

ACTIVITY RULEBOOK

Softball

Softball is a non-contact activity, however contact and injuries are a possibility. The Intramural Sports program assumes no responsibility for injuries and all participants must electronically acknowledge/consent to the online waiver in IMLeagues prior to participating. By agreeing to the online waiver, each participant agrees to rules and policies outlined in this and all other documents provided by Intramural Sports.

All information in this rule book pertains to the facilitation of Softball contests and its season administration. For questions or concerns, please contact intramurals@uwlax.edu.

REMINDER: *all participants are encouraged to review the participant handbook and general rules overview prior to participating in each activity in which they are interested. View these documents by visiting the ["Rules" website](#).*

UWL Intramural Sports welcomes all students and faculty/staff members meeting eligibility guidelines. Participants may compete in the gender league with which they identify. For any eligibility concerns, please contact intramurals@uwlax.edu.

Section 1: Starting the Contest**Start (Game) Time**

Game time is forfeit time. It is recommended teams arrive at the contest site 15 minutes prior to the scheduled start.

Facility and Contest Set Up**a. Playing Location**

Softball is played on the recreation fields (along La Crosse Street by Reuter Hall) in the Veterans Memorial Sports Complex and at the North Campus Fields. For directions to the North Campus Fields, please view the [campus map](#).

b. Field

Fields are lined and set up by Rec Sports staff only.

c. Officiating

All contests will be officiated by at least one (1), possibly two (2) trained umpire. All decisions made by umpires are final, except for those eligible for protests.

Intramural Sports is always looking for officials and would love to have you join our team! To learn more about officiating, visit our ["Become an Official" website](#).

d. Captain's Meeting

Captains are to meet with the contest umpire(s) prior to each contest to review rules, eligibility, legal equipment and to determine possession/team sides. Teams will also review/submit their lineup cards at this time.

Equipment

Participants must provide their own fielding gloves.

Game balls, warm up balls and bats will be provided.

To ensure player safety, all participants must use provided bats. Bats will be replaced when the umpire determines the bat is no longer safe for competition.

Tennis shoes or plastic cleats are allowed. Metal cleats are NOT allowed.

Participation

Teams will consist of ten (10) fielding players and ten (10) batting players.

Teams can have eleven (11) players in the batting order.

If a team begins with eleven (11) hitters, the batting order must remain the same for the entire game.

A game may start with as few as seven (7) players.

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Participation (continued)

If agreed upon, the other team may provide a catcher. He/she will not make a play at home.

When playing with eight (8) players, teams must supply their own catcher.

If a team is reduced to six (6) players, the game will be forfeited.

Any player that arrives late to the contest should present his/her ID to the scorekeeper upon arrival. The player can enter the game as a substitute only or at the end of the batting order.

An 11th hitter cannot be added once the umpire has said, "play ball."

All players may withdraw and re-enter the game once in the same spot in the batting order.

Notify the scorekeeper when making substitutions.

Once a substitute enters the game and is removed from the game, he or she may not re-enter for the rest of the game.

Eligibility**a. Intercollegiate Athlete**

- Current UWL Softball and Baseball players may not participate in Intramural Softball during the current academic year.
- Only one (1) former collegiate player (including transfer students from other institutions) may play on a single gender team (Men's or Women's) and must play in the "A" league when offered (leagues are considered to be "offered" even if "A" leagues are full).

Intramural Sports administration will search and filter athletic athlete eligibility. It is not guaranteed that all roster violations will be noticed. Teams, players, officials and additional staff members are allowed to protest team rosters

When in-doubt about your roster or eligibility, please ask early. Contests (including playoffs) may be forfeited retroactively if ineligible rosters are discovered mid-season

Section 2: Playing the Contest**General Game Play**

Games will consist of seven (7) innings or 50 minutes, whichever comes first.

A new inning will not be started with five (5) minutes left in game (45 minutes after start time).

- For tied games in the league play, one extra inning will be played. If still tied, the game will end tied.
- For tied games in playoffs, extra innings will be played until a winner is declared.

Lineup cards will be provided by Intramural Sports and are to be filled out by the team captain AND examined by the umpire(s) prior to contest commencement. Any team and/or individual batting out of order will be called out by the umpire.

Game Fields – please be advised specific fields have certain ground rules not included in this rule book. Ground rules will be available at the site of competition and reviewed by umpires before contests begin.

