

# KICKBALL

## League Rules



**EDMONTON SPORT & SOCIAL CLUB**

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## 1. FIELD REQUIREMENTS

League	Total # of Players Required on the Field	Minimum # of F Players Required on the Field	Maximum # of M/X Players Allowed on the Field
All	10	3	7

The ESSC welcomes people of all gender identity or expression. Minimum female player requirements are inclusive of anyone who identifies as a female (i.e. players who identify themselves as M and X will not count towards F player minimums).

## 2. DEFAULT MINIMUMS & SCORES

League	Minimum Players to Avoid Default	Default Score
All	7 (2 Female Players)	0-20

## 3. FORMAT & EQUIPMENT

### GAME FORMAT

- Players should arrive 15 minutes prior to the scheduled game time
- Teams will play one 90-minute game per night:
  - Maximum of 9-innings in length
  - Most diamonds have two rotations of games per night, ***if playing in the early slot on a diamond, teams may not start a new inning with less than 10 minutes remaining in the timeslot***
  - If a game is called due to darkness, the final score will stand as of the last completed inning
- **Regular Season:** Ties are allowed
- **Playoffs:** Ties are not allowed
  - If a game is tied at the end of 9-innings, the game proceeds to extra-innings
    - Both teams get a chance to kick in each extra-inning
    - If the score remains tied, additional extra-inning(s) will use the ***'International Scoring Rule'***
      - Teams will start each inning with a runner on 2nd base
      - The runner will be the player who was the final out in the previous inning

### SCORING

- Mercy is called and the score freezes if a team is up by 20 or more runs as the conclusion of a full-inning

### EQUIPMENT

- **Cleats** are permitted, as long as they do not have metal spikes

- Players **cannot** wear gripped gloves in ESSC Kickball Leagues
- All kickballs will be provided by the ESSC

## 4. GAME PLAY

### STARTING THE GAME

#### FIELD SET-UP

- Teams should set-up the field using the **ESSC Field Set-up Diagram**
  - Most fields will be lined, but if lines are absent, teams should mark the following:
    - Foul Lines, Respect Line, Commitment Line, Home-plate line
  - Bases will be placed **65 feet** from home plate
    - Some fields will have the distance marked by an in-ground whisker

#### KEEPING SCORE

- **Regular Season:** Teams may use any suitable means to determine who is the home team; receiving the choice to field or kick to start the first-inning
- **Playoffs:** The higher seed is the home team, choosing to field or kick to start the first-inning
- Teams will track individual kicker results each inning for their own team, as well as total runs scored by the opposing team
- **A team can score a maximum of 7-runs in a single-inning**, with the exception of the final inning where a team can score an unlimited number of runs
- **Mercy** is called and the score freezes if a team is up by **20 or more runs** as the conclusion of a full-inning
  - In this case, teams are encouraged to continue to play for fun, or to mix up the teams for practice, but it is not a requirement and teams may leave the game following a mercy
  - Final scores cannot be higher than a 20-point differential
- A team does not kick in the bottom of the 9<sup>th</sup> inning if already leading the game
- If the go-ahead / winning run is scored in the bottom of the 9<sup>th</sup> inning, the game ends immediately
- **The score should be confirmed at the end of each half-inning to avoid any discrepancies**

#### KICKING ORDER

- All players playing in the game must be listed in the kicking order
  - A player cannot play in the field during the game if they are not part of the kicking order
  - A player can be part of the kicking order, but not play in the field during the game
- Any additions or changes to the kicking order after the start of the game (due to players arriving late, etc) must be approved by the opposing team
  - Teams are allowed to sub or replace a player mid-way through a game, but once a player is removed from their spot in the kicking order they cannot return to the game
- 3 female players must appear within the first 10 players in the kicking order
  - If only 2 female players are present at the game, every 3<sup>rd</sup> female player spot results in an automatic out

- The kicking order will alternate between genders. Three players of the same gender can only bat in a row one-time, including the carry-over from the bottom of the order to the top
- There is no limit to the length of the kicking order
  - If a team only has the minimum female player requirement, they may construct the batting order repeating the present female players as needed to ensure the batting order rules above can be followed.

