

2025 50+ SOFTBALL RULES & REGULATIONS

50+ SPORTS/ADULT SPORTS STAFF

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50+ SOFTBALL LEAGUE REGULATIONS & PLAYING RULES

Official softball playing rules as adopted by the Senior Softball-USA (SSASA) are used in the administration of the Milwaukee Recreation 50+ Softball League. Managers and/or participants are strongly recommended to obtain a current SSASA Rulebook. Bat Lists can be found at <http://www.teamusa.org/usa-softball/play-asa/certified-asa-equipment>. The following municipal recreation rule adaptations replace and supersede any rules published by SSASA.

1. PRE-SEASON ORGRANIZATION: PLAYER RATING, TEAM COMPOSITION, AND DRAFT

- A. Team Composition
 - a. Each team is composed of a maximum of 13 active players.
 - b. Team rosters include: one team manager, one assistant manager, and two position players (Pitcher & Shortstop).
 - c. Only the Team Manager and Assistant Manager remain on the same team each year.
 - i. No team may organize a Manager-Assistant Manager duo with the same skill level!
 - ii. Example (substitute any letter grade)
 - a. Legal: Manager (A-1) & Assistant Manager (A-2)
 - b. Illegal: Manager (A-1) & Assistant Manager (A-1)
 - d. Each season, remaining players are placed back into the draft pool.
- B. League Draft
 - a. League administration hosts a preseason draft annually (typically in early February).
 - b. The teams are formed via a modified-blind draft.
 - c. Players are drafted thru 13 rounds according to their player rating/skill-level: A-1, A-2, B-1, B-2, B-3, C-1, C-2, C-3, D-1, D-2, D-3
- C. Player Rating - the league administrators are ultimately responsible to rate and reevaluate the individual skill level of each player (player is not eligible to rate oneself). The individual player ratings are achieved in conjunction with input from:
 - a. Milwaukee Rec 50+ team managers in pre-season and post-season manager meetings;
 - b. Select local senior softball league representatives; and
 - c. Several trusted softball observers;
- D. Trades & Rules
 - a. After the rosters are released, managers will meet with administration on a selected day and go through 2 rounds of trades.
 - b. Communication upon the time the draft results are released, until the trade meeting, should be limited to managers-to-managers only. No players are to be contacted during this time.
 - c. Snake Order will be the format if the trades. The pick order will be reversed in the second round.
 - d. You may choose to pass on a trade when it is your turn.
 - e. Each team has the ability to make a maximum of two (2) trades.
 - i. It is possible that a team can have two completed trades in round 1 if someone uses their selection to trade with an individual who has already made a trade.
 - f. All trades must be made on draft day, prior to the conclusion of the meeting.
 - g. Trades will be announced and documented.
 - h. Only 'C' and 'D' players may be traded.

- i. Trades can only be made for players at the same exact grade level. Teams cannot trade players at different grade levels. All examples of trades that can be made are here:

- i. C-1 for C-1
- ii. C-2 for C-2
- iii. C-3 for C-3
- iv. D-1 for D-1
- v. D-2 for D-2
- vi. D-3 for D-3

- 2. **TEAM MANAGER APPOINTMENT** - Milwaukee Recreation League administrators are responsible for the appointment of managers and have the final say.

3. **EQUIPMENT**

- A. Milwaukee Recreation does not furnish any equipment (with exception of game balls).
- B. Two (2) new game balls will be provided each game. The official softball of the league is:
Debeer 12" Clincher Softball
- C. Metal cleats are prohibited!
- D. Team members participating in the game must wear the league issued team t-shirt.
- E. Restricted Equipment – any softball equipment deemed unsafe by SSUSA will not be permitted to be used in league play.
- F. All bats used must be approved by USA Softball.

4. **FIELD/GROUND RULES**

- A. Field specific boundaries (in-play/out-of-play) will be reviewed by umpire prior to games.
- B. **Speaking Captain: Managers are responsible for naming a speaking captain in the pre-game meeting with the umpire. One (1) speaking captain and the manager can speak to the umpire regarding questions that arise during a game.**
- C. Inclement Weather/Field Conditions:
 - a. For up-to-date information on game status, please call the Weather Hotline (414) 475-8192. This hotline will be updated no later than 7:30 a.m. every Tuesday.
- D. Pre-game practice:
 - a. Each team is permitted 5-minutes of warmup time upon duration of the previous game. Teams are encouraged to practice on a different area of the park before their scheduled game time.
 - b. ****No batting practice is permitted on the infield****
- E. Field Dimensions:
 - a. Bases Distance – bases shall be set at 60 ft.
 - b. Pitcher's Box – the area from the pitcher's plate, 50 ft. from home plate, and extending back 10 ft. perpendicular to the pitcher's plate shall be used.
- F. Infield/Outfield Warm-ups:
 - a. Warm ups are not allowed after the 1st inning.
 - b. Pitchers are permitted a maximum of two (2) warm-up pitches between innings after the 1st inning.
- G. Game Delays:
 - a. Injured Player/Umpire Procedure – a time out for an injured player will be called and the game clock stopped at the discretion of the umpire.
 - i. Stop the game and allow treatment for a maximum of two (2) minutes.

