

# **SCOREKEEPER'S GUIDE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Thank you for agreeing to serve as the scorekeeper for your daughter's team.

This guide has been created to help team scorekeepers understand the *basic* requirements of the official scorekeeper, to learn the elements of scorekeeping, and to serve as a reference/refresher during games. This guide is not intended to describe, and does not describe, all possible aspects of softball statistics and scoring.

## **THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE OFFICIAL SCOREKEEPER**

### **GAME PROCEDURES**

When you are the official scorekeeper, you should perform the following procedures:

#### **BEFORE THE GAME**

- 1) Arrive at the field at least fifteen(15) minutes before the game.
- 2) Bring pencils with erasers. Every scorekeeper makes mistakes, no matter how much experience he/she has. Using a pen asks for a mess. Also, if you draw lines for hit locations, it is helpful to use a red pencil to record runs scored.
- 3) Get the appropriate scorebook from your manager for the game you are scoring
- 4) Get a line-up card from the coach of each team.
- 5) Fill in the line-up information in the next available blank pages in the scorebook. If a player arrives late, she is added to the end of the batting line-up. You may, but need not, record defensive positions if the coach lists them.
- 6) Fill in the other information about the game - home team, visiting team, game location, etc.
- 7) Find the umpire when he/she arrives. Introduce yourself and let him/her know where you will be sitting. You should sit somewhere near home plate.
- 8) There is a time limit for each game.
  - a) In the 8U division, games continue until the drop-dead time of 1 hour 45 minutes.
  - b) In the 10U division, games continue until the drop-dead time of 1 hour 45 minutes.
  - c) In the 12U and 14U divisions, no new inning will begin after 1 hour 30 minutes. Play will continue until the inning is completed or the drop-dead time of 1 hour 45 minutes is reached.
  - d) The umpire usually will tell you when he/she is starting the "clock." This is the official start time. The umpire, not the scorekeeper, is the official time-keeper.

#### **DURING THE GAME**

During the game, the official scorekeeper is responsible for keeping an accurate record of the game and for assisting the umpire when asked. In order to do this, you must remain focused on the game.

### During the Inning

- 1) Record the name and number of the girl who is pitching, as well as any new pitchers that replace previous pitchers. Do the same for catchers.
- 2) Make sure you watch the entire play – do not write anything down in the scorebook until the play is over. Then, go from the batter backwards (up the column) marking each line-up position until you are caught up. A common mistake, for example, is to see a girl hit a single to left field, look down at the scorebook to mark the single, only to have something else happen on the field that you don't see.
- 3) There is a run limit in the first three innings, unlimited thereafter. The limits are currently as follows, 8U, 3 runs, 10U and 12U, 4 runs, and 14U, 6 runs. Bring this to the attention of the umpire if necessary.

### End of Inning

- 1) Record the runs, hits, errors and runners left on base for the half-inning just ending, at the bottom of the column for that inning. Runs are the only one of these statistics that is truly important. There is no need to record pitching statistics.
- 2) Make an "X" in the score-box of the batter who would have batted next in the line-up. This is to remind you that you need to move over to the next column (i.e. inning) when the team comes up to bat again.
- 3) Check your watch to make sure the game time has not expired. The umpire is the official timekeeper.
- 4) The umpire may confer with you between half-innings. Usually this is to confirm the number of runs scored.

### Run Ahead Rule

- 1) The RUN AHEAD RULE as modified is: if, at the end of four (4) complete innings (or 3½ innings if the home team is ahead), either team is leading by 15 runs or more, **or** if, at the end of five (5) complete innings (or 4½ innings if the home team is ahead), either team is leading by 8 runs or more, the game will be declared over.

### **AFTER THE GAME**

- 1) Do not be in a hurry to leave, and don't leave until you've completed the scoring process.
- 2) Record the final score of the game, making sure it is clear which team won the game.
- 3) Verify the final score with the other scorekeeper and your coach.
- 4) Sign the scorebook on one of the pages for the game.
- 5) Return the scorebook to the manager.
- 6) Do not share or discuss your scorekeeping results with parents.

