

Softball Scorebook Abbreviations

A score book page has a place for each person in the batting order, and then a tiny box (usually with a tinier picture of the diamond and field) within which all the action of a plate appearance and the player's base running is recorded. Because of the small space and the potentially large amount of information that needs to be written down, baseball and softball have developed a scorekeeping shorthand. In most cases, baseball and softball scorekeeping is the same but there are subtle differences that will be touched on in future articles (you thought you would get every scorekeeping detail in one article? Sorry!). All scorekeeping discussed below follows American Softball Association (ASA) scoring unless otherwise noted.

Let us start with the basics. On the left-hand side of a scorebook page is a set of rows to write the player's names. Record their jersey number beside their name in the "No." column. "POS" is their fielding position, which is assigned a number as follows:

Position	POS	Abbreviation
Pitcher	1	P
Catcher	2	C
First Baseman	3	1B
Second Baseman	4	2B
Third Baseman	5	3B
Shortstop	6	SS
Left Fielder	7	LF
Center Fielder	8	CF
Right Fielder	9	RF
Extra Player	10	EP

These position numbers are used as shorthand to record defensive plays on the field. Note that the Extra Player is usually only used in slow-pitch softball, or with younger age divisions. For example, in Southern California ASA fastpitch games, the 8-and-under divisions play with an Extra Player.

Usually on the left side of each player's scoring block, there is a list of the standard ways a batter can safely reach base. These are

Reached Base	Definition	Explanation
BB	Base on Balls	Otherwise known as a walk. A walk is given when four balls have been pitched to the batter.
1B	A base hit that is a single.	The batter hits the ball safely and gets to first base.
2B	A base hit that is a double.	The batter hits the ball safely and gets to second base.
3B	A base hit that is a triple.	The batter hits the ball safely and gets to third base.
HR	A base hit that is a home run.	The batter hits the ball safely and scores on the same play.

How to judge whether a ball that is hit is either a base hit or some other animal will be discussed another day. We were only going over abbreviations, remember?

Here are the abbreviations for other ways a runner can get on base. Usually, these are written under the line drawn in the teeny-tiny diamond from home to first. Write small! I recommend a mechanical pencil.

Abbreviation	Definition	Example
E#	Error on one of the fielders.	If the third baseman bobbles the ball, it would be scored "E5" since her POS is 5.
FC	Fielder's Choice	Scored when the batter gets on base, but an out was made elsewhere during the play.
HBP	Hit By Pitch	Scored when the batter gets on base because she was hit by the pitch. Don't worry -- she'll rub some dirt in it and it'll be fine!
INT	Interference	Scored when the batter gets on base because another runner was called out for interference.
D3S	Dropped Third Strike	The catcher did not field the batter's third strike, and the runner made it to first base before being thrown out (does not apply to slow-pitch softball).

How about when a batter is out? The good news is that the entire tiny block can be used to write! The bad news is, well, the batter is out and there could be tears involved. Focus! You are the scorekeeper! How did she get out?

Abbreviation	Definition	Notes/Examples
K	Strike out	The biggest tear culprit. If the batter struck out but did not swing on strike three, it is customary to write a backwards "K".
F#	A fly ball was hit and caught by a fielder.	If the ball was caught by the third baseman, then the out would be scored "F5".
L#	A line drive was hit and caught by a fielder.	If the ball was caught by the shortstop, then the out would be scored "L6". It is left to the scorekeeper's judgment on the difference between a fly ball and a line drive. Usually, a fly ball goes higher than the player's head, whereas a line drive does not.
#-#	A ground ball out is scored by recording who fielded the ball, and then who caught the ball for an out.	If the batter hit a ground ball to the pitcher, and she then threw it to the first baseman for the out, the play would be scored "1-3".
#U	A player fields a ground ball and then makes the out herself.	If a ground ball is hit to the first baseman and she steps on first to make the out, then it would be recorded "3U". The "U" stands for "unassisted".
SAC	A batter sacrifices to advance a runner already on base.	This usually occurs when a player bunts or sacrifice slap hits with runners on base and makes an out (note that there is no slap hitting in baseball). The batter also gets credit for a sacrifice if she hits a fly ball and the runner safely scores. For example, if the batter bunts the ball and it is fielded by the catcher and thrown to first for an out, and the runner on second base goes to third, then the play is scored "SAC 2-3" or "2-3 SAC". Whichever. We're flexible.

Finally, there are abbreviations for the runner's actions. Write these above the line drawn from the one base they were at to the base they go to.

Abbreviation	Definition	Explanation
SB	Stolen Base	The runner safely steals a base on the pitch while the catcher fields the ball cleanly and throws to the base, or the defense otherwise makes a play.
PB	Passed Ball	Recorded when the runner advances a base because the catcher dropped or

WP	Wild Pitch	<p>did not field a pitch that she normally should have.</p> <p>Recorded when the runner advances a base because the pitch was so far out of the strike zone or in the dirt that the catcher could not field the ball cleanly.</p>
CS Caught Stealing	<p>Recorded when the runner is thrown out by the catcher as they are trying to steal the base. If the catcher throws to the shortstop at second base and the shortstop tags the runner before the runner makes it safely to the base, then the out is recorded "CS 2-6".</p>	
BF# Batted Forward by Player No. #	<p>When the runner advances because of a hit or an out. If the runner on first was batted forward to second base by the batter whose jersey number is 71, then write "BF71" above the runner's line</p>	
AOE Advanced on Error	<p>When the runner advances because of a error on the play.</p>	
AOT	Advanced on Throw	<p>The runner safely advances a base because a throw and play was made to another base.</p>

It seems like a lot to remember, but once you get the hang of it, it is pretty easy. Print this article out and tuck into the back of the score book as a handy-dandy guide for if you get stuck.