

## 2026 SOFTBALL RULES AND REGULATIONS

You, as manager, will be held responsible for knowing these league rules, regulations, and all other procedures and requirements listed in the Adult Sports Policy. You are urged to make this copy available to your players as they too will be held responsible for abiding by them. Ignorance of these rules will not excuse you or your players.

Rules will be in effect throughout the 2026 season

**Late Starts:** There will be no grace period for the start of a game. Games will be forfeited 5 minutes after scheduled play time. Game clock will start at scheduled game time.

**Official line-up card:** must be at the score table Ten (10) minutes prior to the *scheduled* start of the game. Failure to do so may result in forfeiture of the game. When submitting line up cards please include players' full name and number.

**Scoreboard Clock:** official clock of the game. The umpire's watch or stopwatch will be the official watch in the event the scoreboard clock malfunctions. Official starting and ending time shall be marked on the score sheets. **The scoreboard clock will start when the umpire says, "Play Ball" and stop at the end of the 55-minute game time.**

**Players:** Valid form of Identification available. Players accused of being illegal will have 15 minutes to produce a form of valid Identification (Driver's License, State ID). If no form of ID is produced player will be removed from the game (**League only**). Roster checks will be completed on both teams. Roster check must be completed by the end of third inning. Clock continues to run. Roster checks will be requested by teams. Team found guilty of having an ineligible player in the line-up will have all prior games that the ineligible player participated in forfeited. In addition to the ineligible player being ejected:

- A. The first offense will have the person signing the lineup card as manager or signing as acting manager ejected from the current game.
- B. The second offense, any person listed on the team contract as manager and/or any acting manager will be ejected from the current game and suspended from the next scheduled game that is played.
- C. The third offense, any person listed on the team contract as manager and/or any acting manager will be ejected from the current game and suspended for the remainder of the season.

## LENGTH OF GAME

**Official Game:** Seven (7) inning game, with a time limit (55 Minutes).

Games will terminate as follows regardless of the number of innings played: No new inning will start after 55 minutes unless score is tied. **If the score is tied at the end of 7 innings or 55 minutes, one additional inning will be played.** To further clarify this, a new inning will be in progress the instant the third out is made in the inning or half inning prior, if there is any time remaining. **A team may call outs to complete the inning to start next inning.**

**Run Rule:** 15 runs after 5 innings will be in effect for all Adult Softball games.

**Pitchers:** 5 warmup pitches at the start of a game. Innings 2 – 7: 2 to 3 warm up pitches maybe taken. If the pitcher desires not to take any warmup pitches, inform the umpire and play will continue with no warmups. A new pitcher will receive 5 warmup pitches when he/she enters the game. A pitcher must deliver the ball within 5 sec after the umpire says play ball or the return of the ball to the pitcher.

**Batter:** must take the batter's position in the batter's box within 10 seconds after being directed to do so by the umpire. A strike will be called if the batter does not enter the box.

## PLAYING RULES

The official USA Softball rules will govern play except when any department or ground rules should prevail.

### Official Line-Up:

A team consists of ten (10) players. A team shall not be permitted to start or continue a game with less than eight (8) players.

- A. The use of the Additional Batter Rule is optional, and the manager must declare its use at the time he turns in his line-up card. Once declared it must be used for the entire game. Added batters of any number from ten (10) through the entire team roster may be declared.
- B. The batting order must always be maintained.
- C. Undeclared Player Substitution: Additional players must be present on the bench and not a part of the original declared batting order for the re-entry rule to be used.
- D. An injured base runner may have the player making the last previous out replace them as a pinch runner if there are no substitutes available. The base runner being replaced by a pinch runner may re-enter the game, once.
- E. Any player whose name appears in the declared batting order and is not present to bat when their name is announced will be moved to the end of the batting order and the last batter will move to his/her place in the batting order. A substitute may be inserted into the lineup if they are not in the lineup. **Umpire will inform scorekeeper of change.**
- F. If a player is injured, ejected from the game, etc., and there is no replacement. The first time that player's name comes up in the order, an out will be assessed. After that, the batting order will be closed, and no out will be assessed.
- G. If a player shows up late, and an injured player's position in the order has not come up, the player will be inserted in the injured player's spot. If a player shows up after the line-up has been closed, player will be

inserted in the *tenth* spot in the line-up of the team provided the team has less than the required number of players participating at that time.

