



Adult Softball League Rules

Fall 2024

I. TEAM ROSTERS

- A. Rosters are limited to 25 members per team.
- B. Players may only be on one roster per division, per season.
- C. Teams must submit a waiver/roster form for Opening Day by 2 pm on game day. Any additions beyond Opening Day may be made at the field. **Exception: Players not on the roster that arrive after the first pitch will not be allowed to play that night's game.**
- D. No refunds will be given once a team commitment has been made unless the league does not form.

Roster Deadline: Final regular season game.

Teams can add players through the last regular season game. However, to be eligible for the end of the season tournament, players must have played a minimum of three regular season games. **Players must have been put INTO the batting lineup to be counted.** Once a player has been added to the roster and has played a game with that team, he or she may not switch teams. League director may make an exception under certain situations. Players that have played two or fewer regular season games will not be allowed to play in the tournament.

II. RELEASE FORMS

Everyone who participates in league play, including non-playing managers must sign an Oak Ridge Recreation and Parks Roster and Medical Release Form before he or she participates. These forms serve as a notice of potential injury and as a hold harmless form. The hold harmless agreement releases the Department and any other person connected with league play of any responsibility in case of an accident. These forms are available on the Department's website or at the Civic Center.

III. ELIGIBILITY

Coaches of teams are responsible for the eligibility of his or her players and will be held accountable by the Department to furnish proof of eligibility, upon request. To be eligible, players must:

- a) be 18 years of age.
 - b) be on the official roster.
 - c) be able to verify identity.
1. All players utilized by a team are required to produce photo identity verification. If a player refuses to show his or her I.D., the game can be protested and if upheld, will be declared a forfeit. If the issues can be resolved on the field, the umpires should attempt to do so. If the issue is not resolved, a protest must be filed and normal review followed.
 2. In the event a protest is filed, the player in question must sign the official game sheet.

IV. UNIFORMS (Enforced September 9)

- a) Uniforms are encouraged to have 6" numbers.
- b) No two players may wear the same number during a game.
- c) It is encouraged that players conform to the USA/ASA rule on uniforms; however, the league requirements will be:
 1. Team jerseys must be worn with unduplicated numbers.

2. If a team does not have jerseys, the same color (or close to the same shade) must be worn. Note: the shade must be the predominate color of the shirt and may not be a different color on the front and back or top and bottom. Large multi-colored graphic shirts will be at the League Supervisors discretion if a protest is requested. Exception: Windbreakers and pullovers of any color may be worn.
3. Legal numbers will be of no more than two digits. Symbols are not allowed.
4. Two players may have no numbers per game, but he or she must check in at the scorekeeper's booth. The first will be listed as 0 and the second will be marked as 00 on the official scoresheet. These players MUST still wear the same colored shirt as the rest of the team. Note: A dark colored shirt is a fine substitute for its light colored counterpart and vice versa.
5. Clothing may not display profane or sexually explicit language or graphics.

Opposing team captains that feel a player's uniform does not adhere to the uniform policy must protest the player in question before the start of the 2nd inning. Players found to be playing outside of the uniform policy after the deadline will be subject to protest and if upheld, he or she must come out of play until able to meet the uniform requirement. If a player is unable to play due to the uniform policy and it drops the team below nine, the team will have to forfeit.

SHOES

Absolutely no metal cleats or hard plastic, screw-on cleats will be allowed. Players must wear molded sole shoes, tennis shoes, or softball shoes. Absolutely no boots, sandals, crocs, or bare feet will be allowed.