## **HOW TO KEEP SCORE**

### **THE MOST IMPORTANT BASICS**

The task of "official scorekeeping" can seem a bit intimidating, but in all but very rare circumstances there are no controversial issues or circumstances that involve the official scorekeeper.

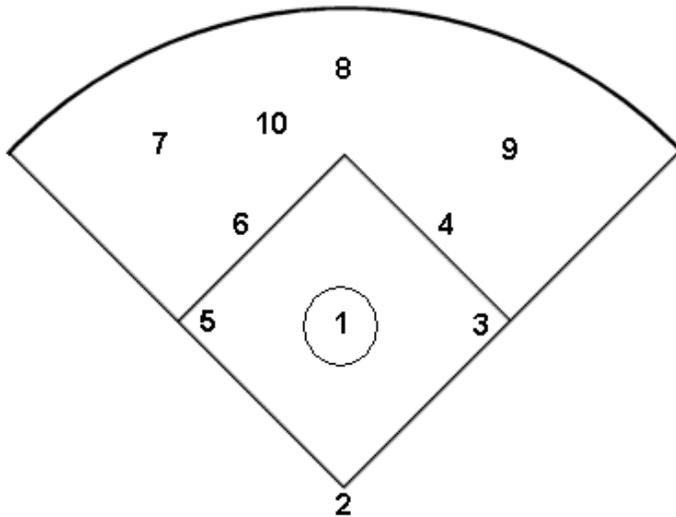
Generally, you should consider the following as the things you need to know at all times:

- 1) What is the count on the batter?**
- 2) How many outs are there?**
- 3) What inning are we in?**
- 4) What is the score?**

If you paying attention, know those four things at all times, and the scorebook accurately reflects those four things, there will be no issues 99% of the time.

### **POSITION NUMBERS**

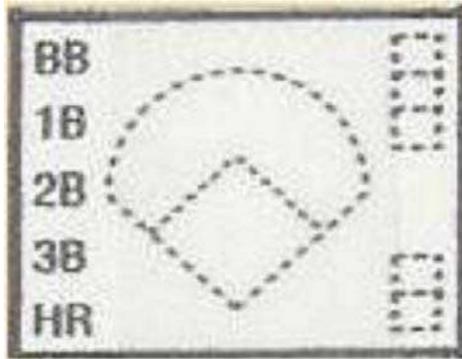
Just as in baseball, numbers are used to designate defensive positions on a softball field. An important part of being able to comfortably keep an official scorebook is to be very familiar with these numbers. These numbers are shown below.



1	Pitcher
2	Catcher
3	1 <sup>st</sup> Base
4	2 <sup>nd</sup> Base
5	3 <sup>rd</sup> Base
6	Shortstop
7	Left Fielder
8	Center Fielder
9	Right Fielder
10	Rover
DP	Designated Player
FX	Flex Player

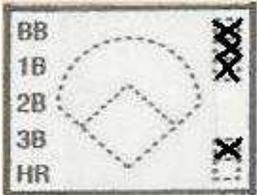
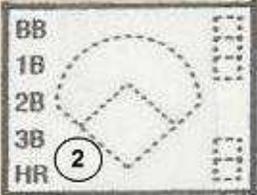
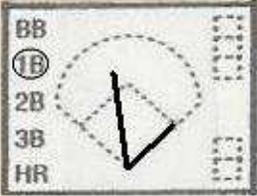
## THE "SCORE-BOX"

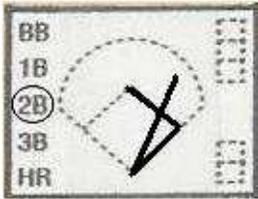
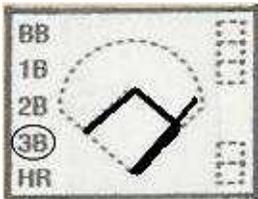
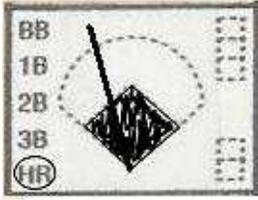
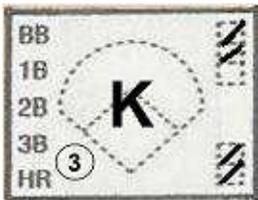
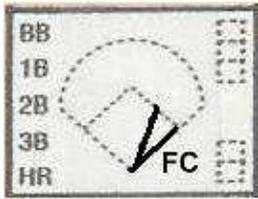
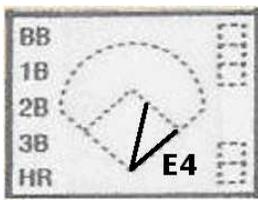
The primary element of the scorebook is what is sometimes called the "score-box" – the box for each at-bat where the actions and progress of that player around the bases is recorded. Before going through the various basic notations, here is a blank score-box:

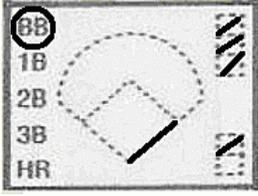
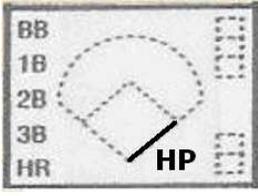
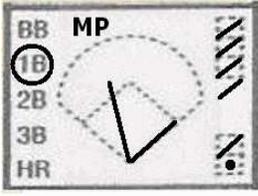
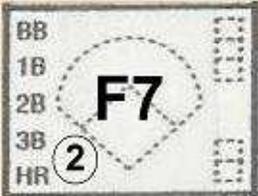
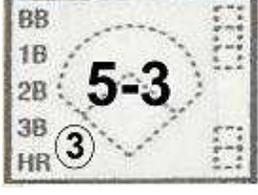
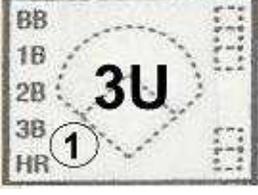


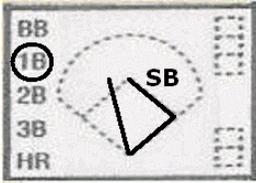
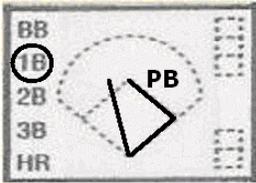
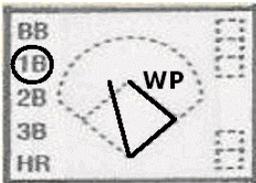
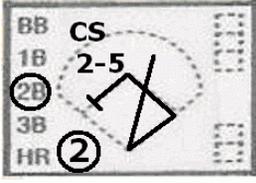
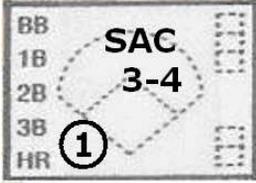
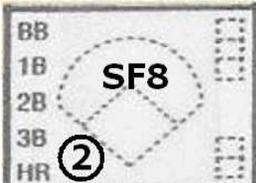
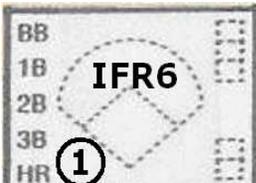
## SCORING NOTATIONS

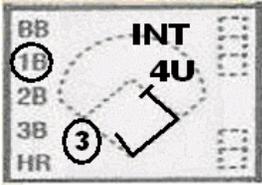
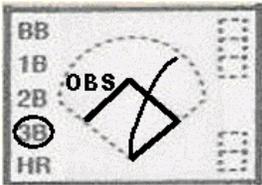
Below is a description of the most common scoring notations.

<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>SCORE-BOX</b>
<p><b><u>Balls and Strikes</u></b> Balls and strikes must be entered as they are pitched, and are recorded in the boxes provided in the score-box (usually along the right side, but sometimes in the bottom-left corner). In the example to the right the count is three balls, one strike.</p>	
<p><b><u>Outs</u></b> Any time an out is made, the player who is put out (not the player who hit the ball, if different) is marked with the out number with a circle around it. There is no defined location for this notation in most scorebooks, but the scorekeeper should be as consistent as possible.</p>	
<p><b><u>Single - 1B</u></b> A single is awarded to the batter if she hits the ball, the fielders fail to put out the batter, the batter advances to first base safely, and advancing to first base is not the result of an error or fielder's choice (see below). A single is denoted by circling the <b>1B</b> along the left side of the score-box.</p>	