There will be four fields utilized on campus. Two are located at the Sports Complex on the Rec Field labeled as SC Field 1 (East end near tennis courts) and SC Field 2 (West end near Reuter Hall). The other two fields are at North Campus on the Rec Field with labels as NC Field 1 (Northeast corner) and NC Field 2 (Southwest corner).

Each field will have a designated player's bench, coaching boxes, and spectator section.

All equipment, participants, and spectators must remain in these sections during play.

The ball is considered in-play at all times unless it goes under the trees near the tennis court on SC Field 1 or over any fence at any field.

NOTE: On SC Field 2, the fence for the throwing cage will be used as a home-run fence when in-play. Any ball hit over the fence will be an automatic home run. A ball bouncing over, under, or through the fence will be ruled a ground-rule double. Teams are permitted three (3) home runs per contest on this field.

Once a team reaches its limit of home runs permissible by rule, ground rule doubles shall be awarded (for home runs hit over a pre-determined fencing area only; runners who could hit an "inside the park" home run must stop at third base, including plays in which errors occur (overthrows or ball-out-of-play instances excluded))

Pitching

Pitchers will pitch to the opposing team starting with a one (1) ball, one (1) strike count.

Pitching arcs must be between six (6) and twelve (12) feet. If not in that range, the umpire will call “illegal pitch” while the ball is in flight.

If an “illegal pitch” is called, the pitch is considered a ball no matter where it lands with relation to the strike mat. If the batter decides to swing anyways, the result of the swing (miss, foul ball, or ball in play) will override the “illegal pitch” call and play will continue normally.

Any pitch that falls within the legal pitch arc range and lands on the plate or the strike mat is a strike.

Batting

The official score sheet must list the batting order of the team, with first and last names, and be turned into the scorekeeper prior to the game.

Batters must bat in this order, unless a substitute enters the game. All players in the field must bat.

If a player hits a foul ball with a 2-strike count, that player will be out.

Any foul ball hit into a parking lot or on to a street will be an automatic out.

There is NO bunting or chopping the ball downward, the batter must have a full swing to be a legal hit. Bunting or chopping the ball will result in an automatic out.

If noticed before the first pitch of the next batter, batting out of order is an out. If not noticed after the first pitch of the next batter, it is a non-correctable error and the batter is legal.

Infield Fly Rule will be in effect if there is a runner on first and second, or bases loaded with less than two outs.

If the batter hits a routine fly ball in fair territory in the infield, the umpire will yell “Infield Fly”. The batter is out and all runners are safe at the base they started at. Any runner that leaves his/her base does so at his/her own risk.

Baserunning

A runner may not leave the base until the ball has been hit. Rules on “tagging up” will apply.

- Leaving the base early (prior to a ball being hit) will result in the play being ruled dead and an out will be called on that runner.
- Runners can tag when a ball is legally touched by a defender; the ball does not necessarily need to be caught (i.e. a ball being “bobbled”).

There is no stealing.

There is no sliding or diving into any base. The runner will automatically be called out.

Teams may use a courtesy runner for an injury once the batter safely reaches base. The person of the same gender who made the last out will be used.

- If needed, the last out of the previous inning will be used.
- If no outs have been recorded in the game, the last person of that gender in the batting order will be used.

A home plate force out will be utilized when the runner passes the 2/3rds mark on the 3rd baseline.

- The runner is assumed committed to home plate once he/she passes that line.
- If the defensive player (catcher) has control of the ball and is either touching home plate or in the extended home plate markings (i.e. circle at North Campus or artificial batter’s box on VMSC fields) before the runner touches home plate, the runner is called out.

Malicious contact is the judgment of the umpire.

- If a fielder is holding the ball and waiting for the runner, the runner is to give themselves up or change direction. If the runner causes contact and/or illegally alters the actions of the fielder the runner is called out.
- If a defensive player has the ball, or is about to catch a thrown ball, and the runner crashes into the defensive player, and the contact is determined malicious, the offender shall be ejected from the contest.

An appeal for leaving a base early or missing a base may be made by the defense after the ball is declared dead by the umpire and before the next legal pitch. The appeal must be announced to the umpire, and then the base in question must be touched by a defensive player in possession of the ball. The umpire’s decision on an appeal is final.

- On an overthrow, runners advance at their own risk. If the ball goes into trees or over a fence, the runner then is awarded two bases. No matter who threw the ball two bases are awarded from the last base touched when the ball left the hand of the thrower.