- H. Ten/eight players must be present on the playing field or in the dugout when the umpire calls play ball, in order that a player count can be made to start the game.

**Strikes & Balls:** All leagues will play three (3) balls and two (2) strikes (any combination of two strikes and the batter is out). Foul balls are a live ball.

**Strike Mat:** A pitching strike mat will be used. Any pitched ball within the arch limit (as judged by the umpire) that lands on any portion of the home base or the strike mat will be a strike. There shall be no arguing about balls and strikes. Arguing about balls and strikes can result in ejection.

**Warm Up:** No infield or batting practice on the infield. At no time shall any teams warm up on the walkways of the complex. There shall be no batting practice in the park area behind diamonds 2, 3, and 4. After a team is warned for the season, the next violation will be cause for forfeiture. *Teams may take batting practice in the outfield.*

**Team Members:** Only team members are allowed in the dugout or playing field. **NO CHILDREN**

**Double First Base:** The white base is to be used by the defensive player, and the orange portion of the base is to be used by the runner. This is only on the initial play on the batter/runner.

- A. If either the defensive player or the batter/runner touches the wrong base, it will be treated as not touching the base at all.
- B. If there is a collision, the player touching the wrong base is responsible for that collision and the umpire will enforce either the interference or obstruction rules.
- C. If there is no play on the batter/runner, and the batter/runner misses the base entirely without touching either white or the orange, when the batter/runner returns, they must return to the white portion

**Base Path Distance:** Sixty-five feet (65').

**Pitching Distance:** Fifty feet (50') with five feet (5') floating behind the mound. A mark will be placed to indicate the 5-foot distance. The pitching arch is 6' from the ground to 12' from the ground.

**Courtesy Runner:** One player per inning may have a courtesy runner, (coed runner must be male for male or female for female). Runner will be last out of the previous inning or last out of current inning.

**Base Runner:** Runners may advance when the pitched ball is batted, no courtesy step.

**Home Run Rule:**

- A. There will be an over the fence **home run limit of seven home runs** per

game for each team. **The team hitting the homerun throws in new ball (Must be official league ball).**

1. Any over the fence home runs hit after the limit is reached will be an out.
  2. **Any fair fly ball touched by a defensive player that clears or has cleared the fence in fair territory, should be declared a four base award and shall not be included in the total of over-the-fence home runs.**
  3. **A batter who hits an over the fence home run must run the bases. A batter who doesn't run the bases will be declared out and Home Run will count toward the home run limit. Current base runners must run the bases.**
- B. On diamond three, any ball hit into the extended netting above the yellow fence cap will be considered an over the fence home run.

### **INTENTIONALLY HITTING THE MIDDLE**

Any batted ball intentionally hits the middle (at pitcher), regardless of whether it strikes the pitcher, shall result in a dead ball out.

The determination of "intentional" is a judgment call by the umpire, is not subject to appeal and shall not be presumptive merely in the case of a batted ball striking the pitcher. EFFECT: The determination of intent shall be based upon the totality of the facts and circumstances present during the game, including previous statements and actions by players, managers and others prior to the incident that results in the umpire's judgment of intent or lack thereof.

### **GAME BALLS/EQUIPMENT**

**Ball:** Teams provide one new ball per game Men's & Co-Ed Leagues, Dudley *Item# 4A-065Y* • Cover: Leather • Size: 12" COR: .52 • Compression: 300 lbs; Women's Leagues Dudley 4A-924Y (optic yellow or white), Cover: Composite 11" ball). ***No other ball will be accepted.*** Teams will submit one new softball prior to the start of the game. **The softball must be given to the umpire prior to the start of the game.**

**Lost/home run ball: Replaced by the hitting team.**

The replacement softball must be an **official league ball. The softball must be given to the umpire to approve before entering the game.**

**Special Provisions:** Women's Leagues and Co-Ed Leagues may start with new or used balls. The used ball must be the Dudley 4A-924Y Composite Cover and Dudley *4A-065Y* • Leather Cover .52 COR 300 LBS for Co-Ed teams. Balls must be approved by the umpire to be used.

