

# WESTAMPTON RECREATION DEPARTMENT COED SOFTBALL LEAGUE RULES

Last Update: 4/1/2019

## 1. FIELD DIMENSIONS

Distance between bases - 60 ft.

Distance between home plate and pitcher's mound - 50 ft.

## 2. LENGTH OF GAME

a. A game will consist of seven (7) innings.

There will be a one-hour thirty-minute (1:30) time limit on all games. The umpire at the start of the game will announce the start time. No new inning will start with less than ten (10) minutes left. Any inning that starts before the last 10 minutes will be completed no matter how long it takes. No game shall be stopped and reverted back to the previous inning.

b. A 12-run rule will be in effect after 5 innings ( 4 1/2 if the home team is ahead).

c. Games in Progress Called Due to Inclement Weather

Any game that is called due to threatening weather and/or rain will be considered a complete game if:

1. 5 complete innings were played, or

2. 4 1/2 complete innings were played and the home team is ahead. If the game does not meet these two conditions, we will attempt to re-schedule the game from the point that the game was suspended. In this case, teams **MUST** record the number of remaining outs, pitch count, and identify the batter so the game can continue correctly.

3. If a game is called in the top of inning 6 or 7, then the score will revert back to the last complete inning played for the purpose of determining a win/loss.

## 3. TEAM LIMITATIONS

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An official team consists of ten (10) players.

- a. The game may begin with a minimum of eight (8) players present for any given team; at least one player must be a female.
- b. Any player arriving after the game begins can be inserted at the bottom of the lineup (see 4d).
- c. A 10-minute grace period will be given from each game's scheduled start time. Once the eighth player arrives, the game must begin. You can not wait for other players during the grace period unless no female is present.
- d. A minimum of three (3) female players must be in the field. If fewer than 3 women are present at the start of a game, then the game may still be officially played with the following penalties:

## Fielding Penalty

### Number of Women

- 2 = 8 Men / 2 Women - Females may play any position on field, catcher must be a male. OR  
7 Men / 2 Women - Only 9 players on field, females may play any position on field.
- 1 = 8 Men / 1 Woman - Only 9 players on field, catcher must be a male.
- 0 = Forfeit - Play scrimmage game.

## Batting Penalty

### Number of Women

- 2 = Automatic out for batter number eight in the batting order.
- 1 = Automatic out for batter number five and batter number eight in the batting order.
- 0 = Forfeit - Play scrimmage game.

- e. Once an individual player begins a season with one team, he/she may not switch to a different team during the same season. If a player is found playing for more than one team per season, the player will be suspended from the league and the captains are subject to league discipline.
- f. Uniforms with number on each shirt are mandatory for regular season games and for playoff games. Teams disregarding the uniform rule will not be allowed to play until this requirement is met. If one player is in violation, a warning will be issued. If a second or additional players are in violation, they will not be allowed to play.
- h. At no time during the game may a team go from 3 female players in the field to two female players to gain a competitive advantage. If this occurs an out will be rewarded to the opposing team in the next half inning, and every inning the infraction continues.

## 4. LINEUPS

- a. Teams can bat as many players as they want up to 16 batters in the starting line-up.

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- b. **Players are free to enter and re-enter the game without penalty. The following substitution rules apply:  
A substitute player can enter the game at any time (either in the field or batting)  
Players re-entering the game must do so in the same manner they were removed from the game and for the same substitute player and in the same spot in the batting order. If a player is replaced in the field, they must return in the field. If they are replaced while batting, they must return batting.**
- c. **A minimum of three (3) female players must be in the lineup. If fewer than 3 women are present at the start of a game, then the game may still be officially played with the batting and fielding penalties as stated in Section 3 (Team Limitations).**
- d. **Players who arrive after the start of the game may be placed at the bottom of the batting order, unless such individual is a woman and there are less than 3 women present. If that player is the second woman in the lineup, she will bat in the fifth spot. If that player is the third woman in the lineup, she will bat in the eighth spot. Any player who shows up once the 5th inning is over is not eligible to play at all in that game.**
- e. **If a player leaves the game due to injury, skip the player's next turn at bat each time after. If it is a female and you don't meet the 3-female requirement, it will be recorded as an out in that spot of the lineup. Other than an injury (if a player leaves before game is complete), an out will be recorded each time the player's turn comes up.**
- f. **The minimum fielder rule (as stated above) requires that at least three (3) females be fielders every inning without penalty. If you decide to remove a female player during the game for any reason other than an injury and do not meet the minimum 3 female requirement the team is penalized and starts the inning with an out for every inning the infraction occurs. The out will take place regardless if it's the eighth spot in the lineup. Also for defensive purposes you may not substitute a male for a female in the field if you do not meet the 3 female requirement. If you do remove the female you can only play the field with 9 maximum players.**

