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1) Prerequisites

Download a [scoresheet](#) and print a few copies. You will need them during the class. If you have a scorebook you prefer, use that one instead. The examples in this workshop will be shown on the downloaded scoresheet. Be sure to have a pencil ready.

2) Introduction

The scope of this workshop is to teach how to generally score a softball game. While there are many ways and levels of scorekeeping, we are going to keep it simple but also include information coaches need to calculate batting average. We will not be teaching batting average in this class but will include notes at the end for your reference.

3) Purpose of Scorekeeping

It may seem like a mundane activity or busy work for someone sitting on the bench, but scorekeeping in softball is, in fact, very important and every player should know the basics and be able to keep score if asked to do so. While playing softball is fun, unless

you're scrimmaging, it's still a competition, and players generally want to know who scored the most runs by the end of the game.

There are other compelling reasons to keep a scorebook:

- 1) **Tracking on-field activity**, for instance: what the count was (balls and strikes), where a batter hit, how an out was made, when a run was scored, who gets credit for a run batted in (RBI), and when a half-inning ends.
- 2) **Statistics for batting and fielding**. In softball, we use a modified batting average (hits/at-bats). It is important to indicate when, according to the definition in the NAGAAA Governing Manual, a player is credited with a hit. The same goes for at-bats. This can get a little complicated, but a good scorekeeper must know these particular rules. Since batting averages are used to help calculate a player's rating or can be used to either refute or back-up a protest to a player rating, accurate recording of what a batter does is very important. Not to mention bragging rights for the player with the highest batting average at the end of the season or tournament!
- 3) **Official Record**: The home team book is generally the official record of the game. This can be very important if there is a discrepancy between the books kept by both teams.
- 4) **Batting Order**: Tracking the team's batting order. A batter can be called out for batting out of order. It's also useful for the defense to know when the top of the batting order is reached.
- 5) **Spray Chart (where players hit)**: Using the book as a spray chart. Recording where each opposing batter hits during the game can provide useful information to the defense at the next at-bat.

4) Overview

a) Scoresheet

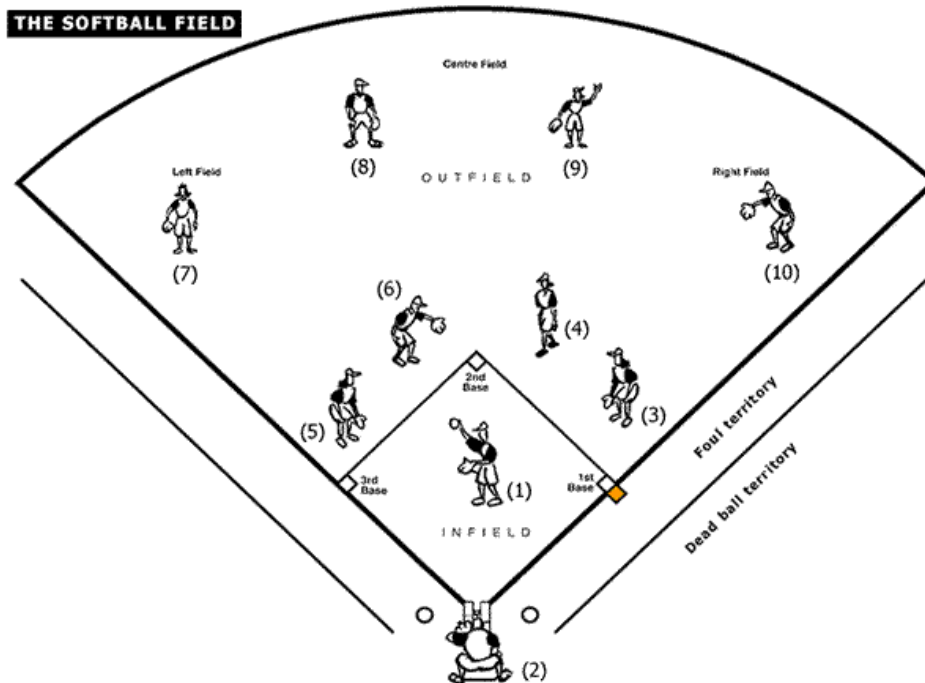
#	Line Up	Pos	1	2	3	4
			◇	◇	◇	◇
			◇	◇	◇	◇
			◇	◇	◇	◇
			◇	◇	◇	◇
			◇	◇	◇	◇
			◇	◇	◇	◇
			◇	◇	◇	◇
			◇	◇	◇	◇

The lineup section is where you put the players' names and jersey numbers. This is also the section where you can put the player position (optional). There are a few lines so that if you need to substitute in a player, you can put the new player's name/jersey number on the next line.