**Kicking Order Examples:**

# of Players in Kicking Order	# of Female Player Spots Needed	Suggested Legal Kicking Order
10	3	P1-F-P2-P3-P4-F-P5-P6-F-P7 P1-P2-F-P3-P4-P5-F-P6-P7-F P1-P2-P3-F-P4-P5-F-P6-P7-F
11	4	P1-F-P2-P3-F-P4-P5-F-P6-P7-F P1-P2-F-P3-P4-F-P5-P6-F-P7-F
12	4	P1-P2-F-P3-P4-F-P5-P6-F-P7-P8-F
13	4	P1-P2-F-P3-P4-P5-F-P6-P7-F-P8-P9-F P1-P2-P3-F-P4-P5-F-P6-P7-F-P8-P9-F
14	5	P1-P2-F-P3-P4-F-P5-P6-F-P7-P8-F-P9-F
15	5	P1-P2-F-P3-P4-F-P5-P6-F-P7-P8-F-P9-P10-F

**PITCHING**

- The pitching mound should be 42 feet from home plate
- Teams will pitch to their opponents:
  - Each kicker will receive up to 3 strikes and/or 4 balls
  - The pitch must be an underhand, below 1 foot in height and hit the ground at least once, or it will be deemed 'illegal'

- Windmill pitchers are not allowed
- Pitches that bounce higher than the allowed threshold are not allowed
- The umpire must call 'illegal' before the kicker makes a play on the ball
- An 'illegal' pitch results in a 'ball' in terms of the kicker's count
- If the kicker makes an attempt on the ball, the result of the play cannot be over-turned
- A strike occurs:
  - On a swing and a miss, or on a foul ball, or an out of play ball
  - If the kicker takes the pitch and the ball rolls through the strike zone
    - The strike zone is one foot on either side of the plate and one foot high
- If a kicker is walked with four straight balls (no strikes) that batter proceeds to second base, and the next batter on-deck may choose between batting or taking an automatic walk to first base.
  - Previous baserunners will only advance if the walk(s) force them to the next base

## KICKING

- There is no bunting allowed in any ESSC Kickball division
  - A half-kick or bunt attempt will result in a strike
- When a player makes contact with the ball, it does not have to pass the pitcher to be live, as long as the kicker took a full-kick or attempt at the ball
- A kicker who hits a foul tip or ball with two strikes is 'out'
- A kicker may step on the plate in order to kick the ball
- The kicker must have at least a portion of the planted foot in the kicking box when the kick is made

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## FOUL BALLS

- A foul fly ball exceeding the height of the Kicker and caught by the catcher or any defender in foul territory is an out
- If the kicker makes contact with the ball and it touches home plate and rolls into fair territory, the ball is live
- If the kicker makes contact with the ball and it touches any part of their body (including clothing) the ball is a foul-tip (dead ball) and is considered a strike
- A ball can travel over the foul line and return into play before it passes 1st or 3rd base and be live, as long as it has not been touched by a defender in foul territory

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## OUT OF PLAY

- Any kicked balls (infield or outfield) that travel past the 'out of play' lines are not catchable for an out. The ball is a foul (dead ball) and is considered a strike.
- Drawing an imaginary line from the corner of the backstop is the easiest reference point for designating the Out of Play lines

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## INFIELD FLY RULE

- Applies when there is 0 or 1 out, and;
  - Runners on 1st and 2nd base



- Runners on 1st, 2nd and 3rd base
- `Infield Fly' should be called by the umpire while the ball is in the air
- On a routine pop-fly to the infield the Kicker is automatically declared out
  - The infielders do not have to make an attempt to catch the ball
  - This prevents the fielder from dropping the ball in an attempt to force multiple runners out
- The rule does not apply for line drives, or balls that go beyond the base line of infield playing area
- On an infield fly play, a player who is already on base may choose to try to tag-up and advance once the ball hits the ground

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## HOME RUNS

- There is a team home run limit of 5 home runs per game
  - **ESSC Leagues:** Any additional home runs hit by a team after the limit has been reached will be recorded as a double, with the runner stopping on 2nd base
    - Both captains agree on an alternate rule before the game starts (strike, out, single, etc)
  - An inside-the-park home run, or home run resulting from a defensive error will not count
- If a ball passes the home run line in the air, it automatically becomes a dead ball and cannot be fielded