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- Each team is allowed three homeruns per game. Once a team hits reaches its limit of home runs permissible by rule, ground rule doubles shall be awarded (for home runs hit over a pre-determined fencing area only; runners who could hit an “inside the park” home run must stop at third base, including plays in which errors occur (overthrows or ball-out-of-play instances excluded))
- There are NO errors recorded for missed catches, or other actions by the defense. Any batter who eventually ends up scoring before the next batter bats, will be considered a homerun.

Mercy Rule

The game will be called if a team is ahead by 15 runs at the completion of the 4th inning or 10 runs at the completion of the 5th or 6th innings.

Section 3: Co-Rec Specifications

Teams are encouraged to play with an equal number of males and females.

It is recommended teams align themselves defensively with five (5) males and five (5) females. Teams can play defense with the following approved male-to-female ratios (no other ratio is permitted):

- 5 males: 5 females
- 5 males: 4 females
- 4 males: 5 females
- 4 males: 4 females
- 4 males: 3 females
- 3 males: 4 females

Teams will consist of ten (10) fielding players and twelve (12) batting players.

Teams can have up to twelve (12) players in the lineup, one (1) additional male & one (1) additional female.

If a team begins a game with extra hitters, the batting order must stay the same for the entire game.

A game may start with as few as seven (7) players.

If agreed upon, the other team may provide a catcher. He/she will not make a play at home.

When playing with eight (8) players, teams must supply their own catcher.

If a team is reduced to six (6) players, the game will be defaulted.

Any player that arrives late to the contest should present his/her ID to the scorekeeper upon arrival. The player can enter the game as a substitute only or at the end of the batting order.

An 11th or 12th hitter cannot be added once the umpire has said, “play ball.”

When playing with an odd number of players, there can only be one (1) additional male or female participating than the other.

Alternating batting orders must follow allowable male-to-female ratios. Teams with ratios not defined by rule must utilize substitute players and follow substitute guidelines as outlined in the lineup card

- A batting order might be F1, M1, F2, M2, F3, M3... etc. or it might be M1, F1, M2, F2, M3, F3... etc.
- At any time two (2) males or two (2) females bat back to back in a Co-Rec league, an out will be called.
- **EXAMPLE:** If a team has eleven (11) players and the 1st and 11th batters are male an out will be called
- **EXCEPTION:** Teams are permitted to have subsequent members of the same gender take an “at-bat” as long as those members are a leadoff hitter and a hitter at the very end of the order when the batting lineup does not have more than nine (9) players.

Teams are required to play with at least two (2) females in the outfield and two (2) in the infield.

All players may withdraw and re-enter the game once in the same spot in the batting order.

- Notify the scorekeeper when making substitutions.
- Once a substitute enters the game and is removed from the game, he or she may not re-enter for the rest of the game.
- A male batter who receives a walk, intentional or not, is awarded first base. The female who follows has the option to walk or bat.
 - If the female chooses to walk, the male advances to 2nd.

Section 4: Weather Issues

Weather cancellations will be determined by the Rec Sports Staff no more than two (2) hours before the first scheduled game of that day.

If the weather is questionable, please contact 608-785-5225 and/or watch for an email from Rec Sports.

DO NOT IGNORE EMAIL MESSAGES FROM IMLEAGUES OR INTRAMURAL SPORTS.

During regular season, four completed innings or 40 minutes (whichever is less) will constitute a completed game. If less is completed, the game will be rescheduled (if time allows). Incomplete games will start over from the first pitch of the game.

If the game is called early, the score at the end of the last inning will be used. Unfinished innings will only count if the home team is up to bat and currently winning.

Games will be made up if time allows. Please check IMLeagues for game makeup dates/times.

Section 5: Winning Specifications**Contest**

Teams receive a win in standings by leading after the designated regulation time period or after applicable overtime period(s). Losses and ties are included in standings as well.

Playoffs

All rules apply to playoffs. To qualify, teams must win at least one (1) contest and maintain a sportsmanship average of 4.0 during the regular season in addition to following forfeit policies. Other scheduling differences may apply to certain playoff circumstances. Qualification is monitored at the discretion of Intramural Sports administration.

Protests

Protesting is permitted. If a team wishes to protest eligibility, rule implementation/interpretation or a perceived scoring error in-game, they shall notify a staff member right away. To file a post-game protest, email the program at intramurals@uwlax.edu or visit the [Online Protest Form](#). Teams may not protest officials' judgment calls (i.e. incomplete vs. complete pass, foul vs. no foul, violation vs. no violation, inbounds vs. out-of-bounds, etc.).

Other than the specifications listed in this rulebook, official WIAA, NFHS and/or NIRSA rules will be followed.