- ii. If necessary, notify the manager that the injured player must be replaced with a legal substitute (one who has yet to participate in the game).
 - iii. Player who was forced to leave the game may re-enter after bleeding is controlled/sanitized and wound is properly covered. This is not counted against a team's re-entry substitution(s).
 - iv. A player who substitutes for a bleeding player is still eligible to enter the game later in the game as a substitute.
 - v. If a player must leave the game due to this rule, and no substitutes are available, the game will continue with one less player. The player may re-enter the same position in the batting order without penalty.
 - vi. If the player forced to leave the game is a base runner, and no legal substitutes are available, they must be replaced by the last batted out. If the injured player was the last batted out, the batted out preceding them will act as the substitute.
- b. Protested Call or Play – protest time outs will be called at the discretion of the umpire. The umpire may also stop the game clock if the protest is deemed to be a delaying tactic.
- c. Dugout Conduct – Failure to abide by the Code of Conduct rules and guidelines outlined by Milwaukee Recreation league administration, may subject a player to disciplinary action.
 - i. Managers, players, and substitutes or other bench personnel shall not be outside the designated bench/dugout area except when the rule allows or when justified by an umpire
- d. Consumption of Alcoholic Beverages or Marijuana: There is a zero-tolerance policy for alcohol or marijuana on our playfields which is in accordance with City Ordinance 90-39: Alcoholic Beverages on School Premises Prohibited. Managers are expected to inform not only their players, but also any team followers of the above ordinance and its possible consequences.
- e. **BLOOD-BORNE PATHOGENS:** Any participant who is bleeding or has an excessive amount of blood on their clothing shall be prohibited from participating further in the game until treatment can be administered. Excessive blood on clothing is defined as saturation to the point where blood may transfer to another person or could soak through to the skin. This also applies to a blood-soaked bandage and/or wrap. If medical care/treatment is administered within two (2) minutes, the participant may remain in the game. If the medical care/treatment extends beyond two (2) minutes, the player must be removed from the game.
- f. **UMPIRE PROCEDURE:**
 - i. Stop the game and allow treatment for a maximum of two (2) minutes.
 - ii. If necessary, notify the manager that the injured player must be replaced with a legal substitute (one who has yet to participate in the game).
 - iii. Player who was forced to leave the game may re-enter after bleeding is controlled/sanitized and wound is properly covered. This is not counted against a team's re-entry substitution(s).
 - iv. A player who substitutes for a bleeding player is still eligible to enter the game later in the game as a substitute.
 - v. If a player must leave the game due to this rule, and no substitutes are available, the game will continue with one less player. The player may re-enter

the same position in the batting order without penalty. If this occurs in a Coed league, there cannot be more men than women in the game.

- vi. If the player forced to leave the game is a base runner, and no legal substitutes are available, he/she must be replaced by the last batted out. If he/she is the last batted out, the batted out preceding them will act as the substitute.

5. **POSTPONED GAMES**

- A. Site Supervisor or the Rec Department will be responsible for cancelling or postponing any games on site. The only exception to this rule is when an Umpire is forced to do so at the field of play due to unsafe conditions.
- B. Games will be postponed and/or rescheduled only under the following circumstances:
 - a. Inclement weather **(including temperature below freezing levels)**
 - b. Poor field conditions
 - c. Emergencies
- C. Any game called off due to weather/field conditions before it is considered an official game will be replayed from the beginning if it is rescheduled. A game is considered official when four (4) innings have been completed. Three and one-half complete innings is considered an official game if the home team is winning.
- D. League play for 2025 will attempt to not exceed beyond August 26. Any makeup games that need to be rescheduled, will be scheduled on doubleheader days if needed.

