

Adult Softball Rules

Revised 4/23/26



OBJECTIVE

The City of Dubuque Parks & Recreation Department adult softball leagues are intended to provide players of all abilities with the opportunity to participate in organized league play. **Fair play** and **sportsmanship** are the responsibility of each player, captain, and spectator.

ELIGIBILITY

Players must be at least 18 years old to participate. All players must have their name, address, and signature on a team roster to be considered a “legal” player. Teams found using non-rostered players will forfeit any and all games in which illegal players were used. Players are allowed to play on multiple teams each night, but only if those teams are in separate leagues/divisions. Players cannot play for multiple teams within the same league/division.

EQUIPMENT

The Parks & Recreation Department will provide one umpire for each game. Each team is responsible for supplying all other equipment.

- **Softballs:** ASA/USA approved (with ASA/USA stamp) .52/300 yellow optic 12-inch softballs will be used for all slow-pitch leagues (Men’s, Women’s, & Mixed). It is suggested that teams mark their softballs so there is no confusion of ownership after a game. Each team will submit two (2) good ASA/USA approved softballs to the umpire before each game to be approved by him. At the beginning of each half inning, the pitcher will start to pitch with the ball of the umpire’s choosing, and will continue to pitch that ball until it is out of play. He/she will then pitch the next ball until it is out of play or until the half inning is over, unless the umpire deems it necessary to change balls. ***Teams will hit their own softball. The softball used will be one of the two submitted prior to the beginning of the game. Non-protestable if opposing teams’ ball is used.)**
- **Bats:** All bats must meet ASA/USA specifications. ASA/USA evaluates bats throughout the season. There is a possibility that a bat may be legal at the beginning of the season and then banned or recalled for adjustment by mid-season. Bat lists are posted on the ASA/USA website, www.usasoftball.com. As soon as the bat is deemed illegal by ASA/USA, it will then be illegal to use in our league.
- **Shoes:** No metal spikes or metal cleats allowed.
- **Scorebooks:** In order to verify the game scores with the umpire and opposing team, teams will be responsible for keeping a rotating score book. The batting team will keep their own stats and alternate the score book every half inning. If a discrepancy occurs and the teams playing cannot agree on the score, then the umpire will have the final decision.
- **STRIKE MAT:** Both plate and mat would be considered a strike **along with the black around the plate**. The Strike mat will also be used as an extension to home plate. Base runners may step on the black mat or home plate to score.

FIELD SUPERVISORS

There will be a field supervisor present while games are being played. Feel free to ask him/her for help, first aid assistance, or to report a problem. The field supervisor will do his/her best to assist you. The Field Supervisor cannot overturn a call made by the umpire, but may be used for rule clarifications. Softball questions that the field supervisor cannot answer shall be directed to Recreation Supervisor.

PROFANITY RULE

Vulgar and obscene language used by any participant or spectator will not be permitted. If the umpire hears any profanity, he/she is to give this individual a warning and will immediately warn **BOTH** teams. Upon hearing any additional profanity from anyone, the umpire will eject this player. **(Any player/spectator ejected must leave the park immediately.)** The umpire may use his/her pre-game meeting as his/her official warning to both teams. If the player/spectator leaves the game without any further problems, no additional penalty will incur. If he/she continues to harass the umpire for enforcing this rule, he/she will be suspended for a minimum of two weeks. Additionally, the umpire has the authority to forfeit any game that has individuals who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol, where the umpire feels there is danger toward the player or other participants.

SCHEDULES/STANDINGS

Schedules, scores, standings, and league information will be posted on Team Sideline. Please visit www.teamsideline.com/dubuque to view our city sports page.

