

INTERMEDIATE SOFTBALL RULES – Grades 6th thru 8th

(Designed by Washington, NTRA, Eureka, Metamora and Germantown Hills Softball Directors for Rec League Play)

PLEASE NOTE – we follow USA Softball Rules with the following modifications.

Select USA rules have been included below for clarification purposes only.

PLAYERS, SUBSTITUTES, EQUIPMENT

1. Each team will roster players as determined by the board after registration. Late registrants may be added to each team OR placed on a waiting list. This decision is determined by the board.
2. The fielding team will consist of 10 players. (catcher, pitcher, 4 in fielders, 4 outfielders)
3. Teams must be able to field 8 players or must forfeit the game 15 minutes after start time. In the event of injury during a game, a team may continue play with less than 8 players.
4. Teams expecting less than 10 players may call-up girls from the age group below. Coaches may not pull subs from an opposing team of the same age group unless approved by the other team AND the director. Any sub may not pitch unless approved by the opposing team AND the directors.
5. Each player must sit out once before any player sits out twice. This rule applies to all positions – including pitchers and catchers. The coach will receive a warning upon the first infraction; the second infraction will result in automatic loss of the game.
6. ***Each player must play one inning in an infield position, within the first 3 innings.
7. Players may be freely substituted at any position in any dead ball situation. (Except pitching, see below.)
8. ***Batters/runners must wear a helmet with a facemask.
9. Pitchers must wear a fielder's facemask and heart guard if provided by the organization.
10. There is no color, size, or type of restriction on fielding gloves.
11. Players must wear tennis shoes or rubber cleats. METAL SPIKES ARE NOT PERMITTED.
12. Coaches are responsible for the equipment assigned to them. All equipment must remain in the dugout when not in use.
13. B and C TRAVEL BALL GIRLS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO SUB OR PLAY IN-HOUSE unless approved by the board of directors. Approved travel ball players may not pitch.

PLAYING FIELD

14. Pitching distance is 40 feet, base distance is 60 feet, ball size is 12 inches.
15. The home team shall occupy the dugout on the third base side, visitors on the 1st base side. Each team is allowed 10-15 minutes of pre-game warm ups, if time allows. Pregame warm-ups will be performed on your respective side of the outfield and foul territory. Full field warm-ups are not allowed. Start times for games will not be adjusted to allow time for warm-ups.
16. Coaches must remain in the dug-out while their team is on the field. Only coaches, players and umpires are allowed in the dugout and on the playing field. Dugout gates are to stay closed at all times.
17. Please do not allow players to climb on or sit upon the dugout walls. Players must stay behind the fence in the dugout, unless they are on-deck and wearing a helmet. This is for the safety of the girls.

PITCHING, CATCHING, FIELDING

18. Pitchers are limited to a maximum of 4 innings per game. If a pitcher is removed, she may re-enter only once but must stay within the pitching guidelines. In the event of extra innings, a pitcher may pitch a maximum of 2 additional innings.
19. Players will pitch following the ASA/USA guidelines. Both feet must be on the ground within the 24-inch length of the pitcher's plate. The shoulders shall be in line with first and third bases. The pitcher shall take a position with their pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate and their non-pivot foot in contact with or behind the pitcher's plate. The pitcher must not make any motion to pitch without immediately delivering the ball to the batter.

20. ***Catchers must wear all gear, even during practice and warm-ups. This includes a helmet with a mask, throat guard, chest protector and shin guards. If catching gear is in use, additional catchers must wear a batting helmet.
21. The infield fly rule applies.
22. Outfielders must play at the edge of the grass or 15 feet past the baseline, until the ball is pitched.

BATTING, BASE RUNNING

23. All players will bat in consecutive order. Late arriving players will be added to the bottom of the batting order. In the event of injury, the player is removed from the batting order, or can be skipped and may return to the batting order in the same position. No penalty will be applied to injured batters removed or skipped.
24. Bunting is allowed.
25. Drop 3rd strike rules apply. *"When the catcher fails to catch the third strike before the ball touches the ground and there are fewer than two outs AND first base is not occupied at the time of the pitch OR any time there are two outs." If the batter does run, the catcher must throw her out at first base to complete the out. If the batter does not run and returns to the dugout, the batter is then called out.*
26. A batter is automatically out for throwing the bat after a warning is given by the umpire. One single warning is given to both teams after the first occurrence.
27. A batter will be called out if she stands/steps on home plate while batting the ball.

