



ADULT SOFTBALL RULES AND REGULATIONS

Revised 3/15/19

The following rules and regulations will govern play in all City of Sun Prairie Parks and Recreation Department's Adult Slowpitch Softball Leagues for the season. It is the responsibility of all managers and players to know and understand these rules and regulations.

I. FIELD CONDITIONS

A. Since we will attempt to play scheduled games whenever possible, rainouts will not be determined during the day unless it's very obvious the field is unplayable. Do not assume that games will be canceled. If games are not canceled by 4:30 p.m., it will be up to the softball supervisor's/umpire's discretion at game time at each site if games will be played or not played.

1. **NEW in 2019: Sign up for email and/or text alerts of game cancellations. Download the app, 'Rainout Line' in the App store or Google Play. Once downloaded, search for Sun Prairie. You can then search for and opt in for Adult Softball to receive update notifications. Be sure to set to receive notifications. You can also access the Rainout Line from a computer.**

II. PLAYER/TEAM CONDUCT

A. It shall be the responsibility of the manager to control the actions of his/her players at all times - before, during and after games. It is also the manager's responsibility for all of the following:

1. To notify and inform players of all local playing rules and procedures.
2. To ensure that all players respect the game officials and supervisors at all times.
3. To remind team members that all players voluntarily agree to accept all judgments by game officials and agree to abide by all league rules.

B. Unsportsmanlike conduct of any type or infractions of the following rules could mean ejection from the game and/or disciplinary action after a game with the possibility of a suspension. If an incident or ejection occurs reflecting the following situations, a participant infraction form will be filled out by the softball supervisor/umpires and submitted to the Recreation Programs Coordinator.

1. **Derogatory remarks, profanity, obscene gestures, threats of physical and/or verbal abuse or force directed toward any game official, department employee, other players or spectators, will not be tolerated.**
 - a. If verbal or physical threats are made towards umpires, the guilty player will immediately be ejected from the game and may be suspended for the remainder of the season.
 - b. If physical contact is made with an umpire, the guilty player will immediately be ejected from the game and may be suspended for the remainder of the season.
2. Smoking will not be permitted on the field or in the team bench area.

Alcoholic beverages are permitted for consumption by players of legal drinking age. No glass is permitted. No alcohol is allowed on the playing field. Alcohol is allowed in the dugout.

C. **The manager shall be the only person to confer with the umpire on a disputed play.** Such conference shall be kept at a minimum and be conducted in a sportsmanlike manner. Constant harassment or intimidation will not be tolerated.

D. Any player ejected from a game will be suspended for the remainder of that game and the team's next game, including league playoff games (players may be suspended for additional games if unsportsmanlike conduct continues after the ejection is made). If a player is ejected with no substitute to replace that player, an out will be assessed each time that player goes to bat after the ejection.

1. An ejected player will be required to sit outside of the field/dugout area for the remainder of that game as well as the following game that they are suspended.
2. The player will also be placed on probation, which means any act demeaning to the program causing a second ejection or further disciplinary action will cause that player to be suspended for the remainder of the season.
3. If one team has 3 or more ejections in a season, that team will not be allowed to return the following season.

III. ROSTERS

- A. **Team rosters are frozen at 4:30 p.m. on Friday, JUNE 14th.** No player may be added after this time.