V. LEAGUE RULES

Leagues will be governed by the playing rules of the 2024 USA /ASA Softball guide. A digital copy will be sent to all Coaches with the season schedule. Exception: Local league rules will supersede USA/ASA rules. (www.usasoftball.org)

- A. **Pre-Game.** No infield or pepper will be permitted before any game. No one is to be on the fields after they have been floated and/or lined for the games that day.
- B. Game time is forfeit time. The first game of the day only will be given a 10 minute grace period before a forfeit is called. The game clock will run during the grace period. The game must start on time if each team has at least 9 players. A 10th player may be added at any time during the game. An 11th player cannot be added once a game has started. If a 10th player is not added, there will be an automatic out recorded in that batting slot.
- C. A written, legible line-up must be given to the scorekeeper 5 minutes prior to game time. Names of additional players/subs must also be submitted at this time. Changes in the line-up are permitted until game time. A player is considered officially in the game if his or her name is on the scoresheet at game time. **Teams are expected to list any possible subs on the score sheet. No new additions will be allowed after the first pitch.**
- D. The official clock will begin at scheduled game time, unless both teams agree to start early. If the preceding game forces a delay, the game clock will begin once the home team takes the field for the first time.
- E. All teams are expected to be within the gates at their appointed game time or a forfeit will be called. Loitering in the parking lot at game time will be cause for a forfeit.
- F. **Smoking.** According to T.C.A. § 39-17-1551(e) and City Ordinance Section 11-111, "Smoking, Use of Tobacco Products, and Use of Vapor Products at Parks, Playgrounds, Greenways, and Public Property Prohibited" prohibits the use of tobacco products at public property and will be prohibited outside of designated areas.
- G. **Equipment.** Both teams are responsible for supplying one new optic yellow 12", top grade, USA/ASA stamped .52 core, 300 compression ball AND one used ball of the same core/compression. The stamp (including core/compression) MUST be visible or the used ball will not be accepted. Team captains must write his or her team name on a brand new ball and exchange it with the opposing team captain in the pregame. Team pitchers should keep the ball between innings. If the ball is hit out of play, the batting team must throw in a good used ball until the game ball can be retrieved.
- H. USA/ASA slowpitch softball stamped bats not appearing on the non-approved bat list are approved for league play. All bats on the USA/ASA non-approved list are prohibited. Any player found attempting

to use an illegal bat will be ejected from the current game as well as the next scheduled game for unsportsmanlike conduct. (See: City rules 8.A)

- I. **Game play.** No more than two coaches allowed on the field while his or her team is batting. Players not currently in the game must remain in the out of play areas.
- J. Only managers/coaches and players whose names are on the official roster are to be on the field at any time during or after a game. Anyone who is not on the roster and is on the field can cause your team to forfeit.
- K. Games will be scheduled sixty (60) minutes apart. No new inning will begin after seven innings or fifty-eight (58) minutes of play (whichever comes first) unless the game is tied.
- L. A new inning begins once the final out of the previous inning has been made.
- M. All leagues will be playing with a starting one and one (ball/strike) count with one foul.
- N. In the first inning, pitchers will be allowed five (5) warm-up pitches. After the 1st inning, the pitcher will be allowed one (1) warm-up pitch. Any time a team changes pitchers, he or she will be allowed five (5) warm-up pitches.
- O. **Base running.** Batter-Runners attempting to beat out a throw at first must touch the secondary (orange) bag. If the batter-runner uses the main (white) bag, he or she will be called out. All other scenarios, the runner may tag the main bag. When tagging up on a fly ball or returning to first base, the runner must use the main bag.
- P. **Stealing.** Although USA/ASA Softball allows stealing, we will not allow stealing for the 2023 season.
- Q. **Courtesy runners.** In men's league play, a team may use only one courtesy runner per inning. For Co-Ed League play, please see Co-Ed Supplement below. Teams are only allowed one courtesy runner per inning. Note: If the team uses a courtesy runner for a batter and the batter gets up during the same inning, the batter must then run for himself/herself. The batter will not be allowed a second courtesy runner during the same inning.
- R. **Run rule.** The game will be called if a team is ahead by twenty (20) runs at the end of the 3rd inning, fifteen (15) runs after the 4th inning or ten (10) runs after the 5th and beyond. This rule includes tournament play.
- S. **Home Run Rule.** All leagues will be allowed five (5) homeruns (over the fence) per game. All homeruns over five will be counted as an inning ending out.
- T. **Shorthanded rule.** If a team begins play with the required number of players as listed (10), that team may continue a game with one less player than is currently in the lineup whenever a player leaves the game for any reason other than ejection. There will be an out for each missing player in the batting order.
 - a) If a team does not have a substitute for an ejected player, the game is a forfeit.
 - b) Under no circumstances will a team be allowed to bat less than nine.
 - c) If there is an automatic out and the batter before the out is walked with two outs, the automatic out is voided and the next batter will step in with two outs. Co-Ed Note: If the walked batter is male, he will still receive two bases.
- U. **Injuries.** If an official believes an injury has occurred requiring medical attention, play will be stopped immediately. Before resuming the game, runners will be placed at the officials' discretion on base where they would likely have advanced should play have continued.
- V. **Extra innings.** We will be using the International Tie-Break Rule. If the game is tied at the end of one hour or after seven innings (whichever comes first), the last batter of the previous inning will take 2nd base to start the new inning. This process will be used during every extra inning until a winner has been determined.
- W. **Out of play area.** Yearwood will have lines running adjacent to each foul line which will represent the field of play. While not actively in a game, players should not be in the field of play (this includes warming up). Please note: if the ball crosses the out of play line, it will become dead.