DESCRIPTION	SCORE-BOX
<p><b><u>Double – 2B</u></b>  A double is awarded to the batter if she hits the ball, the fielders fail to put out the batter, the batter advances to second base safely, and advancing to second base is not the result of an error or a fielder’s choice (see below). A double is denoted by circling the 2B along the left side of the score-box.</p>	
<p><b><u>Triple – 3B</u></b>  A triple is awarded to the batter if she hits the ball, the fielders fail to put out the batter, the batter advances to third base safely, and advancing to third base is not the result of an error or a fielder’s choice (see below). A triple is denoted by circling the 3B along the left side of the score-box.</p>	
<p><b><u>Home Run – HR</u></b>  A home run is awarded to the batter if she hits the ball, the fielders fail to put out the batter, the batter advances all the way around the bases, and advancing all the way around the bases is not the result of an error or a fielder’s choice (see below). A home run is denoted by circling the <b>HR</b> along the left side of the score-box.</p>	
<p><b><u>Strikeout – K</u></b>  A strikeout is recorded when the batter receives three strikes before putting the ball in play or getting on base by other means. Most scorekeepers indicate a swinging third strike with a regular K and a called third strike with a backwards K. This is the 3rd out of the inning.</p>	
<p><b><u>Fielder’s Choice – FC</u></b>  A fielder’s choice is recorded when the batter puts the ball in play and gets on base because the fielder attempted to put out another runner. A fielder’s choice is given only if it is clear that a decision to attempt to get the <i>batter</i> would have been successful absent an error, otherwise the batter is awarded a base hit. In the example to the right the batter hit a ground ball to the second baseman, who threw to another base thus allowing the batter to reach first base.</p>	
<p><b><u>Error – E</u></b>  An error is charged to a fielder whenever a runner advances to a base that she would not have reached without a misplay by a fielder. The scorekeeper determines whether an error was made, not the umpire, coaches, or fans. Consideration should be given to the age and playing ability of the players before an error is given. Here, <b>E4</b> means the batter reached base on an error by the second baseman.</p>	

DESCRIPTION	SCORE-BOX
<p><b><u>Base on Balls (i.e. Walks) – BB</u></b>  The batter is awarded a base on balls when she receives four pitches judged to be balls. Walks are recorded by circling the BB in the upper right corner of the score-box. There are no walks in the 8U level.</p>	
<p><b><u>Hit-By-Pitch – HP</u></b>  A batter who is struck by a pitch is awarded first base unless the pitch was a strike, the batter swings, or the batter makes no effort to avoid being hit. A notation is made near the line drawn from home to first base. <b>HP</b>, <b>HB</b>, or <b>HBP</b> are all acceptable notations for hit-by-pitch.</p>	
<p><b><u>“Machine Pitch” – (8U Only)</u></b>  At the 8U level, players who receive four pitches judged to be balls do not take first base. The machine will pitch until the batter puts the ball in play or strikes out. The player gets only as many strikes as they had remaining when they are walked. Note machine pitches with a different symbol (•).</p>	
<p><b><u>Fly Out/Pop Out/Line-Out</u></b>  When a ball is hit in the air and is caught for an out, the out can be recorded by simply writing the position number of the player who caught the ball. For clarity, it is sometimes better to indicate a fly ball by an “F” before the position number (e.g. <b>F7</b>), a pop fly with a “P” before the position number (e.g. <b>P4</b>), and a line drive with an “L” before the position number (e.g. <b>L6</b>).</p>	
<p><b><u>Ground Out</u></b>  A ground out is indicated by writing the number of the position that fielded the ball, then a dash, then the position number of the player who caught the ball for the put out. The score-box to the right shows a ground out to the third baseman who threw to the first baseman for the third out of the inning.</p>	
<p><b><u>Unassisted – U</u></b>  When a player makes an out by fielding a ground ball and then tagging a base, or tagging a runner, then the player has made an unassisted out. This is noted by placing a U after the position number of the player who made the unassisted out (usually the first baseman).</p>	

