

## **7 steps to join the Houston Softball Chapter.**

Becoming a softball umpire is not simply a matter of thinking you know softball because you've played it for several years now. It involves study, training, a solid understanding of the all-important 'mechanics' of umpiring, having the proper umpire's uniform and gear.

But there is actually a whole lot more to it when it comes to fulfilling the role of a qualified, conscientious umpire.

The Houston Chapter is an Equal Opportunity Association that accepts officials without discrimination as to race, color, creed, gender, age, national origin, sexual orientation or disability. However, officials and umpires must demonstrate knowledge and proficiency in the application of the rules and must be physically and mentally capable to officiate or umpire assigned games.

. . Here is Step-by-Step to help you Off on the Right Foot to becoming a High School Umpire.

**Step 1:** Go to <http://www.taso.org/> and register to join TASO.

Attend the next chapter meeting in Houston @ Lutheran North High School In the Garden on October 24th @ 6:00. This will get you in the door and give you a sense of most everything you'll need to become a High School umpire.

**Step 2:** GET IN GOOD PHYSICAL SHAPE -- as this will be vital to performing at the level you'll be required to in your new advocacy. Good Umpiring requires both standing for extended periods of time. In varying degrees of temperature from cold and wet, to occasionally in high heat; and many instances through each game, you'll absolutely have to hustle to get in the right position to make good calls.

**Step 3:** ATTEND ALL MANDATORY CLASSES AND TRAINING, and pass the necessary tests so you can officiate games. Incidentally, training is not a one-time thing; good officials regularly look for training opportunities, as they find that the best information tends to come out in discussions at those events. What's more, rules do tend to change on a not infrequent basis, and training clinics are one of the best ways to keep abreast of those changes.

**Step 4:** BECOME RULES KNOWLEDGEABLE / TAKE AND PASS THE TASO TESTS ( 70 or greater) for regular season, scrimmages and tournaments. And a 90 or greater to be eligible for playoffs, so you can feel confident in your base of knowledge as you prepare to umpire games for the first time..

**Step 5:** GET YOUR UNIFORM, AND OTHER PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT to use while umpiring. What you'll need is:

1. Polished Black Shoes
2. Black Socks
3. Heather Gray Slacks flat front no pleaded pants and Lt. Powder Blue and possible a Dk Navy Blue Umpire Shirt.
4. Black Belt
5. Fitted Base, Plate, and/or Combo. Cap(s); Taso logo or blank Blue.
6. Ball Bag(s), Navy Blue
7. Pencil, Flipping Coin, Balls / Strikes / Outs Indicator, Plate Brush..
8. Rule Book, Case Book, Umpire Manual. These will be provided.
9. Your Own Protective Gear. Mask, Chest Protector, Shin Guards, Plate Shoes, Protective Cup.

If you're a first time Umpire. The cost for the clothes and equipment is around 300.00.

**Step 6:** IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, FIND A MENTOR, who can guide you through your early activities on-field... to give you a sense of what and what NOT to do.

Good Officiating requires a Personal Commitment to Yourself First and Foremost... to continuously strive to improve with each and every game you work, and with each and every Rule Book or Case Book you study... Always seeking out more knowledge and more training, to insure you are in a position -- physically, mentally, and emotionally -- to make absolutely the best calls possible in any given situation.

Great! If you're interested in becoming an umpire, and possibly getting games scheduled through us, please complete and submit the Umpire Form as described above.

**Step 7:** Reply

Don Milbourn  
832-797-3019