

**Menasha Park and Recreation Department
Softball League Rules
Men's and Women's 12"**

12" Slow-Pitch Rules

Note: Managers are responsible for making players aware of all rules.

I. Entry Fee: \$525—Men's \$475—Coed

One-half of the Entry Fee (\$263 Men's Leagues and \$238 Coed league) due with registration form and roster (signed by each player) during the registration period. This fee is non-refundable and guarantees you a spot in the league.

II. Team Registration

A team registration form, one-half of Entry Fee and a complete roster signed by all players are due at time of registration. Balance of entry fee is due by Friday, April 27 for all leagues. **Failure to have all completed paperwork and fees to the MPRD office by this deadline may result in game forfeiture until all missing and/or incomplete information is received. The minimum roster size is 14. League registration materials will be mailed to all teams who played the previous year.** All fees must be paid for at the MPRD office; fees not will not be accepted by officials at the ball diamond.

A. Leagues are scheduled to play on the following evenings:

Men's: Thursday Co-Ed: Sunday

B. Leagues will be filled according to the following criteria:

Until April 3 – Returning teams

Starting April 4 – Open registration until leagues are full

C. The Previous Year's League Champions of a less competitive league may be moved to a more competitive league on the same night if it becomes necessary to accommodate another team for any reason.

III. Rosters and Roster Additions – All players must read and initial the roster!

A. **Any player can be added until Friday, June 1. See Add-a Player rule on page 2**

B. One-Time Injury, Work Shift Change or Job Transfer Exemption

Each team will be entitled to replace one player due to injury, change in work shift, job transfer, etc. beyond the normal roster additions that are allowed until Friday, June 2. This one-time exemption can take place any time during the season. Player fees cannot be transferred and no refunds will be given. Once a player has been replaced due to injury, shift change, etc., he/she will not be able to return to play for the duration of the season.

Note: Team captains should contact the Director of Parks and Recreation to discuss any unusual circumstance which may jeopardize the team's ability to maintain an adequate number of players on their roster.

C. Any person 18 years of age and/or out of high school is eligible to play.

- D. City of Menasha, Neenah, Appleton and Village of Fox Crossing residents may play on more than one team (not in the same league), provided they are officially on the second team's roster. Any player on a men's league may also play on a coed league.
- E. There will be a roster limit of 20 players. Large rosters are encouraged so that a team will have an adequate number of players for the entire season.
- F. **Playing Unregistered Players**
 - 1. The team on which the player was signed up to play for or played for illegally will receive an automatic one-game forfeiture, which may be a past or future game.
 - 2. A second violation will bring a minimum two-game forfeiture and a maximum season long suspension.
- G. Adding players the night of the game
 - 1. Player(s) can be added the night of the game to avoid a forfeit
 - 2. Both captains must agree to the added players in the presence of the umpire
 - 3. Each added player must sign an Add-A-Player form
 - 4. New players cannot already be on a city league roster from that particular night
 - 5. A team may only add players through this process to get up to nine (9) to play that night

IV. League Standings

- A. Standings will be updated and posted on the city website www.cityofmenasha-wi.gov.

V. The Game

- A. **A team may start and continue a game with a minimum of eight players.** If for any reason the number of players should fall to seven, the game will be forfeited.
- B. The away team will be designated by the schedule as the first team listed.
- C. The Park and Recreation Department and the umpires will decide on the fitness of the field for play.
- D. All captains must provide a "best phone number to be reached at" and an email address in case of rainouts. If games are cancelled, League Supervisor will send out cancellation text to all captains as soon as that determination has been made. In the event of rain, all captains will be notified by 4:30pm if games are cancelled. In the event of rain after 4:30pm, captains will be required to show up at the fields. Assume games are on if there has been no contact from the League Supervisor.
- E. Umpire or scorekeeper will turn off the field lights five minutes after the last game.
- F. The game will not begin until a line-up listing first and last names is turned in to the scorekeeper. Any delay in turning in line-ups will cut into the one-hour time limit of the game. Any team consistently violating this rule will face disciplinary action.