Each inning has the number at the top (e.g., 1, 2, 3). The visiting team always bats at the top of the inning; the home team bats at the bottom of the inning. The boxes on each line have a diamond that represents the field of play.

b) Position Numbers

Each position has a number. You should learn the numbers as it will help you to record the play.



c) Scoring Terminology

- i) **At-bat:** An at-bat is charged to a player following every plate appearance except when:
 - (1) the player hits a sacrifice fly that scores a runner,
 - (2) the player is awarded a base on balls (walk), or
 - (3) the third out occurs and the batter is not entitled to run to first base.

Exception: #3 shall not be considered if the batter is out due to a strike being a foul ball which ends the at-bat.
- ii) **Base Safely Reached on Error:** A batter shall be credited with a base safely reached on error on the part of a defensive player(s) who is charged with an error by the scorekeeper. While technically not a hit, this is treated as a hit when calculating adjusted batting average.
- iii) **Hit:** A batted ball that allows the batter to reach base safely:
 - (1) on a fair ball which settles on the ground, clears the fence, or strikes the fence before being touched by a fielder,

- (2) on a fair ball which is hit with such force or such slowness or which takes an unnatural bounce that it is impossible to field with ordinary effort in time to make an out,
- (3) when a fair ball which has not been touched by a fielder becomes dead because of touching the person or clothing of an umpire, or
- (4) when a fielder unsuccessfully attempts to retire a previous runner and in the scorer's judgement, the batter-runner would not have been retired at first base by perfect fielding.

A hit shall **not** be scored:

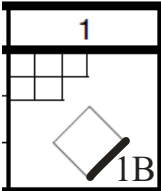
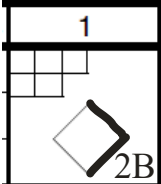
- 1) when a runner is forced out on a batted ball.
- 2) when a player fielding a batted ball retires a preceding runner with ordinary effort.
- 3) when a fielder fails in an attempt to retire a preceding runner, and in the scorer's judgement, the batter-runner could have been retired at first base. It's not a hit because even with an error, it's still a fielder's choice.
- 4) when a batter reaches first base safely as a result of a preceding runner being called out for interfering with a batted or thrown ball, or with a defensive player.

In the event of any discrepancy between this definition and the official scoring rules of the USA Softball (ASA) and the definition contained therein, the latest version of the USA Softball (ASA) rules shall control.

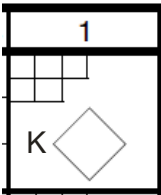
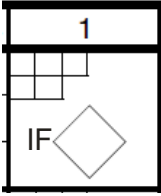
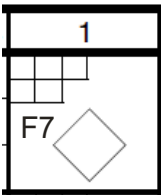
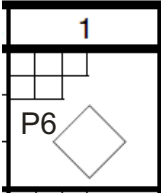
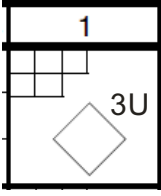
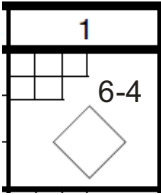
- a. **Modified batting average:** The percentage resulting from the sum of a player's: 1) hits and 2) bases safely reached on error divided by 3) the player's at-bats.

