

HRAS LEAGUE RULES

Revised April 29th, 2026

Our goal is to keep the league fun, respectful, and safe for everyone. As a reminder the board is here to serve the league, and it's needs and hereby support our organizations mission statement:

“We are a vibrant community of forever young athletes, passionately playing the game we love while prioritizing safety and well-being. Together, we inspire sportsmanship and respect for all who have paved the way before us, fostering an environment where everyone feels empowered to play their best. Our commitment is to leave the field and the game better than we found it, creating a legacy of joy, camaraderie, and safety for future generations of softball enthusiasts. Join us as we celebrate the spirit of the game and the bonds we create on and off the field!”

Conduct Policy:

For this league to continue successfully, it's important that we all follow a basic standard of conduct. Any form of abusive language, harassment, disorderly behavior, or violence will not be tolerated. Any person who fails to act appropriately will be asked to leave the premises.

All threats will be taken seriously, and result in law enforcement involvement

Any person(s) ejected from the game have 30 seconds to leave the field and 1 minute to leave the premises. The game will not continue until ejected person(s) leaves. Failure to do so will result in an automatic forfeit for that team. Fighting and other acts of violence will result in immediate removal from the game and a two-game suspension.

In the event of an ejection, the umpire will file a report with the board for further review to investigate the matter; depending on circumstances, penalties could include additional disciplinary actions for individuals or entire team(s). Ejections because of violence can result in removal from the league. Retaliation will not be tolerated. This will result in disciplinary action for you and (or) your team.

**Team managers are the only individuals to address the umpire with questions or clarifications.
*UMPIRES DECISIONS ARE ALWAYS FINAL***

Rosters

- All players must be at least 21 years old prior to the league's official season start date.
- Up to 20 players per roster. After the completion of week 2, all rosters are **FINAL**.
 - *Unless approved by the board.*
- All players must sign the waiver prior to playing in any game, if teams play with players who have not signed a waiver, that player will be considered illegal and therefore be subject to penalties. If there are any disputes or concerns regarding rosters, email hoodriveradultsoftball@gmail.com

The Grounds:

- Bases will be 65 feet apart.
- Equipment must be stored properly back into the storage room after each use. Water hoses must be nicely looped, and screens should be removed from the field.
- Bats, gloves, bags, water bottles, etc. must be stored behind the fence.
- Only fielders, batters, active runners, on deck batter, base coaches, and umpire are allowed on the field. All other players must be behind the fence.
- Children are not allowed on the field or on top of the dugouts during games.

- Alcohol is not allowed on the field during a game and must stay behind the fence.
- Teams are responsible for retrieving balls hit or thrown out of play.
- Lights must be off by 10pm. They are on a timer set to turn off at 9:55pm, this doesn't always work.

Team Responsibilities

Home Teams – 3rd Base Dugout

- Updating score board.
- Prepare the field prior to their game time.
 - spraying down the field with water hose
 - chalking the foul lines, pitching halo, batter's box, home-line, commitment-line
 - raking the batters' box, around all bases, and pitching mound after the last game

Away Teams – 1st Base Dugout

- Dispose of trash into the dumpsters after their game.
- Locking portable toilet(s), last game only.

Both teams are required to keep books. The home teams' book will be the primary record for each game. Winning teams will report the final score and the winner to: hoodriveradultsoftball@gmail.com

Uniforms and Equipment

- Teams are encouraged to wear uniform shirts
- Players should wear unrestrictive clothing to allow for full range of movement.
- Clothing must not contain or promote discriminatory, offensive, or abusive language, symbols, or actions.
 - All decisions regarding uniforms will be decided by the umpire and/or present HRAS board members
- Closed toed shoes are required while on the field during a game, including base coaches and volunteers.
- Metal cleats are not allowed.
- HRAS will provide game balls.
 - A standard 12-inch softball will be used for male batters, and a standard 11-inch softball will be used for female batters.
 - The umpire, pitcher, and base coaches will work together to switch balls between male and female batters.
- Fielding gloves are required for all players on defense.
- All bats must be stamped with the USSSA or ASA approval.
 - Bats should be free from structural cracks or popped caps.
 - Senior league bats are prohibited.
 - Players seen using illegals bats will be given a warning and bat must be taken out of play.
 - Any player found using a removed bat will be ejected.
- It is strongly recommended that all pitchers use the pitching net and/or wear a helmet with a facemask and other protective equipment.

Lineups

- Teams play with 10 players on defensive.
 - A minimum of 4 females and 4 males are needed to start AND finish the game.
 - If a team cannot fill the minimum player requirement by the time the game clock starts the team is given an automatic forfeit.
- If a team uses a non-roster player, they will automatically forfeit the game
- Teams cannot play with more males than females on the field.
- Batting line up must alternate male and female.
 - Teams playing with odd number of players may elect to use “the wheel” method for batting rotations, assuring males and females alternate.
 - Males or females batting back-to-back will receive an automatic out each time this occurs.