DESCRIPTION	SCORE-BOX
<p><b><u>Stolen Base – SB</u></b>  A stolen base is awarded when the runner is successful at advancing a base on a pitch, and: a) there is either no passed ball or wild pitch; or b) the runner began the attempt to advance before a passed ball or wild pitch occurred.</p>	
<p><b><u>Passed Ball – PB</u></b>  A passed ball is noted when a runner advances to the next base because the catcher did not handle a pitch that she should have caught or held with ordinary effort.</p>	
<p><b><u>Wild Pitch – WP</u></b>  A wild pitch is noted when a runner advances to the next base due to a pitch that could not be caught or stopped by the catcher with ordinary effort. It is the scorer's judgment whether the runner advanced on a stolen base, a passed ball, a wild pitch, or entirely something else.</p>	
<p><b><u>Caught Stealing – CS</u></b>  When a runner attempts to steal, and is thrown out, it is denoted as caught stealing. Use this notation regardless of whether it would have been scored a stolen base, passed ball, or wild pitch had the runner been safe.</p>	
<p><b><u>Sacrifice Bunt – SAC</u></b>  A sacrifice bunt is noted when a batter is thrown out at first after bunting the ball, and the bunt advances one or more runners to another base.</p>	
<p><b><u>Sacrifice Fly – SF</u></b>  A sacrifice fly occurs when a fly ball is caught for an out, and a runner on base advances and scores a run by "tagging up." Note the position number of the player who catches the fly ball.</p>	
<p><b><u>Infield Fly Rule – IFR</u></b>  The batter is out when umpire judges a fly ball can be caught by an infielder, pitcher, or catcher with ordinary effort when there are runners on first and second, or bases loaded, with less than two out. When the umpire calls "infield fly" the batter is out whether or not the ball is caught. Note the position number of the player nearest to the ball.</p>	

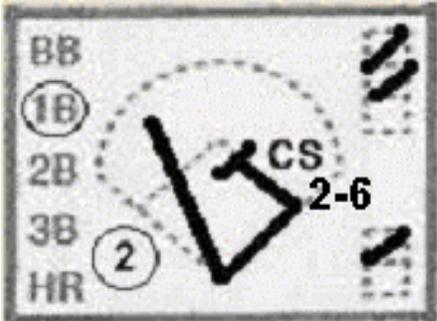
DESCRIPTION	SCORE-BOX
<p><b><u>Interference – INT</u></b>  Interference occurs when a base runner interferes with a fielder attempting to make a play, or a ball in play hits a base runner. The base runner is out; note the fielder nearest the interference</p>	
<p><b><u>Obstruction – OBS</u></b>  Obstruction will be called when a fielder without the ball hinders the progress of a runner. Each base awarded due to an obstruction call is denoted by <b>OBS</b></p>	

**ADDITIONAL NOTATIONS**

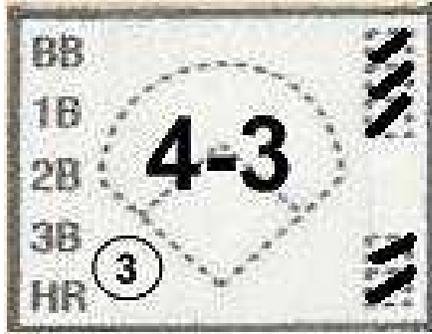
Additional symbols may be used to denote a double play (DP), catcher’s obstruction (CO), pick off (PO), look back rule violation (LBR), etc. **D3K** is non-standard for a dropped third strike. A batter who has three strikes and reaches first base safely has done so because of a wild pitch (WP) or a passed ball (PB). This is the scorekeeper’s judgment. A horizontal bar drawn at the top of the score-box indicates this batter is facing a new pitcher. A vertical bar at the left side of the score-box indicates a substitute is batting. You will not have to deal with substitutes in league play.

