

# Redemption Softball Guide for Scorekeepers

Teams designated as the visitors (rather than the “home” team) are expected to supply a scorekeeper for games if at all possible or, failing that, make other arrangements with their opponents for this role to be filled. Some basic familiarity with the task is required of those asked to do it, and the discussion that immediately follows here is intended to help provide some of that orientation and reminders. Thanks for kindly consenting to keep score in our games! While who wins and who loses is not the most important issue, the game is an honest competition and both teams play aiming to end up with the most runs legitimately scored in the contest. It’s important to get the tally correct, right through the game.

## THE BASIC JOB

At our level we are primarily concerned to capture

- the complete batting order being properly used by each team,
- the number of outs and runs that occur in each inning for both teams when they are at bat, and
- the final score.

The scorebooks themselves usually contain more detailed instructions about how to enter particular bits on the page; you may be interested in all of the information that could be captured if you really wanted to master this task beyond the minimum record needed in our context. However, sustained attentiveness to the game is required just for our modest purposes.

For any game, you will need to use two pages side by side in the book provided to you. It is best to enter the information for the visiting team on the left page (since they bat first, in the top of each inning) and the information for the home team on the right page (since they bat second, to complete each inning).

Prior to the game beginning, you need to write in each team’s batting order on their page. Coaches can fill this in themselves if they like. *In the event that a team does not have 3 females in the batting order, they will take an automatic out when the vacant third slot comes up at the end of the batting order.* Latecomers to a game may be inserted into the batting order at the bottom of the lineup (unless replacing an incapacitated starter; otherwise their inclusion does not require that another player be removed from the order).

The basic requirement is to chart what basically happens to batters, tracking and marking their progress (or lack of it) around the bases in each inning. A simple way to indicate when they are put out at some point, if that occurs, is to mark a very conspicuous **X** in the particular box for that player’s time at bat in the inning and its outcome. Another tack is to enter an encircled 1, 2, or 3 within that box depending on whether the player becomes the first, second or third (and last) out in the inning.

For those players who round the bases it is not only necessary to trace their progression around the base paths in the box but also advised to fill in the box’s diamond once they safely reach home so that it will be easier after to add up the number of runs scored in the inning. Draw a

firm line on the sheet after the final batter of each half inning to mark its termination point in the order. When the team has its next at bat in the following inning, you resume with the next batter (in a new column for that inning). If a team is still at bat in an inning after the last batter in the batting order has had their turn, the record for the next batter(s) at the top of the order is registered in the same column that has been used so far for that inning, because the team is still in that inning. If a batter comes up for the second time in an inning (a very rare occurrence, most likely to happen in a long final, open inning) that second appearance must be registered in the next column which now has to also be marked as the continuation of that inning.

The scorekeeper records outs and runs that are recognized and declared by the umpire and so should clarify any uncertainty with the umpire. Many outs will be obvious (e.g., when batters definitely strike out, hit fly balls that are caught in the air, are clearly tagged out in between bases, or are ruled out when the ball is already possessed by the defense on a base that a runner is being forced to try to reach since the previous base is required by a teammate). Other outs will not be so evident, but in all cases **the umpire decides and the scorekeeper follows suit in recording the umpire's final verdict.**

## ORIENTATION ON SCORING AND NON-SCORING PLAYS

Sometimes scorekeepers are unsure of whether a run should be counted when a baserunner crosses the line at home on a play in which the third out is also made elsewhere on the field. The basic rule in such situations is that a run shall **not** be scored if the third out of an inning is the result of:

- (a) the batter-baserunner being put out legally before reaching first base safely;
- (b) a baserunner being forced out at any time;
- (c) a baserunner being called out for leaving a base too soon on a pitched ball; or
- (d) a preceding baserunner being called out for failure to touch a base.

In our league, situations (a) & (b) are the primary scenarios of interest and apply even when a runner crosses the home plate line before the out is actually made on those plays; (c) & (d) are unlikely to arise.

Of course in a situation where the batter hits a long or high fly ball for the third out and actually happens to touch first base before the ball is caught and the runner from third also crosses the home plate line before the ball is caught, the run still does not count. Such a scenario really falls under (a) because the batter-baserunner did not **safely** reach first base on the play in view of the catch that then took place.

In a run-down situation elsewhere on the base paths where a force is not in effect and a tag is applied for the third out, a run home from third **is scored** if the runner crosses the home plate line before his/her teammate is tagged out, but it **is not scored** if the tag out is made before that other runner crosses home. **Again, it will be the responsibility of the umpire to read all these above situations accurately and make an appropriate call, advising the scorekeeper properly in the process.**

## COMMUNICATION RESPONSIBILITIES

Scorekeepers are expected to communicate with umpires as needed to clarify matters (e.g., if an umpire has lost count of how many outs have been made or how many runs have been scored). In our games a half inning ends if either three outs have been made or five runs have been scored, except for the final inning which is open, allowing the team at bat opportunity to score as many as they can or need before three outs occur. In games in which the home team is already ahead in the score going into the bottom of the last inning, they forego their final turn at bat with the win already secured.

Scorekeepers are also encouraged to update coaches on the score after every complete inning and remind them of what stage the game is at (i.e., how many innings have been played) and provide this update on request to coaches at other junctures of the contest.

After confirming the final score to both teams, scorekeepers are also asked to remind coaches that this score needs to be communicated to the league statistician as soon as possible following the game in order to facilitate prompt updating of the league regular season standings or playoff progression.