VI. Run Differentials and Called Games

- A. When a team is *twelve (12)* runs behind the opposing team, the game will be called by the umpire only after an official game or the one-hour time limit has been reached. The home team, if behind, will bat in the bottom half of the fifth inning.
- B. **OFFICIAL GAME** – If the team second at bat has scored an equal or greater number of runs in 5 and two-thirds innings than the opponent has scored in five turns at bat; or if play has gone beyond five full innings.
- C. Unless the game is tied, NO new inning will be started after 55 minutes.
- D. The last game of the night will also have a 55 minute time limit.
- E. Extra Innings – 2 innings or 15 minutes will be allowed. Tie games may be rescheduled/depending on factors such as league standing implications, scheduling, convenience, etc.

VII. Ground Rules

- A. A fair hit ball, which goes over the outfield fence in fair territory, or which hits an outfield light pole above the top of the fence, shall be a home run.
- B. A fair hit ball, which bounds over or under the fence, shall be an automatic double.
- C. A fair hit ball touched by a fielder, then hitting the ground and **bounding over** the fence shall be an automatic double. (Should a fielder touch a fair hit ball and it goes over the fence before touching the ground, this shall then be declared a **home run**.)
- D. **On an Overthrow** at first, second, third, or home, which hits an obstruction (other than the fence or backstop), a person, or passes beyond the line of the fence, shall entitle the base runners to one base and no more.
- E. **Fielding of Foul Flies** – A limit line from the corner of the bleacher fence running parallel with right and left field foul lines shall determine the area for fielding. Players shall not field fly balls outside of these lines. Balls caught outside of these limits shall be ruled as foul balls.
- F. **A Fly Ball** hitting trees or light poles in foul territory shall be ruled a dead ball, and no play made.

- VIII. **Forfeits and Protests**
- A. Games shall start at time indicated on schedule. The lineup must be presented ten minutes before scheduled game time. The first game will start promptly at 5:00pm for Coed League and 6:30pm for Men's League (no grace period). The 60 minute "clock" will start at these respective start times, and may be forfeited immediately if the other team is not ready. Teams ready to play on time will be allowed to play a 60 minute game provided the 12 run rule isn't called. All teams should have a full lineup. However, a team will be allowed to play with as few as eight (8) players. See #III, G about the rule for adding a player the night of the game.
 - B. Protests must be made in writing by the manager of the protesting team and must be in the office of the Park and Recreation Department within 24 hours of the time of protest. All protests must be accompanied by a protest fee of \$10 which will be returned if protest is sustained. All protests to be acted upon by the Director of Parks and Recreation within five working days. Umpires must be notified at the time of the protest who in turn will publicly announce same. Note: If a team is protesting the use of an ineligible player(s), it must be done so immediately upon learning this information. If possible, this must be done so prior to the start of the game.
 - C. A game scheduled after a forfeit shall not start until scheduled time unless both managers agree their teams are ready. All managers will be notified of the time and date in which rainouts will be replayed.
 - D. If a team forfeits three games during the course of the season, they may be dropped from the league.

IX. **Umpires and Scorekeepers**

- A. Umpires chosen by the Park and Recreation Department shall be in full authority of the game.
- B. Only team managers and coaches can question a decision of the umpire, and then only in case of rules interpretation and not in cases of judgment.
- C. An official scorekeeper will be provided. Team managers must submit their starting lineup to the scorer at least ten minutes before **scheduled game time**. Umpires shall be in authority to recommend suspension of players to the Park and Recreation Department.