**Sr. Bats:** May be used in the Tuesday Classic League by players 55+ and may be used in the Sr. League on Thursday morning.

**Bats/Stickering:** The Waukesha Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department, as member of the Southeast Park and Recreation Council, will follow the SEPRC decision to adhere to the USA approved and banned bat recommendations for the 2026 Softball Season. The banned bat and approved bat list are available online at USA softball web site (<https://www.teamusa.org/usa-softball/certified-equipment>). All bats must have WPRF sticker on the bat to be legal in the WPRF Softball program. No bat is allowed without a sticker. **Bats must be approved prior to the start of the game by the Complex Supervisor and/or Umpire-In-Chief. Players and/or team managers must allow enough time so as not to interfere with the start of the game.**

**THE WAUKESHA PARKS, RECREATION AND FORESTRY**

**DEPARTMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO BAN ANY BAT AT ANY TIME, IF IN THE OPINION OF THE STAFF THE BAT PRESENTS A DANGER TO THE SAFETY OF THE PARTICIPANTS. Titanium bats will not be allowed in the City of Waukesha Adult Softball Program.**

**Penalty for Illegal Bat:**

1<sup>st</sup> illegal bat violation – bat removed from game

2<sup>nd</sup> illegal bat violation, at any time – immediate ejection of player using the bat and the team Manager

3<sup>rd</sup> illegal bat violation, at any time – immediate ejection of player using the bat, the team manager, and forfeiture of the game. The forfeit fee will be assessed.

**Protective Equipment:** The Waukesha Park and Recreation Department recommend that a chest protector and mask be worn by all catchers in the League. The W.P.R.F. recommends that pitchers wear a mask and other protective equipment. However, the wearing of protective equipment is optional.

**CLEATS:** METAL CLEATS can be worn; molded cleats are encouraged. Metal cleats are allowed only in Men's and Women' Softball.

**AWARDS**

Individual awards will be given to each 1st place team in each league.

**GAME CANCELLATIONS**

In the event a game is called on account of inclement weather after it begins, the following procedures will be followed:

If the score is not tied and the game has completed 4-1/2 innings, the game will be a complete game provided the home team is ahead. If less than 4 - 1/2 innings have been complete, the game is not a complete game and will be made up following the same procedures as protest rules. The batter will start with the count he had when the game was called.

1. The game will continue with the time left when the game is called.
2. Any new players acquired by a team between the time the game was called and the time the game is made up may enter the makeup game as a substitute.

**In the event of inclement weather, the decision to call the game once they are started will be made by the Softball Supervisor.**

## **CITY TOURNAMENT**

All teams in Waukesha's Softball Leagues *except* teams playing in the Co-ed Leagues or Women's league are eligible to enter the City Tournament. A player must play in a minimum of four league games prior to the tournament to be eligible. All games will be counted including forfeits (team receiving forfeit).

**Awards:** Team trophies in City Tournaments will be awarded for 1<sup>st</sup>, and 2<sup>nd</sup> place. Individual awards will be given to the 1<sup>st</sup> place team.

**Format and Guidelines:** Subject to change. Teams will be placed into pools for pool play or preliminary bracket play. Once the initial play is complete, teams will be placed into brackets.

**Rain Policy for Tournaments:** In the event of inclement weather the schedule of games will be pushed back to the next day or until weather permits. The tournament(s) in progress at the time of postponement will be completed before another one begins.

**Entry Deadline:** Announced in the Summer Activity Guide. Proof of entry will be a dated receipt slip.

**Time Limit/Run Rule:** All tournament games will have a 55-minute time limit and/or a fifteen-run lead after five (5) innings in effect except for the championship games, in which teams will play a seven (7) inning game.