## 5. PITCHING

- a. **Pitcher must have one (1) foot on or touching rubber to begin pitching.**
- b. **A one-step approach, releasing the ball in an underhand fashion with the arc being at least 6 feet from the ground and not greater than 12 feet from the ground, will be a legal pitch. (If the pitch is below 6 feet or above 12 feet, the umpire will call illegal pitch and it will be an automatic ball; however, if the batter elects to swing at an illegal pitch, the ball is considered in play and outcome stands [i.e., strike, foul ball, hit, or out].)**
- c. **Strike zone - Front shoulder to knees.**
- d. **Strike mat will be used.**

## 6. BATTING

- a. **Bunting or chopping down at the ball is not allowed and will be an out.**
- b. **If the batter throws the bat, player is out, play is dead, and the runners remain in place.**

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If the batter deliberately throws the bat (in anger), player will be called out and ejected from the game.

- c. Infield fly rule will be used.
- d. (ROLLING HILLS FIELD) Everything is in play unless specified by rule book or umpire.  
(SPRING MEADOWS FIELD) Everything is in play unless specified by rule book or umpire.  
(VO-TECH FIELDS) Everything is in play unless specified by rule book or umpire.  
(IRON WORKS FIELDS) Everything is in play unless specified by rule book or umpire.  
(MILL DAM FIELD) Everything is in play unless specified by rule book or umpire.
- e. Home Run Rule (ball hit over fence) - The Equalizer Rule is in effect after the first home run. Your team can hit one home run more than the total of the other team. For example, your team cannot hit its second home run until after your opponent has hit its first. (Until the other team catches up, all home runs hit will be a dead ball out.)
- f. The second foul ball after 2 strikes will be an out.
- g. Only 4 players may be able to start play inside the infield (not including the catcher or pitcher). Once the batter swings or makes contact with the ball, additional players may enter the infield. If there are more than 4 fielders in the infield before the batter swings or makes contact, the batter will be awarded first base by the umpire and all runners will advance one base from start of play.
  - 1. Outfielders must maintain a distance of 5 yards from the infield during all at bats. (A minimum of three (3) outfielders is required; the short fielder (4th outfielder) may stay right at the edge of the grass. All players can be on edge of baseball size infields.
- h. Any time a male batter is walked (intentionally or not) with TWO outs and a female batter is up next, she will be given the option of hitting or receiving an automatic walk. Both teams prior to start of game can mutually agree to eliminate the TWO out walk rule for the entire game. If one team objects, there is no further discussion and the rule applies. If rule is not discussed prior to game the TWO out walk rule will be in effect automatically.
- i. A "strike mat" will be used to determine balls and strikes. If the softball touches any part of the mat on a legal pitch (6'-12' arc), it will be considered a strike. Pitches touching any part of the plate WILL BE considered a strike as well.
- j. **Everyone starts with one strike, one ball count (a 1-1 count). A player is out after strike three. Four balls is a walk. Foul balls count as a strike, regardless of the pitch count - you can foul out after your 1 courtesy foul after 2nd strike.**

## 7. BATS

ONLY single-wall bats may be used in the Westampton Softball League.

The following definition will be used to define a "single-wall bat":

- A single-wall bat is one composed of one continuous, single shell or layer

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composed entirely of the same material without the use of any type of glue or bonding system. Any bat that is more complicated than this definition is considered a multi-wall bat. All current composite bats are considered multi-wall bats since they are constructed using multiple layers.

**All double-wall and multi-wall bats are illegal!**

For safety reasons, the league prohibits the use of double-wall, multi-wall, single-wall bats with a core, titanium, and certain other bats.

The use of an illegal bat will result in an out being called and player ejected -- no exceptions.

A bat is illegal if...

- It is constructed with two or more metal walls, layers, or shells, OR
- It is end loaded with more than 1 ounce (with proof of specs), OR
- It exceeds the 1.20 BPF rating, OR
- It is marked to contain titanium, OR
- It appears on the list of illegal bats.
- It has a sealed air chamber, OR

\* Once the game starts, the umpire at any time can deem a bat illegal for safety reasons even if the bat is listed. At this time, only the bat will be removed from the game. The player is not ejected, but must use another bat.