X. **Conduct of Players**

- A. Any act of unsportsmanlike conduct, including the use of profane, abusive, or insulting language, shoving and/or fighting, shall be cause for removal or ejection of the offending player by order of the umpires. If a player is ejected or displays unsportsmanlike conduct, the following progressive discipline will usually be followed.
 - 1. A minimum of one but usually two-game suspension with a maximum season-long for severe violations (possible one-year suspension from all MPRD programs from date of violation).
 - 2. A second ejection will bring an automatic suspension (for the remainder of the season and possibly carrying over to the next sports season).

3. *A second warning to a player or team during the same game may result in the forfeiture of the game, or ejection of the players.* (Umpire will usually warn players or team about certain rule infractions).
4. After ejection, the player must leave the bench and not continue any harassment of the umpires, scorekeepers, etc. Umpires have the authority to banish a player from the diamond area (including all spectator areas) if harassment continues, or, if necessary, forfeit the game in favor of the opposing team.
5. *Discipline action will be investigated and determined by the Director of Parks and Recreation. Discipline will be as fair and impartial as possible while maintaining the integrity of the league*

Note: Intentionally throwing the bat is grounds for immediate ejection.

- B. **Consumption of Alcoholic Beverages – If a team wishes to consume beer before or after a game, they MUST take out a Beer Permit with the P & R Dept.**

Player consumption of alcohol on team benches, on the playing field, in the bleachers or around the team bench during their team's game is not allowed. This rule will be enforced in the following manner:

1. First violation - Team or Individual – umpires will warn the team captain of the rules. Scorekeepers will write this on the game result sheet that is turned into the office.
2. Second warning during the same game – automatic forfeit - clear the field. Umpires judgment will prevail.
3. If a team or individual violates the rules a second time during the season, the team captain will be notified, and either a past or future game will be forfeited and individuals will receive a two-game suspension.
4. After a third violation, the team will be suspended for the rest of the season, and must apply for reinstatement into the league.
5. At the umpire's discretion, players who are suspected to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs may be ejected and will receive an automatic two game suspension or longer depending on the severity of the infraction.

- C. **Sliding Rule** – Players have two options when running toward a base. A player must slide if he/she intends to break up a double play. If a player does not slide, and interferes with the play in any way he must "give himself or herself up" by veering to the outfield side of the base. If in the judgment of the umpire the runner does not slide, and interfere with the play in anyway, does not make a satisfactory attempt to remove his/herself from the play, or attempts to distract or disrupt the play other than by sliding, interference on the runner should be called and an automatic double-play awarded. The umpire should make the call the moment the play occurs with a prominent hand gesture and stating loudly "Runner interference, automatic double play". Prior to the game, umpires should explain to both team captains how this play will be called. ***The home plate umpire has responsibility of third base and home plate.***

Sliding at Home Plate – Obstruction will be called if a catcher blocks the plate without the ball. Catchers should play the ball in front of the plate. Runner will be called safe. Note there is no need to intentionally plow into a catcher who does or doesn't have the ball. The runner will be automatically ejected and suspended if this occurs.

XI. Miscellaneous

- A. Only rubber spikes will be allowed.
- B. There will be no maximum height for pitches. The minimum pitch height should be 6 feet. Any illegal pitch should be called in flight.
- C. The official infield fly rule shall be used.
- D. The game shall last seven innings and be based on three balls and two strikes, two foul balls and the batter shall be declared "out".
- E. **A batter must start with both feet completely in the batter's box (or what's left of it). At least one foot must be completely out of the batter's box when contacting the ball in order for batter to be declared out. Typically, one bat length from the front of the plate will be allowed** (see XI-G).
- F. Blatant removal of the batter's box line or lines for the purpose of obscuring where the original box was located is not allowed. A batter shall be called out for violating this rule.
- G. A mat will be used for strikes and balls. If the pitched ball hits the plate or mat, including the black edge, a strike will be called.
- H. **Base Running – Base runners must remain in contact with the base until a legally pitched ball has reached home plate.** If the runner leaves the base early, this results in a dead ball, no pitch is declared and the runner ruled out. Under no conditions is the runner permitted to steal a base.
- I. **Courtesy runners** will be allowed providing the manager notifies the umpires and the opposing team manager prior to their team batting in the inning.
 - ~ Prior to allowing a courtesy runner, the base runner must be found incapable of running the bases.
 - ~ The original batter must bat and successfully reached first base.
 - ~ The courtesy runner is normally the player that made the previous "out".
 - ~ A batter with a known physical disability can ask the umpire to allow a courtesy runner to run to first after the ball has been contacted.
- J. **Swinging Bunt** – On a short infield hit, the base runner should use the buntline area. If the base runner is hit by a thrown ball while in fair territory, this is considered interference, and the base runner is declared out.
- K. **Fake Tag** – If a fielder fakes a tag on a base runner, the base runner will be awarded at least one base, and the fielder may be ejected. (This is in accordance with National Federation ruling).
- L. Falling over a fence and landing in dead ball area - If fewer than two are out, and if catch was legal, all runners are awarded one base.