**Cancellation:** The City of Waukesha Department of Parks, Recreation and Forestry will cancel any tournament if there are not enough teams to run an effective tournament.

**League Rules:** League rules and regulations will govern all tournament play except where any special ground rules are specified.

**Roster Checks – Tournament:** Teams may call for a roster check prior to the end of the third inning; both teams will have rosters checked. **If a team is found with illegal players, the game is a forfeit.**

**Player Replacement:** Teams may add players after deadlines ONLY under the following circumstances:

- To replace injured players who are unable to play the rest of the season. (Written medical excuse from a doctor is required.)
- To replace players who are unable to participate due to military obligations. (Written proof from the military is required.)
- To replace players who are unable to participate due to work related changes. (Written proof from Personnel Department is required.)

### **Tournament Player Replacement:**

- Players will be on roster by July 24<sup>th</sup>
- Players being replaced must have played in seven games

- Maximum: 2 players

In the cases listed above, teams may pick up players who have not been registered with any other team in the current season. Players add must be formally registered and must pay \$20 player fee.

When a player is released by a manager, an official release card **must** be filled out by the manager and player and placed on file in the WPRF Office.

### **CO-ED SOFTBALL RULES**

All rules and regulations including player eligibility rules for our regular adult softball program are applicable to the Co-Ed league.

**Players:** A Co-Ed team shall consist of ten (10) players; five (5) men and five (5) women. A team shall not be permitted to start or to continue a game with less than eight (8) players. Nine (9) players must be five (5) women and four (4) men. A team can play with eight (8) players, (4) men and (4) women. Any number below eight (8) players will be forfeit. Teams may play with more women than men if the minimum is met.

**Additional Batters:** Manager must indicate its use when turning in the line-up card. If used, an equal number of men and women must be declared.

**Batting Order:** The batting order must alternate man, woman, man, woman, etc., starting with either man or woman. If a team starts with nine (9) players, the batting order must start with a woman.

A. A male batter cannot follow another male batter. If a batting lineup starts with a male and finishes with a male, the next female scheduled to bat in the lineup will bat before the second male bats. The order will alternate from that point.

B. If any player is unable to bat in his/her turn at bat and there is no sub available, the player will be declared out the first time up. The batting order will then close. If the player is a female, the procedure in A (above) will apply.

C. If a male batter is walked, the female batter following must bat if the team has less than two outs. After the team has two outs and a male batter is walked the female batter will be given the option to bat or be walked.

**Count:** Balls and strikes will be (3 balls and 2 strikes).

**Men's Bat Coed League only:** Men must use bats furnished by the Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department or purchase the required bat (**30" USA** baseball bat). Women may use their own regulation softball bats or those furnished by the department. Bats used by the men must have "**USA Baseball**" on the bat. Aluminum baseball bats (fatter barrel head) are **NOT** allowed.

**All Bats must be stickered.**

**Shoes: No metal spikes allowed.**

**Infield:** Infield is defined as 1st base, 2nd base, shortstop, 3rd base, pitcher, and catcher.

**League:** Teams shall have fun! This is not a highly competitive league!

**Outfield:** Outfielders must be no closer to home plate than the edge of the outfield

grass until the ball is hit.

**Ball:** Co-Ed can use a new or used ball, Teams provide one new ball per game Men's & Co-Ed Leagues, Dudley *Item# 4A-065Y* • Cover: Leather • Size: 12” COR: .52 • Compression: 300 lbs;

**NO Return Line:** There will be a line drawn halfway between third base and home plate. At any time, the base runner leaving third base crosses this line they cannot return to third. The person making the play with possession of the ball may tag the runner or just touch home plate for a force out. It is the base runner’s responsibility to avoid any contact with the defending player. Any contact, in the judgment of the umpire, to be intentional and/or deliberative will result in the runner being called out and ejected from the game.

**Home Plate:** Coed league will have two home plates – official home plate will be used by the catcher and mat behind the home plate will be used by the runner.