VI.

SUPPLEMENT FOR CO-ED LEAGUE

- A. Defensive players may play in any position and will not be required to alternate genders for pitcher and catcher. There will be no switching of infield and outfield positions during an inning, with the exception of the pitcher (affecting only two players). During an inning, infielders may not switch with outfielders and vice versa. Note: This includes teams playing with only 9 players.

- B. If an additional hitter is used, there must be one man and one woman. The team can then bat twelve (12) players. Additional hitters may not be added to the line-up after the game has started. **Men's League may also bat up to 12 batters.**
 - C. Batting order must alternate sexes.
 - D. One male and one female courtesy runner may be used per inning. The courtesy runner must be of the same gender as the player coming off the field.
 - E. **MALE BASE ON BALL:** Any walk to a male batter will result in a two base award.
- Provision:** ONLY with two outs, the female batter has the option to walk or bat if the male in front of her walks.

VII. USA/ASA PITCHING CHANGE

USA/ASA Rule 6C, Section 3J: "The pitcher has 5 seconds to release the next pitch after receiving the ball or after the umpire indicates "play ball."

Comment: Reduces the time to release a pitch from 10 to 5 seconds.

Effect: Section 3A-K: Illegal pitch; refer to Rule 6C Section 10 for penalty

Rule 6C, Section 10: Illegal pitch penalty

- a. If a batter swings at or contacts any illegal pitch, it is nullified and all play stands
- b. If the batter does not swing, a ball shall be called on the batter.

VIII. TOURNAMENT

- A. **Seeding.** Tournament seeding will be determined by win-loss record and the bracket will be determined by the number of teams. Single elimination format. In the event of a tie, seed will be determined by:
 - a) **Two teams**
 - 1. Head-to-head record
 - 2. Head-to-head score
 - 3. Total runs scored for season
 - b) **Three or more teams** (all teams played each other equal amount of times)
 - 1. Head-to-head record (amongst all tied teams)
 - 2. Head-to-head runs scored (amongst all tied teams)
 - 3. Total runs scored for season
 - 4. If two teams are still tied, revert back to VII (A)(a)(1)
 - c) **Three or more teams** (where team has less head-to-head games than the others)
 - 1. Total runs against for the season.
 - 2. Total runs scored for the season.
 - 3. If two teams are still tied, revert back to VII (A)(a)(1)
- B. **Brackets.** Tournaments will be single elimination and brackets will be available via the league website around week 7 of the season.
- C. All tournament games, including the championship game, will include a 58-minute time limit.