6. **LENGTH OF GAME/INNING**

- A. Games will start promptly at their scheduled time.
- B. Games will be SEVEN (7) innings with a 70-minute time limit.**
- C. Four (4) complete innings constitutes a complete game.**
- D. Regular Format:
 - a. **Each game will be a regular in-out format for 7 innings or when the time limit is up.**
- E. Maximum Run Rule:
 - a. A maximum of five (5) runs may be scored per half-inning (with the exception of the catch-up-rule)
- F. Catch Up Rule:
 - a. **EXCEPTION: If a team is losing by more than five (5) runs, they may score the number of runs needed to tie the game in any inning (1-6).**
 - b. EXCEPTION: The maximum run rule will not be enforced during the last inning and any extra innings (if necessary).
- G. In the event of a tie after seven (7) innings or time limit, one (1) extra inning will be played. If after the extra inning a game remains tied, the result will be deemed a tie game.
 - a. **Extra innings (8th inning) will begin with the LAST batter/designated runner for that batter from previous inning on 2nd base. If there was no designated runner declared for the batter who made the last out, then that batter must go to second base. Runner may not be pinch run for until they advance one base.**
- H. Pitchers are permitted a maximum of two (2) warm-up pitches between innings after the 1st inning.
- I. Defensive Positioning Enforcement: The batting team is responsible for appealing to the umpire in a timely manner. A legitimate appeal can only be made after the batter has entered the batter's box and before the next legal pitch. The appeal cannot be made after a legal hit.
- J. Warning System:
 - 1. Each team is allowed two (2) team warnings per game.
 - 2. Upon a 3rd infraction:

- a. With less than two (2) outs, batter goes to 2nd base and all base runners advance.
- b. With two (2) outs, the batter has the option to bat or take 2nd base.

7. PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES

A. Roster Restrictions

- a. A team roster is limited to 13 members.
- b. A non-playing manager and/or assistant manager are not included in that player count.
- c. A team must have the required number of players present in the dugout or team area to start or continue a game.

B. Roster Substitutes - Adding Roster Players

- a. If a team's roster falls below 10 or less players, the team manager may request to add players until it reaches the 11-player level.
- b. Those players may be from the same or lesser skill level, or equivalent.
- c. EXCEPTION TO RULE: if a team is missing an essential player (A-rated player, SS, or Pitcher)
 - i. The team can acquire a substitute for regardless of the total number of players present.
 - ii. A-1 or SS: the eligible substitute is defined as A-1/SS or below
 - iii. A-2 or SS: the eligible substitute is defined as A-2/SS or below
 - iv. Pitchers: the eligible pitcher is defined as the same grade level or below. If a pitcher matching this criterion is not available, the League Director will handle this case by case.
- d. If, after attempting to substitute, a team is left with seven (7) or eight (8) players, the catcher of the opposing team can catch for the opposing team (and not hit).
- e. **Substituted players must wear their normal team jersey, so that they can be identified as the sub. At no time should substitutes be wearing a jersey of the team they are subbing on.**

C. Lineup Cards

- a. Each team must submit a lineup card to the umpire during the pre-game meeting.
- b. Lineup cards will be handed out to managers before the season.
- c. Substituted players should be documented on the lineup card in full detail.
 - i. Ex: Eric Taylor (C-2) for Tim Riggins (C-2)

D. Required minimum players – Batting orders/Defense

- a. Eleven (11) players constitute a team. However, a team may start a game with no fewer than ten (10) players. Seven (7) of those players must appear on the team's roster.
- b. An eleventh player on the roster may be added any time during the game, batting in the last (11th) position. Until the (11th) position is filled, an out will be declared only the first time that position comes to bat.
- c. All players on the team roster must who are present must bat the entire game and play a minimum of three (3) innings on defense.
- d. A team's defensive alignment must consist of four (4) designated outfielders (feet must be on the grass). This does not count the short centerfielder, unless a team is fielding less than ten (10) players.
- e. Defensive Positioning Enforcement: The batting team is responsible for appealing to the umpire in a timely manner. A legitimate appeal can only be made after the batter

has entered the batter's box and before the next legal pitch. The appeal cannot be made after a legal hit.

f. **Warning System:**

- i. Each team is allowed two (2) team warnings per game.
- ii. Upon a 3rd infraction:
 - a. With less than two (2) outs, batter goes to 2nd base and all the baserunners advance.
 - b. With two (2) outs, the batter has the option to bat or take 2nd base.

8. **COURTESY AND DESIGNATED RUNNERS**

- A. **Courtesy Runner** (definition): A runner running for another player after they have achieved a base(s).
- If a player's turn at bat comes up while they are courtesy running, that player will be asked to leave the base, and they will be called 'out'.
 - The courtesy runner will still be permitted to bat when their turn comes up next in the order, whether it's the next-at-bat or the following inning.
- B. **Designated Runner from Home** (definition): A runner running for a batter, starting at home plate.
- The designated runner will line-up next to the cone & designated starting line in the area marked diagonally behind home plate.
 - The designated runner may not leave until the bat strikes the ball.
 - The designated runner is only permitted to advance to first base.
 - There will be a line 20 ft. from the batter's box, referred to as a commitment line. The batter may not run past this line.
 - Any violations of the items listed above will result in the batter being called "out".
 - **Maximum of three (3) players are eligible to be assigned a designated runner per team & the runner may change, but, only for those three (3) players.**
 - **These 3 players must be marked on the scoresheets in the pre-game meeting.**