Game Play:

- **Coaches Meeting:** Before each game, coaches will meet at home plate with the umpire to discuss understandings and relay important information.
- **Time limit:** All games will be 1 hour and :15-minutes. Time will start at the end of the coaches meeting. No new inning will start after 1 hour and :05 minutes of play, unless the game is tied.
- **Count:** All batters will start with 1 ball and 1 strike count.
- **Strike:** A “Strike Zone” mat will be used. Any legal pitch that contacts the Homeplate or strike zone mat will be called a strike.
- **Foul Balls:** Foul balls are considered strikes. No courtesy fouls.
- **Walks:** After 3 balls females batters will walk to first and male batter will advance to 2nd base on a walk, either intentional or not. If there are two outs and the male walks the following female batter can choose to bat or occupy first base.
- **Legal Pitch:** Pitch heights are 6’ minimum and 10’ maximum from ground level.
- **Illegal Pitch:** If the umpire identifies an illegal pitch, they will immediately declare it verbally (“Illegal Pitch”), and a ball will be added to the count.
 - If a batter chooses to swing, the result of the swing will be the outcome.
- **Batter Ready:** The batter and umpire must be ready within the batter’s box before the pitch is thrown. No quick pitching. (Umpires’ discretion)
- **First Base Double Bag:** A double bag (white and orange) is used at 1st base. When there is a play at 1st base, the runner must touch the orange bag; failure to do so will result in an out. First basemen must use the white bag, failure to do so will result in the runner being safe. If there is no play, the runner may round either bag. Interference by the first baseman will award the runner 2nd base.
- **Base Running:** Runner must remain on the base until the ball is batted, leaving a base early may result in the runner being called out. Runners must avoid contact when a play is being made at a base. Sliding is not required, but avoiding collision is the runner’s responsibility. Failure to do so will result in the runner being called out.
- **Courtesy Runners:** May be used once per inning per gender and must match the gender of the runner being replaced. Exception: runners injured during the play may be replaced by a courtesy runner. Courtesy runners will be the furthest from the batter in the lineup unless they are on base, then the runner will be the second furthest batter or until a runner is available. If a courtesy runner is on base when their turn to bat comes up, they will be called out as a runner and must bat.
- **Commitment Line:** Once any part of a runner crosses the commitment line, located halfway between 3rd base and home, they must continue through the home plate line. Runners will be called out if they cross the commitment line and return to 3rd base.

- **Home Plate Line:** Extends into foul territory from the top corner closeted to 3rd base of home plate. Runners must run through the home plate line, once any part of a runner crosses the home plate line they will be considered through. Do not touch home plate, if runners touch home plate they will be called out. The only exception is with an over the fence home run.
- **Outfield Line:** Outfielders are required to stay behind the 165' (grass line) outfield line until the ball is hit. If outfielders cross the outfield line prior to the ball being hit, the batter has the option to take the result of the play or occupy first base.
- **Infield Fly Rule:** When there are runners on first and second, or when the bases loaded, with less than two outs. Any fair fly ball that can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort, the umpire will call "Infield Fly." When an infield fly is declared the batter is out, even if the ball is dropped, and force plays are removed. Runners may advance but are not required to.
- **Overplay Rule:** A defensive player may not intentionally physically displace a teammate to make a play (e.g., a pitcher pushing the catcher off home plate, or an outfielder interfering with a teammate positioned to make a catch). Any violation will result in all affected baserunners advancing one base."
- **Ball Out-of-Play:** If a thrown ball goes out of play (e.g., over/under/through the fence, or gets stuck), the ball is dead. Runners will be awarded one base from the last obtained base.
- **Ground Rule Double:** If a fair batted ball becomes trapped, rolls under, or bounces over the fence out of play the batter and base runners are awarded 2 bases from their base at the time of the pitch.
- **Over the Fence Home Run:** Each team is allowed 3 over-the-fence home runs per game. Any additional home runs will be ruled a ground rule double; any runners will advance 2 bases. If both teams hit 3 over the fence home runs, each team is allowed 1 additional over the fence home run. This will continue each time teams have the same amount of over the fence home runs.
- **HALO RULE:** A ball batted directly back at the pitcher, without hitting the ground before, will be an automatic out and the play will be called dead. The halo zone 2 feet to either side and in front of the pitching rubber, up to 2 feet above the pitcher head when standing. If a ball is caught by the pitcher in the halo zone, the play is dead, no runners advance. Pitchers who step out of the halo zone when releasing the pitch WILL NOT be given the benefit of a HALO call. This is a judgement call by the umpire.
- **Pitching Net:** Pitchers may request the use of a protective net during games. If the net is used the halo zone will be the pitching net.
 - A ball batted directly back at the net, without hitting the ground before, will be an automatic out and the play will be called dead.
 - Any ball that hits the ground before hitting the net will be a live ball.
 - The net is considered a part of the field and will be considered in play for all other scenarios.
- **Ball In Play Interference:** Gloves or other objects may not be removed and thrown at a ball in play. Players who throw their gloves to stop a live ball will be given a warning, if it occurs a second time the player will be ejected. The batter will be granted two bases.
- **Tied Game:** In the event of a tie game, if the time limit has not been reached, the game will proceed until a winner is decided or the time limit is reached. In all extra innings, teams will start with two outs, and the last player to complete a plate appearance in the previous inning will start on 2nd base. A game will be complete when a team has a lead after the completion of an extra inning, or time expires, in which case the game is considered a tie.
- **Mercy Rule:** A game is considered finished if a team is ahead by 15 or more runs after the 3rd inning, or 10 or more runs after the 4th inning. If the home team is down by 10 or more runs after batting in the bottom of the 3rd or 4th, they will remain at bat becoming the visiting team in the top of the next inning. If they can cut the deficit to less than the mercy rule, the game continues with the original visiting team becoming the home team. If a team wins by more than 10 runs, they will only be given a point differential of 10 runs for that game.

Rules are subject to change with board approval regarding safety or gameplay.