VIII. FORFEITS

- A. Any team whose player(s) is found inside the ballparks, dugouts, and/or surrounding area with alcohol will forfeit the game. Any alcoholic containers (empty or full) found in a dugout will also be cause for a forfeit. **ALCOHOL IS NOT ALLOWED ON SCHOOL PROPERTY.**
- B. Failure of an ejected player to leave the premises within five (5) minutes (out of sight and sound) will result in his or her team forfeiting the game. The premises includes the general area: playing field, parking lot, bleachers, and a 100 ft. radius of the fences.
- C. A team must have nine (9) players to start a game. If a team of 9 eligible players cannot be fielded at the scheduled starting time, the team ready to play will win by forfeit. There will be only be a TEN (10) minute grace period for the first game of the day. Note: Game clock will run during grace period. D. Any team using an ineligible player will forfeit all games in which that player has played.

- E. Any team found to be playing with an illegal player after game play has begun will forfeit the game. The offending player will be suspended for one week per violation from all play in leagues and tournaments organized by the Oak Ridge Recreation and Parks Department.
- F. An official, scorekeeper or the opposing team's coach, manager or captain may request verification of the eligibility of a player. See Rule 3c.
- G. Any league team to forfeit three (3) games during the season (including makeup games) will not be allowed to participate in the league tournament.
- H. Games ending in a forfeit during pregame will result in a score of 10-0.
- I. **Appeals.** Managers, coaches, and players may request an appeal of a judgment call made on the field. The request must be made before the next pitch and can be made to either umpire. This request is granted at the umpire's discretion, but umpires reserve the right to deny this request. If an appeal is granted, both umpires will discuss the call and make a final decision based on their meeting. The clock does not stop during an appeal conference between umpires. Umpires may uphold the call based on their conference, as an appeal doesn't automatically ensure a call reversal. The decision made as a result of the appeal are final, and additional discussion or argument will be considered unsportsmanlike conduct.

IX. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT POLICY

Before, during, and after game play, players are expected to be respectful of other participants (including family/children that come to watch). Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated. Any official or the league supervisor may issue such warning. **Any player that receives two warnings for unsportsmanlike conduct during a single game will be ejected for the remainder of the current game and the next scheduled game. Any team that receives three warnings for unsportsmanlike conduct during a single game will forfeit the current game.** Any team forfeiting two games during the regular season due to unsportsmanlike conduct will be excluded from the end of the season tournament. Unsportsmanlike Conduct is defined as, but is not limited to:

- a) **Cursing.** No person shall use vulgar, profane or indecent language on any public place or in any public hall, club, restaurant or other place open to the public. (1969 Code, § 17-14)
- b) **Throwing equipment.** A player must refrain from showing emotion by throwing/spiking equipment. This includes any equipment used or worn during competition. This could be a safety issue and will be classified as unsportsmanlike conduct.
- c) **Disrespectful comments.** Disrespectful or offensive words toward another player, a person in the stands, an official, or any other staff member will be considered unsportsmanlike conduct. (This will exclude friendly banter among teammates.)
- d) **Intentionally Prolonging Gameplay.** If an umpire deems that a defensive player is intentionally making errors to allow the opposing team to score runs in attempt to extend the game, the Unsportsmanlike Conduct policy may also be implemented. Note: This includes, but is not limited to, intentionally dropping routine popups, intentionally making errant throws, and any other defensive errors that may be seen as attempting to prolong the game. At this time, this DOES NOT include putting players in different defensive positions or going "station to station" on the basepath.
- e) Any other action that may be deemed unsportsmanlike by an official.