A player may only serve as a Courtesy or Designated runner from home once per inning. (i.e., If a player "courtesy" runs for a player in an inning, they may not serve as a "Designated" runner in that same inning)

9. **BATTER/RUNNER**

- A. A batter/runner cannot be put out by an outfielder.
- B. A batter is not required to touch first base if he/she is utilizing a pinch runner.
- C. When advancing to 1st base, the batter/runner must touch the red side of the base and the defender must use the white side of the base.
- D. Upon achieving 1st, 2nd, or 3rd base and passing (running through) the base, a runner may turn left/right and return to the base at no risk.
- E. While advancing to 2nd or 3rd base, a runner may overrun the base opposite side of the throw.
- F. If a runner is advancing without stopping, he/she must touch 1st, 2nd, and 3rd base.
- G. A defender has a right to the bag while making a play on the ball, it is the responsibility of the runner to avoid contact with the defender. Colliding and/or any malicious contact is prohibited and will result in an "out". Colliding due to wild throw is incidental contact and is a no-call.
- H. Diving and/or sliding back to a base is prohibited and will result in an "out". Crawling or reaching back is allowed.
- I. When advancing past 3rd base and upon crossing the 3rd base commitment line, a runner must proceed home. Attempting to run back toward 3rd base will result in an "out". The ball remains live until the umpire calls "time".

- J. The umpires have discretion on runners positioning on the base path. If a player is more than halfway to second or third, they are committed to advancing to the next base and cannot go back to the previous base.
- K. To score a run, a runner must run past the home plate line OUTSIDE the cone located to the left of the batter's box before the defender catches the ball and makes contact with the plate/mat. At least $\frac{3}{4}$ of the runner's foot must be in contact with the ground/past the home plate line & outside the cone. If the runner attempts to score using home plate, an "out" will be ruled.
- L. If a runner crosses the home plate line and inside the cone, the player will be ruled out. This is a judgement call from the umpire and cannot be protested.
- M. A fielder may not attempt to tag a scoring runner.

10. PITCHING

- A. The ball must be delivered with a perceptible arc of at least six (6) feet from the ground and not reach a height of greater than twelve (12) feet at its highest point from the ground.
 - a. Strikes – Two (2) strikes (any combination of swinging/called) will be an out.
 - b. Balls – Three (3) called balls constitute a walk.

Note: Only one (1) intentional walk (no pitches thrown, batter automatically award 1st base) is allowed per game.
- B. A legally pitched ball (within the 6-12-foot arc limit) that hits home plate and/or the mat will be ruled a strike.
- C. "Quick pitching" is not permitted.
- D. Pitch must be released upon first underhand motion.
- E. Any illegal pitch will be called by the umpire by using both verbal and hand signals. If a batter swings at any illegal pitch, it is nullified and all play stands.
- F. A pitcher may pitch from a maximum of five (5) feet behind the pitching rubber, but one foot must stay within the width of the pitching rubber.
- G. If releasing the pitch while in contact with the rubber, one foot must remain engaged with the rubber at the release of the pitch.

11. BASERUNNING

- A. Base stealing is not allowed. Each runner may leave a base when a pitched ball is batted, touches the ground or reaches home plate, but must return to that base immediately after each pitch not hit by the batter. A baserunner must be in physical contact with a base at the time of the pitch.

12. TIE-BREAKER PROCEDURES

- A. The following procedure will be followed to determine league champions and/or playoff eligibility:
 - (1) Head-to-Head competition
 - (2) Total Defensive Runs Allowed: The team that allowed the lowest number of runs compared to the other tied teams will be awarded accordingly. If a team forfeited against the team they are tied with, the forfeiting team will automatically lose the tie breaker.
 - (3) In the event that all regular season games are not able to be played, the teams' winning percentages will be used to determine the tie-breaker.
 - (4) The Adult Sports Office will carry full discretion in determining position and placement for all teams qualifying for post-season play.

PROTESTS AND APPEALS

PROTESTS: Judgment calls made by umpires are not eligible for protest and/or appeal. Protests on rule enforcement and player eligibility must be made within 24 hours after completion of the game in question using the following process:

- The manager of the team protesting must declare to the umpire that they are playing the game under protest. Once this is stated, this will be recorded on the score sheet by the umpire. The game will be completed. The scoresheet will be turned in to the league supervisor.
- A protest must be submitted **in writing** to the league supervisor via email or delivered in person to the Adult Sports Office (2414 W. Mitchell St.) within 24 hours of completion of the game. No protest will be accepted via phone. The Manager will be asked to submit **in writing**.
- Milwaukee Recreation will handle all protests and appeals and make the final decision.
- **EXCEPTION**: All protests during postseason play must be handled on site before completion of the game. The 24-hour policy does not apply to postseason game play and must be handled at the field on the day of the game.