

NCSO Softball Uniform Requirements

1. **Bright Blue:** NCAA Style shirt.
2. **Umpire Pants:** Charcoal grey. A "Combo" pant is a great, versatile option to get started, as they are designed to accommodate shin guards for plate work while remaining tapered enough for base work.
3. **Footwear:** Primarily black athletic or plate shoes; minimal white accents are acceptable.
4. **Umpire Cap:** Navy Blue umpire-style cap (short bill) with no team branding. **Must be always worn forward.**
5. **Navy Blue Bag:** Navy blue cloth construction; please avoid nylon materials.

Protective Gear

1. **Mask:** Standard umpire face mask. Black, Navy or grey is preferred.
2. **Chest Protector:** Must be worn under the uniform shirt.
3. **Shin Guards:** Designed for baseball/softball umpires to be **worn under the pants.**
4. **Protective Cup:** Essential for all plate assignments for males.
5. **Plate Shoes:** Highly recommended. While standard black athletic shoes may suffice for lower levels, plate shoes provide necessary toe and metatarsal protection. As you progress to higher-speed play, these will become a required safety upgrade.

Note on Catching Gear: While players transitioning to officiating may use their existing catcher's gear to get started, please be aware of the limitations. Catcher's chest protectors typically offer less shoulder protection for an umpire's stance, and catcher's shin guards are significantly bulkier, which often makes it difficult to fit them properly under umpire-cut pants.

Appearance & Professionalism Notes

- **Partner Matching:** Alternate shirts may be worn within reason, provided you perfectly match your partner. Consistency across the crew is vital for a professional look.
- **Style Standards:** Avoid vibrant colors or loud patterns that draw unwanted attention. The goal is a clean, professional appearance that keeps the focus on the game, not the officials.