Players, managers, coaches, etc., who are guilty of unsportsmanlike conduct will incur the following:

- f) Ejection from the remainder of the current game plus the next scheduled game. (In the event the ejected player plays on multiple nights, the suspension will only be enforced in the league the ejection took place. Exception: Any suspension lasting 3 or more games.)
- g) A second ejection during the season will result in an automatic suspension of three (3) games up to a maximum of twelve (12) months'.
- h) Game suspensions will carry over from one season to the next, if necessary.
- i) Any participant ejected must leave the premises within five (5) minutes. The premises includes the field, parking lot, and at least 100 feet from the facility fencing. Failure to comply will result in a forfeit of the players' team and if necessary, the police will be notified.

- j) Any verbal or physical abuse of an official or player is an automatic year suspension from all Department facilities, including the Civic Center, Library, Municipal Pool, Scarborough Community Center, and all City Parks.
- k) Any person receiving a suspension has the right to appeal, in writing, within a forty-eight (48) hour period. Appeals are to be directed to the athletic office with the Department.

FIGHTING

In an effort to maintain a safe and non-intimidating environment, there is a zero tolerance policy in regard to fighting. Punishments for fighting are as follows:

1. **First Offense:** Automatic one (1) year suspension from all Recreation and Parks facilities and programs and possible Police involvement.
2. **Second Offense:** Automatic three (3) year suspension from all Recreation and Parks facilities and programs and possible Police involvement.
3. **Third Offense:** Automatic indefinite suspension from all Recreation and Parks facilities and programs and possible Police involvement.

All suspensions are subject to appeal and must be filed with the Recreation and Parks' Athletics Department within fortyeight (48) hours.

X. PROTESTS

1. If you wish to protest a game, you must notify the plate umpire and official scorekeeper before the next pitch. A written protest will be submitted to the Athletics Office of the Recreation and Parks Department by 5:00 PM of the next business day after a protested game. A \$25 protest fee must accompany the written protest. No protest money will be necessary in tournament play.
2. In all tournaments sponsored by the Department, the protest must be resolved prior to the next pitch of the game.
3. The only type of protest that may be filed is a rule interpretation. A judgment call made by an official cannot be protested.
4. All protests will be handled by the Recreation and Parks Department.

XI. REFUND POLICY

There will be absolutely no refunds once a team commitment has been made unless the specified league does not have enough teams to form.

XII. RAIN-OUTS

In the event of bad weather, players may call the Department Info Line at (865) 425-3453, sign up for e-mail alerts or check the Athletics Department's Facebook page. Once a final decision has been made, the info line, email line and our social media accounts @ORRecSports will be updated by 4 pm. If rain occurs after 5:00 PM, report to the field where the umpire will make the decision. It is each team's responsibility to make sure the umpire officially calls the game before leaving the park. When games are called because of inclement weather, the fields will be closed and unavailable for practice. Teams who do not comply with this policy could lose practice privileges for the remainder of the season.

POSTPONEMENTS

A game called by an umpire shall be regulation if five or more complete innings have been played, or if the team second at bat has scored more runs in four and one half innings (home team leading in the bottom of the 5th). The umpire is empowered to call a game at any time due to darkness, rain, fire, panic or any other cause that places the patrons or players in peril.

Games not considered regulation shall be resumed at the exact point where they were stopped. Teams must have the exact batting order as the previous game. If players are not able to make the continuation, subs must be inserted into those spots in the batting order.

XIII. SCHEDULING

Games will be scheduled at the discretion of the Recreation and Parks Department. NO games will be rescheduled due to individual team conflicts. The only games that will be rescheduled will be those cancelled due to weather, field conditions and City scheduling conflicts as determined by the Department. If weather postponements or other extreme scheduling conflicts arise, the Department may schedule league games on non-traditional days in order to complete league play. If such scheduling issues arise, the league supervisor will give as much advanced notice as possible as to the non-traditional reschedule.

2024 Fall Softball Rules

Updated: June 28, 2024

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Office Hours:
9am – 5pm M-F

Athletics Manager

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Official League Website:

<http://orrecparks.oakridgetn.gov/athletics/softball>

Although softball is a non-contact sport, participants are warned that the possibility for injury does exist.