IV. LOCAL GAME RULES

- A. The official Softball Playing Rules as adopted by the International Joint Rules Committee on Softball and the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) shall govern play in all leagues with the exception of local rules stated on these pages.
- B. Two umpires are assigned when possible to all games, but if there is only one umpire, the game will be played.
- C. Team listed **second** on the schedule is the home team and occupy the first base bench. They will keep the "official book" for the game played.
1. If the home team cannot keep the "official book", the visiting team has the option to keep the "official book". If no book is kept, no protests of the game will be allowed to be made.
- D. Teams must have at least 8 players to start and continue a game at all times.
- E. Balls and strikes consist of the following:
1. Three balls constitute a walk.
 2. A strikeout will be: two called strikes, two swings and miss, two foul balls or any combination of these.
 3. The strike zone will include any white or black part of home plate (includes front, sides and back parts of plate) and the black mat attached to the plate. If a pitched ball hits the plate or mat, a strike will be called.
- F. ***There will be an unlimited arc on all pitched balls, but a minimum of 6 feet.
- G. All games are 7 innings unless time limit or run rule takes effect.
- H. Runner may **NOT** leave their base until contact has been made with the ball. No courtesy step or leading off.
- I. **FOR SAFETY REASONS: 1st Base – Runner MUST touch the orange part of the base on a run through if a play is being made.**
NOTE: The runner **will not** be called out if they touched white to avoid a collision or if there is no play at the base.
- J. **FOR SAFETY REASONS: HOME PLATE – Runner MUST touch the BLACK MAT when crossing home plate. Catcher will always take home plate. *This is an appeals play. See below for exceptions.**
1. If the catcher takes the black mat instead of home plate, the runner **will not** be called out. The run will count.
 2. If runner takes white to avoid a collision, they **will not** be called out. The run will count.
 3. If the runner takes home plate instead of the black mat, the run will not count until they touch the black mat. The play will continue to be live and the runner can be tagged out/force out until the runner touches the black mat or the ball is pitched to the next batter.
- K. **Commit Line for Women's League Only:**
1. There will be a chalk line drawn half way between 3rd base and home plate (Approximately 30 feet from either base).
 2. Once a runner has touched or crossed the line, the runner must continue to home plate and cannot return to 3rd base.
 3. This will create a force out at home plate so the catcher or other defensive player only needs to tag home plate, not the player. There will be no sliding at home since it is a forced out situation.
 - a. Exception: If catcher taking home plate would impede the runner, the catcher may tag the runner to avoid a collision. If the catcher causes a collision, the runner will be safe. It will be the umpire's discretion.
 4. The runner may return to 3rd base safely after crossing the line if the batted ball goes foul or another rule requires the runner to return to 3rd (bat out of order, illegal bat, ball out of play, time out, etc.).
- L. All base paths will be 65' in length. Pitching rubber will be at 50 feet on all diamonds.
- M. Warm-ups:
1. Warm-up pitches will be as follows:
 - a. At the beginning of the game, pitcher will get 5 warm-up pitches. When a pitcher relieves another, they will get 3 warm-up pitches. Not more than one minute may be used for these pitches so the games can stay on schedule.
 - b. **At the beginning of each half inning, the pitcher will be limited to ONE warm-up pitch.**
 2. Infield warm-ups will be allowed once the umpire(s) are present at the game site before the first scheduled game each night and between other games as time permits. **NO INFIELD WARM-UPS WILL BE ALLOWED BETWEEN INNINGS.**

N. Batting-Order:

1. A courtesy runner may be used to replace an injured player who has reached base safely and is unable to run the bases. The injured player may remain in the game defensively and have a courtesy runner each time they reach base.
 - a. **Courtesy Runner:** Must be in the batting order and will be the player who made the last out. (In coed, the courtesy runner must be male for male, female for female). If the courtesy runner situation arises in the first inning and no outs have been recorded, the courtesy runner will be the last batter listed in the batting order.
 - b. **Prior to each game, in the presence of the umpire, teams must indicate which players have prior injuries that require a courtesy runner for that game. The courtesy runner must be used each time they reach base safely.**
 - c. A player who is injured during the game may also have a courtesy runner for the remainder of the game. If the injured player chooses to leave the game, their position in the batting order is left vacant and no penalty is assessed
 - d. The Courtesy Runner Rule supersedes the Re-Entry Rule listed below in section Q.
2. If a player is ejected with no substitute to replace that player, an out will be assessed each time that player is up to bat after the ejection.
3. Teams may choose to bat any number of players desired over the minimum allowed. (Example: if 14 players come, you could choose to bat 10,11,12,13 or 14 players. If 12 batted, 2 players would serve as substitutes.)
4. **Unlimited Batting Order:** Use of this rule is optional for each team. Teams must decide before each game whether they will use the rule or not. Once a team elects to, they must use it for the entire game.
 - a. Until the leadoff batter is up for the 2nd time, teams may add any number of players to the lineup at the bottom of the batting order. Exception: A team may add a 9th or 10th player at any time during the game, also to the bottom of the order.