## BASE RUNNING

- Lead-offs or stealing bases are never permitted in ESSC Kickball Leagues
  - The runner is `out' if they leave the bag before the Kicker makes contact with the ball
- When running to 1st base:
  - The runner may only contact the orange safety base beside 1st base
    - If the runner touches any part of the white 1st base then they are out
  - The fielder may only contact the white 1st base
    - If the fielder touches any part of the orange safety base, the runner is safe
  - The exception is if the runner is rounding 1st base on a multi-base hit:
    - In this case the fielder must move out of the base path and allow the runner to round the base unobstructed and the runner can make contact with the white 1st base
- A runner may not run out of the baseline to avoid a tag, or they will be called `out'
  - *Exception:* When running from 3rd base towards home plate the runner is to keep outside of the baseline and is considered safe if they pass the home-plate line (one foot on the ground past the line) before the catcher has the ball while touching home plate
    - If the base runner touches the home plate while attempting to score it is an automatic out
- A commitment line will be drawn halfway between 3rd base and home plate
  - Once a runner passes this line, they must proceed home (cannot run back to 3rd base)
- Sliding into 2nd or 3rd base is permitted
- Sliding into home is never permitted
- Sliding into 1st base is only allowed if the runner is returning to 1st base after rounding the base
- Tagging up and running on a fair or foul fly ball is permitted
  - The runner must stay on the base until the ball contacts any part of the fielder's body
- If the third out occurs on a caught fly-ball the inning is over; any runs that scored on the play do not count
- If a runner scores before a non-forced third out is made, the run will count

- **Pinch Running:**
  - Pinch runners are allowed only for injured players
  - The pinch runner must be the last out of the same gender as the player that they are running for
  - The pinch runner must start from behind the plane of home plate

## FIELDING

- A full team on the field consists of 10 players: *a pitcher, a catcher, 4 infielders, 3 outfielders, and a rover*
- A fielder may throw or kick the ball at a base runner on their way to any base or home plate to get them out
  - Head shots are not allowed and result in the baserunner being safe at the next base or home plate
    - If a headshot occurs while a baserunner is sliding, the baserunner is out
- The defense may tag a base runner on their way to any base or between 3<sup>rd</sup> base and the commitment line
  - Tagging is not permitted between the commitment line and home plate
  - To record an out at home, the defender cannot tag the runner, instead they must touch home plate while in complete possession of the ball or throw/kick the ball at the runner
- An outfielder may relay the ball to the infield by throwing or kicking the ball
- The **respect line** applies in all divisions:
  - **Infielders** cannot pinch in, they must stay along or behind the base line until contact is made
  - **Outfielders** must remain behind the marked outfield respect line until contact has been made

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## OVERTHROWS

- If an overthrow occurs on a play and the ball rolls out of play:
  - **All runners can advance one base beyond the base they were travelling towards**
    - If the runner had rounded 1st base or was travelling towards 2nd base at the time, they will be awarded 3rd base
    - If the runner had rounded 2nd base or was travelling towards 3rd base at the time, they will proceed home

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## INTERFERENCE

- There are two kinds of interference:
  - **Offensive interference:**
    - A base runner will be called 'out' if they make contact with a fielder, yell at a fielder to distract them, or screen them from making a clear play
    - If interference from a base runner clearly prevented an out from being made on another base runner, both runners will be called out
  - **Defensive interference:**
    - A fielder may not block the base with their foot or body
    - A fielder may not stand in the base path unless they are making a play on the ball
    - In a case where defensive interference occurs, the runner will be considered safe, or will be awarded the base that they were travelling towards
- Interference is difficult to call and players are expected to avoid interference or body contact at all costs
- If the sides are not in agreement on the call, there is an option for a re-play



- Base runners will return to the bases they were at prior to the hit, and the kicker will resume the count from where it was prior to making contact

## UMPIRING

- All ESSC games are self-officiated
- The kicking team will supply the umpires
  - A home-plate umpire is mandatory and will call balls, strikes, and outs
    - The umpire should be a player with a high level of rule knowledge
  - 1st and 3rd base umpires are not mandatory, but are highly encouraged
- If an umpire makes the wrong call, the two captains should quickly agree on a resolution

## VIOLATIONS AND FOULS

- Captains are encouraged to bring the rulebook to games
  - It is unsportsmanlike for teams or players to not know the rules, or claim ignorance towards the rules
  - While a team may be 'just out to have fun', they can ruin the experience for the opposing team if they are constantly violating rules
- Captains are expected to control the actions of their teammates
  - Captains must honor the zero-tolerance policy and remove players from the game who participate in unsportsmanlike conduct or threatening behavior

## UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

- The first offense (if non-malicious) should result in a **warning** from the team captain
- A malicious first offense, or a second offense will result in a **game misconduct**
- Examples of unsportsmanlike conduct:
  - Players making calls from the bench
  - Players yelling at fielders to 'drop the ball' or make a mistake from the bench
  - Throwing equipment
  - Arguing calls with the umpire

## THREATENING BEHAVIOR

- The first offense will result in a **game misconduct**
- Examples of threatening behavior:
  - Swearing or verbal abuse
  - Physical threats or contact
  - Fighting, Instigating, Retaliation,
  - Intent to injure