GAME LENGTH, SCORING

28. Game length is 6 innings or 90 minutes. When the time limit is reached – the current inning will continue until completed or the home team is ahead. A new inning will not begin after the time limit has been reached. If the game is tied at the end of the 90 minutes, ONE inning will be played with International Tie Breaker rule. Four innings constitutes a game.
29. RUN RULE PER INNING – during the first 4 innings, the team at bat must take the field after scoring 5 runs, regardless of outs. (All runs scored on the final play of the inning DO count.) No run limit during 5th & 6th innings.
30. A game will be called if there is a 15 run lead after 4 innings or 12 run lead after 5 innings.
31. During all tournament play, the regular season rules apply, including time limit, run limits and run rules. Only the championship game will be a full 6 innings, with no time limit.
32. Each team must supply a score keeper. Final scores must be confirmed at the end of the game and reported to the league coordinator.
33. END OF THE SEASON, TIE BREAKING RULE – Ties for league standings at the end of the season will be determined as follows – head-to-head, win/loss records against the team above the tying teams in the standing, win/loss records against the team below the tying teams in the standing, then coin flip (the team that won the first game between the two teams calls the flip.)

WEATHER, CONDUCT, PARK RULES

34. EXTREME WEATHER – At the first sound of thunder or sight of lightning, games will be suspended for 30 minutes. The 30-minute suspension of play restarts every time lightning is seen or thunder is heard. All players and coaches must leave the playing area, per park guidelines. This may include leaving the dugouts.
35. HEAT ADVISORY – Games will not be rescheduled or canceled due to heat advisory. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to hydrate the players before and during games, provide cooling towels during rest periods or notify your coaches if your player will not be attending.
36. NO PROTESTS ALLOWED. On a judgment call, the umpire's decision is final. If a coach feels an umpire has improperly enforced a rule or failed to enforce a rule, they must wait for a dead ball, and request a time-out to discuss the play and call. The rule in question will then be reviewed by the plate and field umpires. Time clock is running during rule discussions. Coaches should keep rules on hand at all times. Balls and strikes are not to be protested, they are judgment calls, made by the umpire and the umpire decision is final. Any strike zone concerns must be addressed with directors.

37. Rules have been designed by and reviewed by all participating directors of each organization. Coaches may request rule clarification during the game, but ANY AND ALL RULE CHALLENGES and COMPLAINTS need to be addressed with the directors after the game is completed and will not change the outcome of the game.
38. If a player is removed from the game for disciplinary reasons, the coach must notify home plate umpire and the opposing coach. Once a player is removed from the game, they are not allowed to re-enter the game and must leave the park grounds. Both directors must be notified if this disciplinary action is ever warranted.
39. There shall be no harassment of a player by any coach, spectator, or player. This will include "baiting" members of one team by a coach, spectator, or player (s). This behavior can result in forfeiture of the game.
40. WE WILL BE ENFORCING A ZERO TOLERANCE TOWARDS OFFENSIVE LANGUAGE RULE. THIS WILL APPLY TO ANYONE ON THE PARK GROUNDS. Any coach or spectator that uses foul or abusive language or that is under the influence of alcohol or any other controlled substance will be ejected from the park.
41. Each organization is responsible for reviewing these rules with all coaches and umpires in the league. Rules may be distributed or posted on the internet with public access via the organization website.
42. A program representative or board member must be present at each field/property during seasonal game play and tournaments. The director of each program is responsible for handling infractions and discipline of their league coaches and must remain involved throughout the entire season.
43. Coaches are responsible for the safety, discipline and sportsmanship of their players and the conduct of themselves, assistants, and spectators.
44. Sportsmanship is the first step in developing our young athletes for their future careers. Anyone or anything that seeks to hinder this development will be asked to leave the premises immediately and may not return.
45. Both teams are responsible for the litter in their dugouts and around their diamond. We ask for your assistance in keeping the PARK LITTER to a minimum.
46. Please encourage patronage of the concession stand. Washington Park District & NTRA use the proceeds from the concessions sales to help this program. Please do not bring store bought treats/food/drinks to the games.

Covid 19 Guidelines

47. Per IDPH guidelines – (copied from [Sports Safety Guidance | IDPH \(illinois.gov\)](#))
[Executive Order 2022-06](#) issued on February 28, 2022, ended universal indoor masking requirements, including in schools and in public indoor settings where sports-related activities are held. All individuals may engage in sports-related activities, both indoors and outdoors, without wearing a mask, except where otherwise required by laws, rules, regulations or facility policies, including local business and workplace policies. As always, schools, districts, facility owners and other sports organizers may establish COVID-19 prevention policies that require the use of face coverings during sports-related activities. In addition, we recommend all individuals wear a mask for public indoor activities, including sports, in areas with high [COVID-19 community levels](#) and as recommended in Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines for [quarantine](#) and [isolation](#).
48. Covid 19 guidelines may change at any time per the state, please follow all current state, IDPH, IHSA guidelines.

Please feel free to contact your Softball Program Director with any questions or concerns.

NTRA Softball Director
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