- M. Players calling time out - Time is not out until the umpire makes either verbal or hand gesture confirming the request. All play must be completed before time will be called.
- N. **Dead ball Areas** – Carrying a live ball into a dead ball area. If the act is unintentional, one base is awarded to all runners. If the act is intentional, two bases are awarded to all runners. The base award is determined by the last legally touched base at the time the ball became dead.
- O. **Illegal bats (list available from Department).** Legal bats are listed at the ASA's website at www.asasoftball.com (See XIV)
All bats used for play in any Menasha League must have a small "approved" sticker on it before it will be allowed to be used.
Use of Illegal Bat Discipline:
- **First Offense:** Batter is called out
 - **Second Offense:** (anytime during the season) Player is ejected and player/team is subject to further discipline.
 - **MPRD reserves the right to investigate and rule on all matters concerning the use of an illegal bat.**
- P. **Infield Fly Rule:** Any fair fly ball (not including a line drive or attempted bunt) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort (outfielder can also make the catch) and provided the hit is made before two are out and at a time when 1st and 2nd base or all bases are occupied. When it seems apparent that the rule should be called, the plate umpire ordinarily announces it for the benefit of the runners. If the fly is near the foul line, umpire should announce "Infield fly, if fair."
- Q. **A limit of eight (8) over the fence home runs is allowed per game in all city leagues. Any over the fence home runs beyond 8 are counted as an out.**
- R. Foul tip vs. foul ball. Below the batters head is a foul tip, above the head is a foul ball. Result: batter is not out on a foul tip with no strikes in the count.

XII. **Batting the Roster and Substitutions**

- A. Teams have the option of batting their ten defensive players or the entire roster of players that are present at the game.
- B. If a team decides to "bat-the-roster," they must notify the umpires, scorekeeper, and opposing team manager before the game starts and indicate this intention.
- C. If a team has elected to "bat-the-roster", they must add all players to the batting order. (Note: If a team is not "batting-the-roster" they may add late arriving players to their batting order until they reach ten).
- D. Free substitution is allowed among defensive players in the starting lineup provided the batting order is maintained. Players leaving the game must sit out at least one inning before returning to defensive play.
- E. The batting order must be maintained throughout the entire game. If a player is injured or must leave the game, the scorekeeper and umpires must be notified of a player substitution

before the first batter of the inning steps up to bat. If a batter does not report to bat, he/she will be declared "out". If the batting order is not maintained, the player(s) in question must sit out the rest of the game.

- F. Players removed from the batting order for a legitimate reason, must be done so before the team begins batting in the inning. Clarification: If a player arrives at the game late, he takes the following position on the roster:
1. If all players have batted, he/she needs to substitute for another player.
 2. If all players have not batted, he/she is added on the bottom of the batting order.