**MORE DETAILED EXAMPLES**

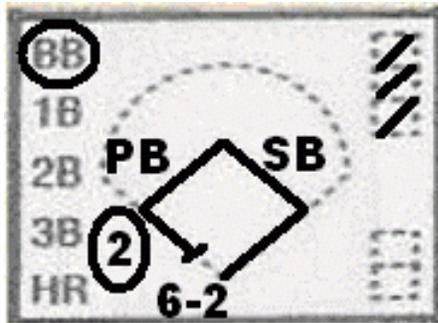
*The box below reflects a player who, with a two balls and one strike count, hit a single to left field, then was subsequently thrown out attempting to steal second base (i.e. caught stealing), catcher to shortstop for the second out of the inning.*



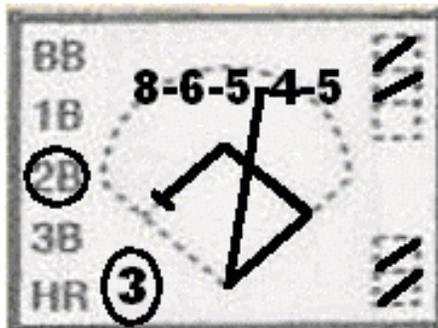
*The following box reflects a player who, with a three balls and two strike count, hit a ground ball to second base (i.e. 4) who fielded the ball and threw to first base (i.e. 3) for the third out of the inning.*



The box below reflects a player who walked on four pitches, stole second base, went to third base on a passed ball, then was thrown out at home, for the second out of the inning, when a batter hit a ground ball to the shortstop.

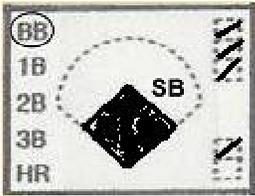
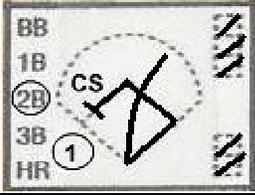
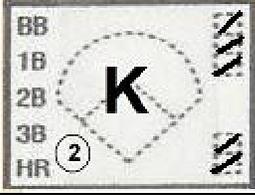
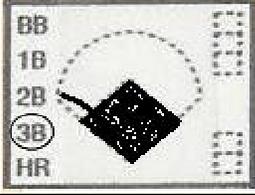
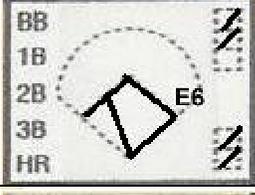


The box below reflects a player who doubled on a 2-2 count, was thrown out on the relay from the centerfielder to the shortstop to third base with the second baseman participating in the ensuing rundown, for the third out of the inning. Try to give credit to each fielder who assisted in making the out. It may be useful to call out to yourself the position number as each player touches the ball.



## A COMPLETE INNING

The chart below shows an entire half-inning, where seven girls came to bat, and how the score-boxes would look at the end of the inning.

<b><u>DESCRIPTION</u></b>	<b>#</b>	<b>SCORE-BOXES</b>
<p><b><u>First Batter:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The batter walks on five pitches.</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>	
<p><b><u>Second Batter:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With a one-and-one count, the runner on first base steals second.</li> <li>With a three-and-two count, the batter hits a double to right-center field, scoring the runner from second base.</li> </ul>	<b>2</b>	
<p><b><u>Third Batter:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With a three-and-one count, the batter looks at strike two and the second batter is caught attempting to steal third base.</li> <li>The third batter then strikes out, swinging.</li> </ul>	<b>3</b>	
<p><b><u>Fourth Batter</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On the first pitch of the at-bat, the batter hits a triple down the left field line.</li> </ul>	<b>4</b>	
<p><b><u>Fifth Batter</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With a two-and-two count, the batter hits a ground ball to shortstop, and the shortstop makes an errant throw over the first baseman's head, allowing the batter to go to second base and the runner to score from third. When judging a misplay, take age-appropriate playing ability into account.</li> </ul>	<b>5</b>	
<p><b><u>Sixth Batter</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With a three-and-one count, the batter hits a "bloop" single to center field, moving the runner on second base to third base.</li> </ul>	<b>6</b>	
<p><b><u>Seventh Batter</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With a one-and-one count the batter grounds out to the first baseman. (Note: no run is recorded for the runner on third base [#5] even if she crosses home plate before the third out is made, because the third out was a force out).</li> </ul>	<b>7</b>	
<p><b><u>TOTALS:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>2 Runs</b></li> <li><b>3 Hits</b></li> <li><b>1 Error</b></li> <li><b>2 Left-on-Base</b></li> </ul>	<b>8</b>	