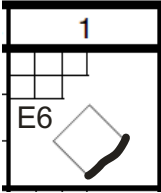
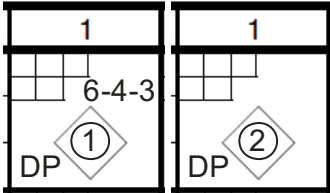
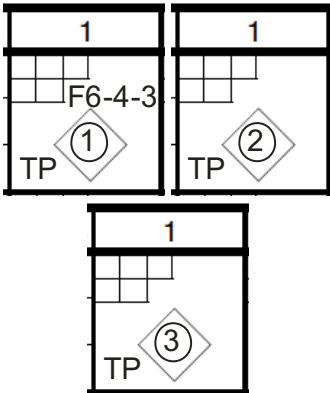
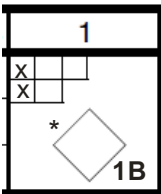
5) Scorekeeping terms

No two scorekeepers keep the book in exactly the same manner. Every scorekeeper has their own style and flair. There are many variations of printed scorebooks as well, but here are some common notations that scorekeepers should know.

#	Term	Definition	example
1	1B	Single	
2	2B	Double	

#	Term	Definition	example
3	3B	Triple	
4	HR	Home Run	
5	Run Scored	A runner is safe at home	
6	RBI	Run batted in (Indicate how many RBI's if more than one)	
7	BB	Walk (base on balls) (Does not count as an at-bat)	
8	FC	Fielder's choice (Doesn't count as a hit)	
9	①, ②, ③	Out - These can be marked inside the square as a player who scored cannot also be out	
10	SC	Sacrifice Fly (Does not count as an at-bat)	

#	Term	Definition	example
11	K	Strike Out: K (swinging) or X (looking)	
12	IF	Infield Fly - An infield fly is possible when there aren't two outs and there is a potential force play at third. If the batter hits a popup that the umpire believes an infielder can catch with ordinary effort then the batter is out	
13	F+ Outfielder's position number	Fly Out (e.g., F7 – means the left fielder caught the ball for an out)	
14	P+ Infielder's position number	Pop Up (e.g., P6 – means third base fielder caught the pop up)	
15	Fielder's number + U	Unassisted Out – Fielder's number + U (e.g., 3U means the first base fielder made the out unassisted)	
16	Fielder's number + Fielder's number	Ground Out – Fielder's number + Fielder's number. The first number is who fielded the ball, the second is who caught the ball. (Ex.: 6-4 – means the shortstop threw to the second baseman for the out)	

#	Term	Definition	example
17	E + the fielder's position number	Error = E + the fielder's number (e.g., E6 – means shortstop made an error on the play)	
18	DP	Double play (e.g., 6-4-3 – means the shortstop got the ball threw it to second who made an out then threw to first for the second out)	
19	TP	Triple play (e.g., F6-4-3 – means the shortstop caught the fly ball, threw it to second where the second baseman made an out then threw to first for the third out.)	
20	• or *	Indicates where the batter hit the ball.	

6) Setting up the book prior to the start of the game.

As scorekeeper you will be bombarded with questions while you are trying to keep score. From experience we've found if you set up the book correctly from the start, you can answer the questions (e.g., what inning? Who's up next? How many runs that inning? What's the score? Etc.) without getting too distracted from the actual scorekeeping focus.

You will need:

- The date
- Team names
- To know who the home team is. The home team will always bat at the bottom of the inning.
- The lineup for both teams (this should be with the jersey numbers and bonus for positions – but positions are not necessary as they can change during the game).

Note: you may not always be provided the opposing team's roster before the game starts. If not, you should write in the name (if known) or a number (if applicable) or at the very least a description ("Blue Hat", "Red Shorts") as each batter comes up. If you were not provided a lineup, take great care to go back to the top of the lineup when the first batter comes up again.

Armed with this information you should set up your book. Write the date, team names (each on their own page), fill in the roster. A good practice is to put the team name down the side where each team's roster is listed. Next to the name put Home or Away. Indicate "bottom" next to the home team name (the home team bats at the bottom of the inning) and "Top" near the away team's name (as the away team bats at the top of the inning). This way, if someone asks what inning, you can easily see it's the bottom of the 4th (for example) and not have to think too much about the answer.