To be legal for use, a bat must...

- Bear the ASA Certification Mark, OR
- Be marked "OFFICIAL SOFTBALL" and not be more than 34 inches in length, and no more than 38 ounces in weight and shall have BPF 1.20 permanently stamped by the manufacturer.
- Have all exposed surfaces smooth and free of burrs, pins, rivets, DENTS, sharp edges, or any type of exterior fastener that would present a safety hazard.
- In the sole opinion and discretion of the umpire, have been manufactured before 1995 and would comply with the ASA bat performance standards then in effect.

a. Females can register ANY bat that is ASA or fast pitch approved for use during league play.

## 8. BASE RUNNERS

- a. No stealing allowed.
- b. The runner may leave the base as the ball crosses over home plate. A play may be made on the runner whether or not the ball is hit. If the ball is not hit, the base runner must return and tag up before proceeding.

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- c. An overthrown ball inside the fences entitles any base runner to advance at his or her own risk. If the ball is dead, the umpire shall award 1 base automatically.
- d. If the runner runs more than three (3) feet out of the baseline, the runner is out.
- e. There is no mandatory sliding. If a play is being attempted on a runner, the base runner must slide or avoid contact with the fielder. (When a defensive player has the ball or is about to receive the ball, and the runner elects to remain on his/her feet and deliberately or accidentally, with force, contacts the defensive player, the runner is to be declared out.) Umpire will use judgment.
- f. A courtesy runner may be used if a player is unable to run the bases. (They must run the hit out.) At the beginning of the game, let the opposing captain know who needs a courtesy runner. If an injury occurs during the game and player cannot continue to run, the last out will take the injured player's place on the base.
  - 1. If the player requiring a courtesy runner is a woman, the last woman to make an out must run. If not available, then any woman on the bench may run. If not available, the last man to make an out will run.
  - 2. If the player requiring a courtesy runner is a man, the last male player to make an out may run. A female player may be a courtesy runner for a male player as long as the female was the last player out.
  - 3. Pinch runners are permitted for those teams NOT USING FREE SUBSTITUTION.

## 9. SCORING

For the purpose of safety, the league is using a second home plate, placed 6 feet from the actual home plate. The second plate is in line with the actual home plate (same distance from 3rd) and in all instances must be touched in order for run to count. All plays will be ruled like 1st base. The only exception is that a runner may return to 3rd base as long as he/she has not crossed the Point of No Return line, which is located 10 feet from home plate.

## 10. SAFETY PROCEDURES

- a. It is suggested that catchers should wear a mask when fielding.
- b. No metal spikes.
- c. Remove any loose jewelry before beginning of play.

## 11. POST-SEASON - DIVISION WINNERS & PLAYOFFS

Regular season division winners will be determined by best record in each division.

- a.
  - 1. National Division - North
  - 2. National Division - Central
  - 3. National Division - South
- b. T-shirts – Will be awarded to the winning team at the end of the regular season. (each division)

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- c. Tie-breaker for division winners
  - a) Head to head will be the tie-breaker for two or more teams.
  - b) Head to head will be the tie-breaker to break a tie after multiple teams are tied.
  - c) If the teams are tied and did not play each other, we will have co-champions and both teams will receive shirts.

## Post-season league tournament.

- a. American and National divisions will be played separately with champions determined in each division.  
Playoffs: will be single elimination for the entire tournament.  
There will be one umpire for all rounds, except two umpires for both the semi-finals and finals.  
The highest advancing seeds will be the home teams.
- b. Trophies – Will be awarded to the winning teams at the end of the tournament.
- c. Tie-breaker for tournament seeding.
  - a) Head to head will be the tie-breaker for two or more teams.
  - b) Head to head will be the tie-breaker to break a tie after multiple teams are tied.

Everything else will be decided by a coin flip or card draw.

- High Suit - 1) Diamond 2) Heart 3) Spade 4) Club
- High Card - Ace, K, Q, J, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2

- d. Games will be scheduled in 1-1/2 hour time slots, but can run over.
- e. All playoff games must complete a full 7 innings (6 ½ if the home team is winning) unless the Run Ahead Rule “Mercy Rule” applies. Playoff games that are not considered regulation will be resumed at the exact point where they were stopped. Playoff games that are regulation tie games will be resumed at the exact point where they were stopped.

## 12. RULES

Rules not covered by the above-stated rules will be covered in the official 2019 ASA Rule Book.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The rules of this league are not to be changed unless the change is in writing from the Westampton Recreation Department.