

Neighborhood Club Men's Softball League Rules

I. Prohibited Equipment

- A. No metal spikes allowed.
- B. Bats must have tape on the handle.
- C. Bat donuts (warm-up donuts) cannot be used.

II. Recommended Equipment

- A. Batting helmets are strongly recommended in all leagues. This is for your own safety and the safety of others. When entering the batter's box you should have a helmet on and continue to wear it on the base paths.
- B. All players must sign the waiver release form before they can participate in any game. It is the responsibility of the manager to make sure all players have signed the waiver.**

III. Batting Orders

- A. Unlimited substitution: Players may withdraw and re-enter the game without limitation provided they occupy the same position in the batting order whenever they are in the lineup. Players whose names appear on the batting order in the same position cannot be in the game at the same time.
- B. Teams may elect to choose one of the three batting orders listed below. Teams must notify the scorekeeper, umpire and opposing team of which batting order they will be using prior to the game. Once the game starts the order cannot be changed.
 - 1. Ten player order with unlimited substitution.
 - 2. Additional Hitter (A.H.) Eleven batters; the A.H. position continues throughout the game and must always be occupied, unless injury or ejection occurs and there are no other eligible players left on the bench. The A.H. is treated as a fielder whose fielding position is on the bench. The A.H. and another fielder may exchange field positions, but must always remain in their original hitting positions. The A.H. may be substituted for, but must follow the unlimited substitution rules.
 - 3. Rotating Order: Only players present at the game will be placed on the batting order and will bat in that order throughout the game. Even if the individuals are not in the field for that particular inning, they will bat. Late arrivals will be placed at the end of the batting order. If a player must leave before the game is over, the coach must notify the umpire, scorekeeper and opposing team before the game. If teams do not notify the correct people prior to the game and a player leaves during a game, an out shall be given to that team each time that player's hitting position comes up. If a player leaves the game because of injury or ejection, his batting position shall be ignored. No changes can be made in the order once the game starts.

IV. Mercy Runner

- A. **18 & Over League**: Each team is allowed to have one mercy runner per inning. The player making the last out will be the runner (Tuesday & Wednesday League).

V. Game

- A. A team must field at least seven (7) players by game time or forfeit. Teams with less than nine (9) players do not have a catcher. A player from the opposing team will catch, but cannot be part of any play. Teams with less than nine (9) players will become the visiting team. If both teams have less than nine (9) players, home team is determined by the schedule.
- B. Three forfeits will result in expulsion from the league. Forfeits will consist of lack of players, illegal players and an umpire's suspension of play because of unsportsmanlike conduct.
- C. If a team forfeits during the season, that team must pay the Neighborhood Club \$36.00 before their next game or forfeit games until the fee is paid.
- D. If a team gives 24 hours notice of inability to play to the League Director, it will count as a no contest, not a forfeit. The game may still be played if the team can field nine (9) players (they don't have to be on the roster) but it will count as a loss. If the game isn't played, \$36.00 will be owed to the Neighborhood Club before that team's next game.
- E. Time Limit: No inning may start one (1) hour and ten (10) minutes after the start of a game.
- F. **Mercy Rule**: A game will be complete after a team is 12 or more runs ahead after 4 1/2 innings. Time limit of 1 hour & 10 minutes will be in effect.
- G. All protests will be submitted in writing with a \$10.00 fee to the League Director within 24 hours of the game protested. If protests are upheld, the \$10.00 fee will be returned.
- H. Any person ejected from the game for unsportsmanlike conduct will automatically be suspended from at least that team's next game. Any person ejected from the game for unsportsmanlike behavior that could cause or result in violent behavior, will receive a minimum two game suspension. (A second suspension will cause expulsion from the league.) Any violent action (contact with an opponent/official, fighting, grabbing, pushing, throwing an object, etc.) will result in an expulsion for the remainder of the season, and will extend to the next season.
Any person involved in unsportsmanlike conduct (i.e. but not limited to profane language, racial slurs or behavior detrimental to our philosophy) will be suspended from at least that team's next game. (A second suspension will cause expulsion from the league.)
Any team or player who leaves the bench area during an incident will cause the whole team to be suspended for one game. The coach will be responsible for keeping his team under control. Failure to keep a team under control will result in expulsion of the team. The League Director reserves the right of a league expulsion for any player or team guilty of gross misconduct. An ejected player must leave the field and premises immediately or forfeit the game.
- I. Teams will be held responsible for the behavior of their fans.
- J. The limited arc rule (6 to 12 feet) will be in effect.
- K. **Base paths will be 70 feet.**
- L. A regular season game ending in a tie will stand as is.