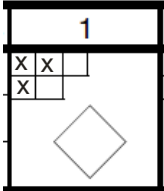
Lineup Cards: Sometimes, you will also fill out the lineup card to give to the opposing team. This is the same as the roster. Be sure to list the substitutes on the bottom of the lineup card. This is important as to qualify for some tournaments and especially for the World Series, players must be listed in the lineup for division play for at least 50% of division games. If not, they can't qualify. Also, in tournament play, if the players are not listed as a substitute, they cannot be subbed into the game. Bottom line, be sure to list everybody on the team in some capacity on the lineup card.

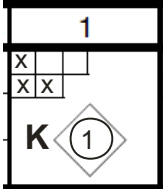
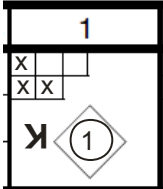
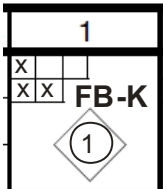
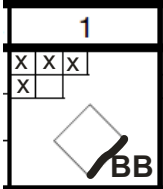
7) Scorekeeping Walkthrough

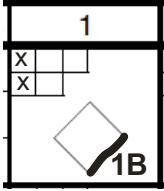
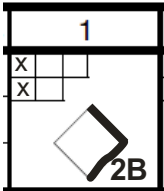
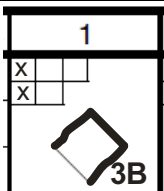
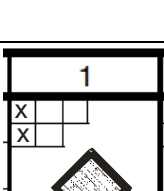
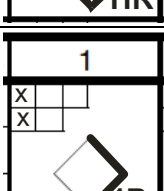
At a minimum, there are 6 things we want every scorekeeper to focus on:

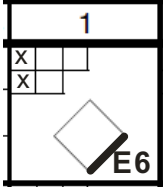
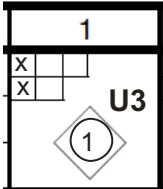
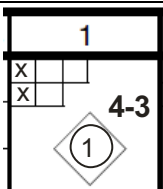
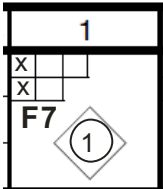
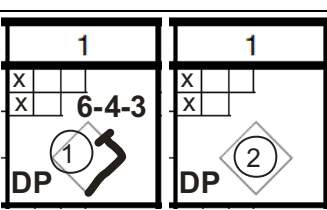
- 1) Runs
- 2) Hits
- 3) Outs
- 4) Walks (Base on Balls)
- 5) Sacrifice Fly
- 6) Fielder's Choice (if you code this wrong, it looks like a hit)

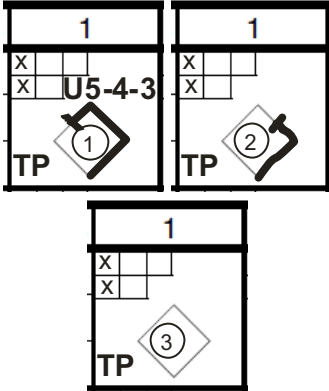
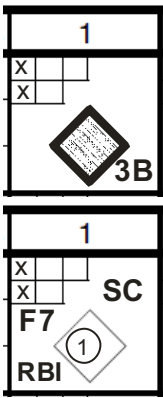
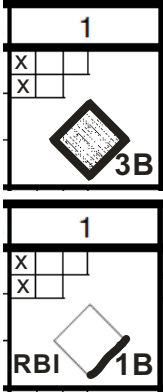
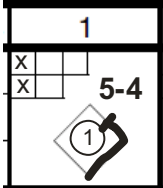
These are examples of basic scenarios that will occur during a game and how to score them. Note: items highlighted in **yellow** are advanced scorekeeping techniques.