- Schedule changes will be made on Team Sideline. Be sure to check the website for changes and updates regularly, as changes may be made due to rainouts.
- The Parks & Recreation Department reserves the right to change and/or adapt any softball schedules in any way necessary to operate the leagues.
- Anytime there are make-ups, rescheduling, rainouts, playoffs, tournaments, etc., they will be scheduled in accordance to the availability of the Leisure Services Department facilities and staff. **If necessary, teams may have to play makeup games on nights, times and at other facilities, other than their normal league night.**

THE GAME

- Official ASA softball rules will cover all games in all leagues, unless otherwise stated.
- The Parks & Recreation Department and league officials are not responsible for any injuries or accidents incurred by players.
- Batters will start with a 1 and 1 count. A three-ball, two-strike count will be used. A batter shall walk after three (3) balls and is out after two (2) strikes. A batter is out if the second strike is a foul ball.
- Pitching distance for ALL slow pitch games is 50'.
- All base distances will be 70' apart.
- A 6' – 12' pitching arc will be enforced.
- The batter's box is 4' wide x 7' long.
- A strike is judged when the ball hits the carpet, or the entire white part of home plate.
- Any foul tip from the bat into the catcher's hand(s) or glove/mitt is ruled an out.
- On Field #3 only, any batted ball that hits the wires above the field will be considered a dead ball and re-do.
- Pitchers are allowed two (2) warm-up pitches between innings.
- The catcher shall return the ball directly to the pitcher after each pitch except after a strikeout, or putout made by the catcher. The pitcher has twenty (20) seconds to release the next pitch, during which time all infield (around-the-horn) must be completed.
- Umpires will control all softballs used. Balls will remain along the backstop corner closest to the owner's dugout. Teams are to present two legal game balls prior to the start of each game. Teams will hit 'their own ball'. No protests allowed if an error is made.
- SAFETY RULES – If at any point during a game, the umpire declares there to be an issue regarding the safety of the players and/or umpires, the umpire may implement a safety rule to help prevent any accident that could cause an injury.

INNINGS/TIME LIMIT

- A game shall consist of 7 innings with the exception of the slaughter rule or a game called by the umpire.
- Any game called by an umpire due to weather shall be regulation if FIVE (5) or more complete innings (4 ½ complete innings if the home team is ahead) have been played.
- If the game is tied at the end of the 7th inning and the time limit has been reached (**60 minutes**), one additional inning will be played. If the game is still tied after the additional inning, the game will end in a tie.
- If the game is tied after the 7th inning and the time limit has not been reached, additional innings may be played until the time limit is reached.
- Games will be scheduled every 60 minutes. Consequently, games scheduled at later times may start later than anticipated.
- Game time is forfeit time. The umpire's watch will serve as the official game clock.
- Slaughter Rule: There will be no slaughter rule after 3 or 4 innings, with the exception of a team manager of the losing team forfeiting if they no longer wish to continue play. At the end of 5 complete innings, or any subsequent inning, if a team is ahead by ten (10) runs or more, the game is over. If the home team is ahead by the run rule prior to, or during its turn at bat, it is not necessary to complete the inning. **NOTE:** A game can never end as a result of the run rule while the visiting team is at bat.

HOME RUN RULE

- Each team will be allowed to hit three (3) over the fence home runs per game. Any ball hit over the fence after the home run limit has been reached will result in an out.

PROTESTS

Protests relating to illegal bats, illegal softballs and illegal players will be taken into consideration. All other protests will not be allowed.

FORFEITS

- Game time is forfeit time (Umpire's judgement call).
- Any team forfeiting a game without giving the Parks & Recreation Department at least a twenty-four (24) hour advanced notice will be required to pay a \$30 forfeit fee prior to their next scheduled game. Failure to do so will result in automatic forfeiture of that game. Games forfeited after play has begun are not covered under this rule.
- Once the umpire declares the game a forfeit, the game is over and will be recorded with a score of 7-0. Teams may still use the field and play for fun, but the game will not count in the standings.
- Any team with more than two (2) forfeits may be removed from the league.
- Any team with a forfeit will lose any tie-breakers at the end of the season.