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- M. Base runners are responsible for avoiding interference with a fielder attempting to make a play. A runner may slide directly into the base or run clearly outside the baseline to avoid interference. If, in the umpire's judgment, a runner intentionally or unintentionally interferes with a double play, both the runner and the batter will be called out.
- N. Intentional Collision: The base runners will be called out if they run into a fielder who is waiting to make a tag. The base runner must either attempt to avoid the tag or slide. A runner may slide into a fielder. If an intentional collision occurs, the ball is dead and all runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the collision. NOTE: If the act is determined to be flagrant, the offender shall be ejected. The fielder must give up the base if there is no play at his/her base.
- O. Players may not advance on an appeal play.
- P. Players may not use a phantom tag (pretending to have the ball and fake tagging a runner). If used, players may be ejected from the game.
- Q. Teams cannot take infield or batting practice from the home plate area. A suggestion is to hold batting practice from first or third base area.
- R. The pitcher shall take a position with both feet firmly on the ground and with one or both feet in contact with pitcher's plate.
- S. The batter is out if he hits a foul ball (whether caught or not) after two strikes. If the foul ball (after two strikes) is caught, base runners may advance.
- T. Contact with the ball can only be made within the batter's box.
- U. Official Bat-The official bat made up of the knob, handle, grip, taper, barrel and end cap shall be free of burs, dents, cracks, sharp edges, rattles and show no signs of excessive wear. The official bat must bear the appropriate certification mark (as shown) and must not be listed on the USA Softball Non-Approved Bat List with Certification Marks. **This bat must be an official Slow Pitch Softball Bat. No Fast Pitch Softball Bats or baseball bats are allowed.**

<https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Softball/Certified-Equipment/Equipment-Bats>



- V. When discovered using an Altered or Non-Approved bat after completing their turn at bat and before the next pitch, legal or illegal...the batter is out, all other runners return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch and the bat is removed from the game. All outs stand.
- W. Current **USA Softball** (Slow Pitch Rules) will govern all other situations.

VI. Player Eligibility

- A. Teams may have any number of players on the team roster. If a team is ejected or resigns from the league, team fees are not refundable.
- B. Teams will be allowed to **add or delete players from the roster up to 4:00 p.m., Mon., May 6, 2024.** Deletions which result in a lower residency priority as determined at the start of the season will lead to the team's expulsion from the league.
- C. Any team found using an illegal player will forfeit that game. Using an illegal player in the tournament will result in the team being disqualified from the tournament.
- D. Players must have played in at least two (3) regular season games to be eligible for the post-season tournament. Also, a team must maintain their residency priority status with eligible players for the tournament or they will not be allowed to participate.
- E. I.D. (Driver's License) should be available at all games in case of a challenge by the League Director.
- F. Players **must be 18 years of age by 4/1/24 to play on any team.**

VII. Post Season Tournament

- A. All teams will participate in the post-season tournament. Tournament pairings will be determined by league standings.
- B. League standings-Tiebreaker: 1- Head to head 2-Runs against 3-Runs for 4- Coin flip
- C. The Neighborhood Club reserves the right to determine placement of teams in the post-season tournament.
- D. The majority of games will be played on your team's designated league day. However, make-up games for rain-out dates may be scheduled on any day whether during the regular season or in the playoff tournament.

VIII. General

- A. No alcoholic beverages will be allowed on the fields or adjoining premises. Any team violating this rule will be removed from the league without any refund. This includes parking lots.
- B. Bleeding Player: A player who is bleeding, has an open wound or has excessive amount of blood on his/her uniform is considered an "injured player". As such, he/she must leave the game and not re-enter until the wound has stopped bleeding and all affected clothing has been discarded.
- C. This is a recreation-fun league. Competition is natural, yet we ask that you adhere to the overall recreation-fun philosophy of our league.
- D. We reserve the right to approve team sponsorship, team name, and uniforms.
- E. Each team will be responsible **for paying the umpire \$20.00** before each regular season and play-off game.

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- F. (1) If a game is called due to weather, darkness, etc., before 3 complete innings have been played, the umpire will refund the team managers \$10.00 each. (2) If a game is called due to weather, darkness, etc., after 3 complete innings and before the regulation 4-1/2 innings, the Neighborhood Club will pay 1/2 of your umpire fee towards the make-up.
- G. Taunting and Baiting: Taunting and baiting of opponents has no place whatsoever in adult softball or any adult Neighborhood Club activity. Using ridiculous motions, pointing fingers and gesturing are ways in which an opponent can be taunted. Any "Trash Talk" will result in a warning. After a second infraction, that player will be removed from the game and will automatically be suspended for their team's next game.
- IX. **Rain-Out Procedure**: In case of inclement weather, check the Neighborhood Club web site (www.neighborhoodclub.org) no sooner than one hour before your scheduled game to see a message of cancellation. If the web site does not specify that your activity is canceled, you are to report to the field.
- X. **Rain-Out Make-Ups**: All rained out games will be made up according to the following procedure if at all possible.
- A. **First option - Game Day Doubleheaders**
 - B. **Second option - Weekday/Thursdays**
 - C. **Third option - Saturday or Sunday**