#	Situation	How the book looks
1	Record pitches for an at-bat. The number of strikes and balls pitched during an at-bat are marked in the small boxes that look like this: There are two boxes for strikes (as the third strike is an out) and three for balls (as the fourth ball is a walk). Almost always in slow pitch softball the batter will start with a	

#	Situation	How the book looks
	<p>1-1 count, mark these as the batter starts their at-bat.</p> <p>Note that recording balls/strikes is advanced scorekeeping and is not necessary on a basic level.</p>	
2	<p>Record a swinging strike out. The batter has two strikes and swings and misses a third time. Mark the box with a K (regular K) and put the number of the out in a circle in the box.</p> <p>Note that recording whether it is a swinging strike out or looking strike out is advanced scorekeeping and is not necessary on a basic level. Just record that it is a strike out.</p>	
3	<p>Record a looking strike out. The batter has two strikes and then doesn't swing at a called third strike. Mark the box with K (backwards K). Mark the box with a K (regular K) and put the number of the out in a circle in the box.</p> <p>Note that recording whether it is a swinging strike out or looking strike out is advanced scorekeeping and is not necessary on a basic level. Just record that it is a strike out.</p>	
4	<p>Record a strike out on a foul. The batter has two strikes and uses their courtesy foul. On the next pitch, the batter hits another foul ball and is called out. Mark as a foul ball – strike out (FB-K) and put the number of the out in a circle in the box.</p> <p>Note that recording whether the strike out is out on a foul ball is advanced scorekeeping and is not necessary on a basic level. Just record that it is a strike out.</p>	
5	<p>Record a walk. The batter accumulates four balls and is awarded first base. Circle the "BB" if on the score book or mark "BB" in the box.</p> <p>Note: This is NOT an at-bat and should not be counted toward the modified batting average.</p>	

#	Situation	How the book looks
6	Record a single. The batter puts the ball in play, which is fielded without an error. The batter reaches first base. Mark the diamond on the scoresheet with a line from home to first and circle or indicate 1B on the scoresheet.	
7	Record a double. The batter puts the ball in play, which is fielded without an error. The batter reaches second base. Mark the diamond on the scoresheet with a line from home to first then first to second and circle or indicate 2B on the scoresheet.	
8	Record a triple. The batter puts the ball in play, which is fielded without an error. The batter reaches third base. Mark the diamond on the scoresheet with a line from home to first then first to second then second to third and circle or indicate 3B on the scoresheet.	
9	Record a home run. The batter puts the ball in play, which is fielded without an error. The batter reaches home. Color in the diamond on the scoresheet and circle or indicate HR on the scoresheet.	
10	<p>Record a base advanced on an error. The batter puts the ball in play, which is fielded cleanly but an overthrow at first allows the batter to take second.</p> <p>Mark the diamond on the scoresheet with a line from home to first then first to second and circle or indicate 1B on the scoresheet because the batter is only credited with 1B since they reached second on an error.</p> <p>Note that recording whether the runner advanced a base on an error is advanced scorekeeping and is not necessary on a basic level. Just record that where the batter ended up (in this example 2nd base).</p>	

#	Situation	How the book looks
11	<p>Record an error. The batter puts the ball in play and reaches base because the fielder made an error. (SIDE BAR: What IS an error – misplayed ball, overthrow, dropped throw)</p> <p>Note that recording whether the runner advanced a base on an error is advanced scorekeeping and is not necessary on a basic level. Just record that where the batter ended up (in this example 1st base).</p>	
12	<p>Record an unassisted out. The batter hits the ball to first, who fields it and tags the bag.</p> <p>Put a circle with the out number on the scoresheet. Put U3 on the scoresheet to indicate the play.</p> <p>Note that recording whether the out is unassisted is advanced scorekeeping and is not necessary on a basic level. Just record that it is an out.</p>	
13	<p>Record an assisted out. The batter hits the ball to second, who fields it and throws to first. Put a circle with the out number on the scoresheet. Write 4-3 to indicate the play.</p>	
14	<p>Record a fly out. The batter hits the ball to the left fielder, who catches it.</p> <p>Put a circle with the out number on the scoresheet. Write F7 to indicate the play.</p>	
15	<p>Record a double play. With a runner on first, the batter hits the ball to short. Short flips to second who throws to first.</p> <p>Mark as DP 6-4-3. The first out is marked in the runner's box, the second out is marked in the batter's box and DP is indicated.</p>	