PLAYERS & ROSTER REQUIREMENTS

- Teams must carry a minimum of ten (10) players, with no maximum for all leagues.
- All players must be at least eighteen (18) years of age before being added to a roster.
- Any team using a player who is not on the team roster will forfeit all games won in which this individual has participated.
- All players must have their name, address, and signature on a team roster to be considered a "legal" player. Teams found using non-rostered players will forfeit any and all games in which illegal players were used.
- Players may play on more than one team per night but cannot be rostered by multiple teams within the same division.
- Only the team captain or manager is permitted to discuss game situations with umpires.
- Smoking and alcoholic beverages are not allowed on the playing field, team bench, and/or dugout. Players disobeying this rule will be ejected from the park. Smoking is prohibited inside the McAleece Park and Recreation Complex.

ROSTER CHECKS

A copy of each team's roster will be kept on file at the game site and the original will be kept at the Leisure Services office. Should a team request a roster check during a game, the game will stop and photo identification of all players on

both teams may be checked. Any players unable to produce photo identification at that time shall be declared an unrostered (illegal) player. Rosters must be turned in prior to your first game, no exceptions. They may be handed in at the field the first night. All players must sign the roster form. The Recreation Supervisor will not take any roster changes after the 10th game of the season is complete, but may accept changes due to injuries. NOTE: All roster checks must be called prior to the completion of the 1st inning. Team managers/captains, are expected to have a copy of their own team roster at each game. Roster checks can only be called by the captains of the two teams playing. Games will not be extended due to roster checks. Each team's roster may be checked at each game it plays during the season.

ILLEGAL PLAYERS

- A player that is not at least 18 years old.
- A player that is playing for two separate teams within the same division.
- A player that is not listed on the team roster for that team which he/she is playing for.
- A player that falsifies an address on the roster.
- A player that fails to sign his/her own name on the original roster sheet.
- A player that is playing under someone else's name.
- A player that is playing while under a suspension.

SUBSTITUTIONS

- Use of the extra player(s) is optional. Teams may bat up to 12 players. If used, the team manager/captain must notify the umpire and the opposing team prior to the start of the game and must be used for the entire game. In the event a team elects to bat 11 or 12 players and then loses that player and cannot replace them, the 11th or 12th position will be ruled an out, except in the case of an injury in which that position would not be ruled an out. Extra players in the batting order may substitute freely on defense. Mixed teams should see additional Mixed League Rules.
- Starting players may be withdrawn and re-entered once, provided players occupy the same batting positions whenever in the line-up. Substitutions may not re-enter once withdrawn. The starting player and substitute may never be in the game simultaneously. This rule applies for men's and women's leagues. Mixed leagues should see additional Mixed League rules.

COURTESY RUNNER

Each team will be allowed to use one (1) courtesy runner per inning. The player that made the last out or last run scored (whichever is most recent), will be used as the courtesy runner.

ILLEGAL BATS

All bats must meet ASA specifications. ASA evaluates bats throughout the season. There is a possibility that a bat may be legal at the beginning of the season and then banned or recalled for adjustment by mid-season. Bat lists are posted on the ASA website, www.asasoftball.com. As soon as the bat is deemed illegal by ASA, it will then be illegal to use in our league. Please remember that all bats that do not bear an ASA certification mark remain non-approved unless they were made prior to 2000 and in the sole discretion of the umpire and/or field supervisor would pass ASA certification test if tested. If you have a question about a particular bat, please ask the umpire, field supervisor, or Recreation Supervisor.

SUSPENSION CONDITIONS

- The Parks & Recreation Department softball supervisor reserves the right to suspend any player from competition, for any period of time he/she deems appropriate when harmful or abusive language is directed toward officials or members of the opposing team, or for unsportsmanlike conduct of any degree. Also, this supervisor has the authority to forfeit any game in which an infraction of league rules has been committed.
- If a participant physically assaults any official softball personnel, a lifetime suspension will result.
- Any player ejected from a game shall be suspended from playing, coaching and/or attending any games for a minimum of one full week. The player may appeal this automatic suspension prior to 5:00pm on the next business day following that game. The supervisor will then investigate the situation and determine if the suspension should be waived.
- Ejected players cannot be replaced on offense or defense and will count as an automatic out when the ejected player(s) comes up in the batting order.