XIII. Appeal Play

- A. An appeal play is a play, which an umpire cannot make a decision upon until requested by the captain or manager, coach, or player. The appeal must be made before the next legal or illegal pitch or before the pitcher and all infielders have clearly vacated their normal positions and have left fair territory on their way to the bench. An appeal cannot be made after the umpires have left the field.
- B. Unless appealed to, the umpire shall not call a player out for having failed to touch base too soon on a fly ball or batting out of order, etc.
- NOTE: When a runner leaves a base too soon, or if a runner misses a base, the defense may tag either the runner or the base that was missed.

XIV. Use of Illegal Bats/Legal Bat List

- A. The Department allows the same bats that are approved by the ASA. A copy is available from the Department, or you may visit the ASA's website at www.asasoftball.com. If a team is planning to use a bat not on this list it must be approved by the Department prior to use! **The Director will place an "approved" sticker on the knob of the bat certifying it is legal. *No titanium bats will be allowed.***

Illegal bats can be identified in two ways.

First, an umpire will normally remove a bat from play if he/she finds it has not been stamped or believes it is illegal for other reasons. The batter may also be disqualified and may face suspension.

Secondly, a team may appeal the use of a bat. The umpire will examine the bat and make the appropriate ruling.

Menasha Co-Ed Softball League Rules and Regulations

Rules

- I. A team must have an equal number of females and males on **defense** at any time, although a greater number of females is acceptable (ex. 4 males-5 females is okay, 5 males-4 females is not). **A maximum of 5 men may play, even if just 4 women are present to play. A minimum of 4 women must be present to play an official game. (In that case, a woman must occupy the 9th batting spot in the lineup.) Eight players must be present at all times. (See III-G regarding adding a player the night of the game.)**
- II. Batting Order – alternate man, woman throughout the order. **No more than two men may bat in a row at the end of line-up only.** (See sample batting orders below).
- III. When a team is *twelve (12)* runs behind the opposing team, the game will be called by the umpire provided an official game (5-2/3 innings or one-hour time limit) is reached. The home team, if behind, will bat in the bottom half of the inning.
- IV. **Pertaining to females having the option to walk or bat after a male walks: Any male that walks automatically goes to second base. Runners will advance only if they are forced to advance. A female will automatically bat all the time if a male is walked in front of her.**
- V. Everyone on the bench may bat. The first ten persons listed will be the starting defensive unit. A courtesy/substitute runner will be the person who made the last out, and must be of the same gender. Substitutions can be made as needed.
- VI. All other Menasha Park & Recreation Department rules will apply.
- VII. **No Fielder Zone:** A white line will be painted beyond the dirt infield. Defensive players may not occupy this area when females are batting until contact is made with the ball.
- VIII. **Umpire:** If the umpire does not show up, teams have the **option** of still playing an official game. A department scorekeeper must be on hand for the game to be official. Both captains **must** agree in advance and sign the scorekeeper's game sheet prior to the game. If both captains don't agree, the game will be re-scheduled at a later date.
- IX. **A limit of eight (8) over the fence home runs is allowed per game in all city leagues. Any over the fence home runs beyond 8 are counted as an out.**

Coed Batting Order

Alternate man, woman throughout the order.

1. If there are more men than women, a man must start the batting order.
2. No more than two men may bat in a row.
 - This can only happen at the end of the order, after the last woman.
 - A man will bat, then another man and then the first woman in the order.
3. Men will follow the same man that was ahead of them.
4. Women will follow the same woman that was ahead of them.
5. The first ten players listed will be the starting defensive unit.
6. Batting may not be switched.
7. A courtesy/substitute runner will be the person who made the last out and must be the same gender.

Example

<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
Todd	Sue
Steve	Amy
Randy	Jean
Curt	Mary
Aaron	Kelly
Mike	Ellen
Brian	
Lance	
Trevor	

Official Book

1. Todd (Lance)
2. Sue
3. Steve (Trevor)
4. Amy
5. Randy (Todd)*
6. Jean
7. Curt
8. Mary
9. Aaron
10. Kelly
11. Mike
12. Ellen
13. Brian

*The first man on the list starts their rotation over at this point.