#	Situation	How the book looks
16	<p>Record a triple play (rare, but they do happen!). With runners on second and first, the batter hits the ball to third. Third steps on third base, throws to second, who throws to first.</p> <p>Mark the scoresheet for the runners with the outs. So, you would mark the runner moving from 2nd to 3rd as (1) on their line, then mark the runner from 1st to 2nd as (2) and then the batter will get (3) as the third out and marked as TP 5U-4-3.</p>	
17	<p>Record a sacrifice fly. With a runner at third and less than two outs, the batter hits a fly ball to left field. The left fielder makes the catch, but the runner tags up and scores.</p> <p>Color in the box of the runner from 3rd to home to indicate the run.</p> <p>Mark the batter's box with a circle and number of the out. Mark F7 to indicate the play made and mark down the RBI.</p> <p>NOTE: This is NOT an at-bat and should not be counted toward the batting average.</p>	
18	<p>Record a run scored and indicate an RBI for the batter. With a runner at third, the batter puts the ball in play. The runner is safe at home.</p> <p>In the runner's line on the scorebook, from third to home, color in the diamond to indicate the run.</p> <p>In the batter's line in the scorebook, mark the diamond with a line from home to first and circle or indicate 1B on the scoresheet.</p>	
19	<p>Record a fielder's choice. With a runner at first, the batter hits the ball to third. The third baseman chooses to throw to second instead of first. The batter ends up at first safely.</p>	

#	Situation	How the book looks
	<p>Mark the batter's line in the scorebook with a line from home to first and circle or indicate FC on the scoresheet.</p> <p>Mark the runner at 1st going to second's line in the scorebook with a circle with the out number. Write 5-4 to indicate the play.</p> <p>Note: This is NOT recorded as a hit for the batter and should not be counted toward the batting average. This is the reason we don't record 1B.</p>	
20	<p>Indicate the end of the half-inning. The third out is made and the half-inning is over. Mark a line under the last batter so you will know who is the next batter up in the next inning.</p>	
21	<p>What to do if the batting order begins to repeat. Move over to the next column and continue. Mark out the inning number at the top of the column and write in the current inning number. There are usually plenty of columns so do not worry about running out. If you do happen to run out, continue scoring on another sheet.</p>	

8) What to do at the end of the half-inning.

When the half-inning is over, add up the runs, and record that number in the appropriate box at the bottom of the column. The score of the game is the accumulated score of each half-inning per side. You should have a number for the runs in the inning and a total of runs so far in the game.

9) What to do at the conclusion of the game.

When the game is over, record the final score. Check with the team manager to see if any record needs to be given to the umpire or to the league. Usually in CAPS, you write the final score on the lineup card and put it in the envelope hanging on the back of the fence behind home plate. This is used to record the official final game score in division play. If there is any doubt as to the totals, you should verify with the opposing team's scorekeeper and resolve any issues before posting the score.

10) ADVANCED: Calculating Modified Batting Average

For each player, look at the box score for the game. The modified batting average is the number of hits divided by the number of at bats. Remember, a base reached on error is considered a hit; but a base reached on a fielder's choice is not.

A walk (base-on-balls), a sacrifice fly, or the last out in a half-inning where the batter was not entitled to run to first are not considered at bats. The exception to this is if a batter strikes out on a foul ball (with two outs, the batter has two strikes and no courtesy foul and hits a foul ball, ending the inning) it IS considered an at-bat. **See the definitions above for more clarity.**

For example:

During the game, John was at the plate six (6) times.

He got a single, struck out, reached on an error, reached on a base-on-balls, was safe due to a fielder's choice, and hit a sacrifice fly.

He had two hits: the single and the base reached on an error.

He had four at-bats: the base-on-balls and the sacrifice fly don't count.

$$2/4 = .500$$

If you counted every plate appearance as an at bat (which people often do by mistake) he would have $2/6 = .333$, a significantly lower batting average. Knowing what constitutes a hit and an at-bat is so important.

11) Resources:

Scorekeeping templates: <https://www.doctemplates.net/printable-baseball-scoresheets/>

[USA Softball Rulebook 2023](#) (Scoring is Rule 11, Page 112):

College Softball World Series full game (Alabama vs. UCLA, 2021):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s8qxYGWVs6g>

College Softball World Series full game (JMU vs. Oklahoma, 2021):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IN68WRY09uA>

