.
- A player headed to home must touch the second home plate or they will be called out.
- If a defensive player has the ball and touches any part of the extended home plate before the runner touches the second home plate, they are out. (VSS Rules section C)

7. Player Placement:

- Outfielders must start behind the 160' line and cannot come in until the ball is hit.
- Infielders must start no closer to the batter than the base line and must have both feet on the infield dirt. Infielders cannot come in or move out until the ball is hit. (VSS rules, Section H, Section J)

8. Double Bag at First Base

- On a hit to the infield, the runner must touch orange bag (else they will be out)
- On a hit to the outfield where there is no play at first, the runner may touch the white bag if turning towards second.
- The defensive player must touch the white bag (not the orange bag) for a force. (VSS Rules section E)

9. Courtesy Runners:

- A player may be a courtesy runner once per inning. If they run a second time, it's an out.
- If a courtesy runner from home doesn't reach first safely, it doesn't count towards their once per inning.
- If a player receives a courtesy runner, they may not then be a courtesy runner that same inning. If they do, it's an out.
- If a player is on base as a courtesy runner when it's their turn at bat, they are called out as the courtesy runner. The player gets their turn at bat. (VSS rules Section K, SSUSA section 8.5)

10. Courtesy Runner From Home:

- Only players approved by the board may use courtesy runners from home.
- Whether to use a courtesy runner from home is game-to-game decision to be made by an approved player.
- If a player chooses to use a courtesy runner during a given game, they must use a courtesy runner during all at bats during that game. If they don't, it's an out.
- A courtesy runner from home can only go to first. If they move towards second, it's a dead ball and runners go back to the last base touched.
- If a courtesy runner from home leaves before the ball is hit, the batter will be called out. (VSS rules Section K)

11. Infield Fly Rule

Infield Fly Rule Explained:

- The infield fly rule takes effect on a fair fly ball (not a line drive) that, in the judgment of the umpire, can be caught by an infielder, pitcher, or catcher with ordinary effort and when there are runners on first and second or first, second, and third and less than two outs.

- If the ball lands foul, is dropped in foul territory, or rolls foul after touching the ground in the infield before being touched by the defense, infield fly does not apply (even if the umpire called it). These are foul balls.
(<http://www.qcbaseball.com/rules/infielddafllyarule.aspx>)

Umpire call of infield fly:

- The umpire should call “Infield fly – the batter is out” or “Infield fly - if fair” and signal the call by pointing his/her arm in the air.
- If the umpire fails to call infield fly when it should be called, this can be corrected before the next pitch (SSUSA section 1.41)

12. Obstruction

Obstruction Defined

- A defensive player or team member who hinders or prevents a batter from striking at or hitting a pitched ball.
- A fielder who is not in possession of the ball, in the act of fielding a batted ball, nor about to receive a thrown ball, who impedes the progress of a runner or batter-runner who is legally running bases.
(SSUSA section 1.48)

Umpiring Obstruction

- Players may be called safe when obstruction occurs.

13. Interference

Interference Defined

- Interference is the act of an offensive player or team member that impedes or confuses a defensive player attempting to execute a play. A base runner must avoid a fielder making a play.
(SSUSA section 1.45)

Umpiring Interference

- Players may be called out for interference.

14. Game Time

- After 65 minutes of play, the umpire should announce “the next full inning is the final inning and an open inning.”
- No innings can start after 75 minutes of game time.
(VSS Rules section M)

15. Lightning

- If lightning is seen in the vicinity, the umpire should suspend play.
- Teams must vacate the field for at least 30 minutes.

- Teams for the second game may not be on the field until the 30 minutes has passed.
(VSS Rules section Q)

16. Forfeits/Substitute Players

A team must have at least 8 players or they will forfeit.

- The 8 players may come from either the team's roster or from the team's roster and pool players.
- To bring a team to 11, substitute players from other teams in the league may be added.
- There are special restrictions regarding the substitution of #1 players:
 - #1 players can only substitute for another #1 player
 - If a team has two or more #1 players present, any substitutes may not #1 players.
 - There is one exception – if a team is short and missing their regular pitchers, they may substitute a #1 player as a pitcher only.
- Substitute players during the playoffs may not be #1 players and are subject to the approval of the opposing manager or of the commissioner if the managers cannot agree.

(VSS Rules section B)