O. Re-Entry Rule:

1. If all players are not listed in the batting order, a starter may be replaced by a substitute.
2. The starter may re-enter at a later time but must return to the same spot in the batting order.
3. The substitute not listed in the batting order must come out of the game and cannot re-enter under any circumstances.
4. If a starter has re-entered once, that player may be substituted for again but cannot re-enter a second time under any circumstances. The same substitute cannot come back in the game if they were already taken out of the game.
5. If you list more than 10 players in your batting order, the re-entry rule can apply to defensive positions only. An example would be that if batter #12 is replaced by #2 in the field, this is legal but the players must remain fixed in their original batting order.

P. Free Substitution Rule (Optional):

1. Any player listed in the batting order may play any defensive position in the field at any time in the game with 10 players being the maximum number on the field at one time. This includes the pitcher.

Q. Appeal Plays (as stated in ASA rule book)– Dead Ball Appeal:

1. Once the ball has been returned to the infield and time has been called by the umpire, any infielder (including the pitcher or catcher), with or without possession of the ball, may make a verbal appeal on a runner missing a base or leaving a base too soon on a caught fly ball. The plate umpire should acknowledge the appeal, and the administering umpire should then make a decision on the play. No runner can leave their base during this period, as the ball remains dead until the next pitch.

R. Tie Breaker:

1. If a score is tied after 7 innings, the 8th inning will begin using the following procedure:
 - a. The visiting team will place a runner (the last out from the previous inning) on 2nd base. The visiting team has 3 outs to score as many runs as possible.
 - b. After 3 outs, the home team will bat, again starting with the last out on 2nd base.
 - c. Whichever team scores the most runs will be declared the winner.
 - d. If the score is still tied at the completion of an inning, additional innings will be played using the tiebreaker method until a winner is declared.

S. Time:

1. Games will be scheduled one hour apart, beginning at 6:00 p.m. unless noted otherwise or where make-ups and playoffs occur.

2. There will be no grace period. PLEASE be on time and ready to play as soon as the game prior to yours is finished. A forfeit will be called if a team does not have at least 8 players at the start of the game.
3. The last scheduled game of the night must start no later than 9:20 p.m. In the event this does not happen, the game will be rescheduled for the next available makeup night at the earliest available game time.
4. City sponsored softball games shall be permitted to continue until 10:20 P.M. In the event that the game is not completed by 10:20 P.M., the teams shall be permitted to complete the inning that they are playing in at 10:20 P.M. In no event shall a new inning begin after 10:20 P.M. After 10:00 P.M. all softball game participants and spectators shall leave the City Park within ten (10) minutes from the time the game is completed or terminated by the game umpire.

T. Time Limit:

1. **All games will have a 55-minute time limit. No new inning will start after the time limit unless the game is tied.**
 - a. Tie game procedures see: IV. Local Rules, Section T. Tie Breaker on page 5 of these rules.
2. If the home team is batting and leading in score when the time limit expires, the game will be called immediately.
3. If the visiting team is batting when the time limit expires, they must finish the half inning. If the visitors are then leading, the home team must bat.
4. The 55-minute time limit supersedes the legal game requirement of 4 ½ or 5 innings (i.e. a game may be called after 3 or 4 complete innings at the time limit and ruled an official game).
5. In playoff games, the time limit will be waived.

V. **RUN RULES**

A. 15 RUN RULE: After a legal game (4 ½ or 5 innings), if either team has the lead or takes the lead by 15 or more runs the game will be called. If the visiting team goes up by 15 runs in the top of an inning, the home team must bat.

1. If the visiting team is batting and ahead by 15 runs when the time limit expires, they must finish the half inning, and the home team must bat. No new inning will be started after the time limit.
2. **The 15 run rule will be waived during play-off games.**

B. HOME RUN RULE: Teams will be limited to six (6) over the fence home runs per game. Each subsequent home run will be an out.