ADDITIONAL MIXED LEAGUE RULES

- Coed defensive positioning shall include two (2) males and two (2) females in the outfield; two (2) males and two (2) females in the infield; and one (1) male and one (1) female in the pitcher and catcher positions.
- Ten (10) member teams shall be used. A team may begin play with eight (8) players (4 men and 4 women). **TEAMS MUST HAVE A MINIMUM OF 4 WOMEN TO START A GAME!** A team with nine (9) players present must play a 5-women and 4-men combination. If there are five (5) women, a woman bats first. If the tenth player (of the alternate sex) arrives late, he/she must bat in the same order. **In the event there are 5 men and 4 women present, the 10th batter slot, (the 5th woman batter spot) will count as an out regardless of the inning or game situation.** Extra player (EP) rule would allow twelve batters (6 men, 6 women).
- The batting order shall alternate the sexes, with the exception of times when females bat back-to-back.
- Any substitution must be on a woman-for-a-woman or man-for-a-man basis.
- Any walk to a male batter will result in a two-base award. The next batter (a female) will bat. **EXCEPTION:** With two outs, the female batter has the option to walk to first base or bat. **NOTE:** Should the female batter-runner pass a male batter-runner when choosing to walk, no out should be called during this dead ball period. A male batter-runner advancing to second base without touching first base shall be called out if properly appealed.
- Until the ball has reached the plate, all outfielders must be on the grass outfield.
- Outfielders must be positioned in the grass outfield until the ball is hit, or until the ball reaches home plate. Infielders may position themselves in the outfield, but must be positioned in front of the outfielders.
- An outfielder to the left of straight center field may not throw to first base in an attempt to get the batter/runner out going to first base. **RESULT:** delayed dead ball – automatic double.
- If discovered using the wrong number of females or males in the outfield or infield and brought to the umpire's attention by the offended team, the batting team has choice of re-batting or keeping the play as it stands.

TIE-BREAKING PROCEDURES

In the event that two or more teams have equal records at the conclusion of the regular season, the tie-breaking procedure will be as follows:

- Any team who has a forfeit during the regular season automatically loses all tie-breakers.
- **2 team tie** – A two team tie will be broken by the results of head-to-head matchups between the teams in questions. If for some reason these two teams played each other twice with split decisions, the tie will be broken by the run differential versus the two tied teams. If the teams are still tied, the run differential throughout the entire season will be used. We will take the amount of runs scored minus the amount of runs given up to determine this number. The team with the higher number will win the tie-breaker. If the teams are still tied, there will NOT be any playoff game to determine the overall champion. Both teams would receive either the 1st or 2nd place trophy (determined by a coin flip) and both teams will receive a 1st place prize voucher.
- **3 or more teams tie** – If 3 or more teams are tied at seasons' end, the teams in question will be placed together in a pool where the teams' head-to-head results will be checked. The team with the best head-to-head record in the pool will win the tie. If all 3 teams are tied in pool play, then the tie will be broken by run differential within the pool of tied teams. Once the best team is determined, the next spot will be determined again by head-to-head. If these two teams are still tied, then run differential throughout the entire season will be used. **(If 3 or more tied teams do not all play each other, the tie will be broken by run differential throughout the entire season. Once the best team is determined after run differential, the next spot will be determined by head-to-head if possible.)**

The Parks & Recreation Department and Recreation Supervisor has the right to enforce these and other rules deemed necessary to provide a safe, fun, and quality league. For more information, please contact the Parks & Recreation Department.

Brian Feldott, Recreation Supervisor
City of Dubuque Parks & Recreation Department
563-589-4316 bfeldott@cityofdubuque.org