1. On a fair batted ball hit over the fence for a home run or four base error, the ball will be called dead and the batter and all runners are credited with a run. **The batter and runners are not required to run the bases. They can run the bases if they choose or they can simply walk off the field.**

VI. **INCLEMENT WEATHER, RAINOUTS AND RESCHEDULING OF GAMES**

- A. Any game not having completed 4 ½ or 5 innings depending on who was leading and getting rained out or canceled due to the weather, will not be considered an official game. These games would then be rescheduled and played from the start.
- B. Games may be **temporarily halted by lightning**. When play is suspended, it will be umpires discretion to decide if a game will resume within 15 minutes of a storm. Safety of the players will be of utmost importance when an approaching storm is spotted.
 1. Any game that cannot resume play due to the weather and is a legal game (4 ½ or 5 innings) will be called. If the game is beyond 5 innings and is in mid-inning, the score will revert back to the last complete inning. Any runs scored in the partial inning will not count.
 2. If the game is beyond 5 innings and the game is tied, it will be postponed and rescheduled to be played from the exact point when the game was stopped, **so long as an official book has been kept and details were documented.**
- C. **If the 6 p.m. games are canceled due to the weather, all games for the evening are canceled even if the weather improves later in the evening.**
- D. Once games are officially canceled, the rescheduling of games normally will be done within 24-48 hours. Make-up schedules will be emailed out to the team managers.
- E. **Cancellation procedure:**

- Team managers will be notified of make-up game schedules. **Make-up games will be played at the regularly scheduled times if an entire night is rained out. If part of a night is rained out, games may be moved to a different time or diamond in order to play on as few diamonds as possible. If a week is available, we will try to schedule make up games on your team's regular night of the week. If this is not possible, Mondays will be used.**

VII. GROUND RULES

- A. All equipment must be kept behind the fence. This includes bats, gloves, etc.
- B. Any batted fair ball that rolls foul and goes under or through the right or left field fence will be a double (applies to untouched balls only).
- C. Any ball hit to the outfield and bounces over the fence will be a double.

VIII. EQUIPMENT

- A. One new game ball will be furnished by the umpires for each game. Balls will not be furnished to teams. Additional balls needed for any game will be the best available used balls. All home run and foul balls must be turned in to the umpire.
- B. Players are encouraged to wear the same colored shirt with a number. Shorts may be worn by players. All clothing worn by players must be deemed appropriate. If any item is judged as obscene, the player must remove it before they can play.
 - 1. **USE OF METAL SPIKES IS PROHIBITED.**
- C. Casts (plaster, metal or other hard substance in its final form), exposed jewelry such as wrist watches, bracelets, large loop type earrings and neck chains, or any other item judged dangerous by an umpire, may not be worn during the game as stated in the ASA rule book.

- IX. **BLOOD RULE** – A player, coach or umpire who is bleeding or who has blood on their uniform shall be prohibited from participating further in the game until appropriate treatment can be administered. If medical care or treatment is administered in a reasonable length of time, the individual will not have to leave the game. The length of time considered reasonable is left to the umpire's judgment. The umpire shall:

- A. Stop the game and allow treatment if the injured person would affect the continuation of the game.
- B. Immediately call a coach, trainer or other authorized person to the injured player.
- C. Apply the rules of the game regarding substitutions, re-entry and shorthanded player if necessary. Once the player has the blood stopped, covered, or clothing changed, they may re-enter the game without penalty.
 - 1. Responsibility for care of the athlete rests with the team, **not the umpires.** The City of Sun Prairie provides first aid kits at each scorebooth, including disposable gloves and miscellaneous supplies.

X. LEAGUE STRUCTURE

- A. Men's and Women's Leagues play 14 games. Co-ed leagues play 10 games.
 - 1. If there are two leagues on a given night (ex: Thursday men's upper league and lower league each have 8 teams), teams will be moved up or down at the halfway point if necessary to keep balanced league play. This will be determined by the Recreation Department. Any moves will be made to keep both leagues in one night to the same number of teams. For example, 1 for 1, 2 for 2, etc.
- B. Championship/Playoffs:
 - 1. All leagues will have 1 champion at the end of the season.

Playoffs/ championships will be determined based on win-loss record. If a league has an uneven number of teams or an uneven game schedule, the fewest number of losses may determine standings. If two or more teams are found to have the same overall record, we will use the tie-breaker procedures described below.
- C. Tie breakers to determine standings for 1st will be used as follows for two or more teams:
 - 1. Head to head competition (win-loss)
 - 2. Run differential in head to head competition (total runs scored vs. total runs given up = run differential). Team with greatest run differential will be the higher team, etc. If three teams tie, the team with the greatest run differential receives a bye in the playoff. If four teams tie, a simple draw will be used to determine playoff pairings.
 - 3. If teams are still tied after the above criteria is met, head-to-head match up will be used as final tiebreaker.