



## Adult Softball Rules and Regulations

- For game schedule: <https://secure.rec1.com/MI/walker-mi/leagues>
- For cancellations: (616) 791-6206 or visit our Facebook page – City of Walker Parks and Recreation
- For questions/inquiries: City of Walker Parks and Recreation Department (616) 735-6286
- To register a team: <https://secure.rec1.com/MI/walker-mi/catalog>

## Registration and Player Eligibility

- Teams may request which division they prefer. However, the Recreation Supervisor has the authority to place teams in other divisions if deemed necessary.
- No portion of the entry fees will be refunded after a team has been placed in a league.
- Each team can have a maximum of 18 players. All players, including the manager and coaches' names must be registered on the team roster. Each player's registration, including any add-on player registration, must be on file at the Recreation Department before the player is eligible to play in any game.
- The deadline for adding players is July 8, 2024.
- No player may play on more than one team in the same league.
- All rosters, fees, etc., must be submitted online.
- Players must be 18 years of age to be eligible to play in the program.

## Equipment

1. All players must wear closed toe shoes. Shoes with metal cleats are not permitted. Any player found to be wearing metal cleats will be removed from the game until they change to appropriate footwear. If that player is due to bat or on base, they will be called out. If that player attempts to re-enter the game while still wearing metal cleats, they will be ejected.
2. For a bat to be legal in Walker Recreation League play, the bat:
  - Must have the ASA approved certification mark and cannot be listed on the ASA banned bat list. Umpires will check all bats before the game.
  - **Penalty:** A batter using an illegal bat will be called out. If an illegal bat is discovered after the ball has been hit and the player is on base, the batter will be out, and the bat will be removed from the game.
3. New or gently used Game balls will be provided by the Recreation Department.
4. Any item deemed to be dangerous by the umpire will not be allowed on the playing field.
5. **The Diamond:** shall have sixty-five-foot baselines and a pitching distance of fifty feet.
6. All men's and co-ed teams will use the 12-inch ball with a C.O.R. of .52 and a 300lb compression. All women's teams will use the 11-inch ball with a C.O.R. of .44 and a 375lb compression.

## The Game

1. **Mercy Rule** – if a team is ahead by 15 runs after four innings or 10 runs after five innings, or 20 after three innings, the game will be stopped and considered a complete game.
2. The regular number of players shall be ten (10), but teams can begin with nine (9) players. Co-ed teams can begin with eight (8) players.
3. **Forfeit** – a forfeit will be declared immediately if a men's team has less than eight (9) players and a co-ed team has less than eight (8) players at game time, anytime during a game due to injury, or a player leaving before a game is completed.

**If a team forfeits 2 games during the season, the team will automatically be disqualified from further league participation without a refund.**

4. **Tie Game** – if a game is tied after 7 innings and time permits, the tie breaker rule will be used for a maximum of two innings. The tie-breaker rule has the last batter from the previous inning put on 2<sup>nd</sup> base with one out.
5. If tied after two extra innings the game ends in a tie. Use international rules if time permits. May use courtesy runner in place of last batted out.
6. **3-way tie** – in the case of a 3-way tie for championship at the end of the season, there will be additional game/games to determine the winner. The team that has scored the most runs during the season will get a 1<sup>st</sup> game bye. For the final determination of league champion, the team with the best record and the least number of losses will be awarded the league championship.
7. **Home Run Rule** – there is a limit of 3 home runs. Any balls hit over the fence by a team more than three times per game will be ruled an out.
  - Any fair fly ball touched by a defensive player which goes over the fence in fair territory, should be declared a four-base award and shall not be included in the total of over-the-fence home runs.

### Batting Order and Substitutions

1. Only players present at game time can be in the batting order.
2. Batting orders should be exchanged with the other team.
3. All leagues will use the “Rocket Rule”. The Rocket Rule means that everyone present for the game and physically capable, must bat and be listed in the batting order. Players arriving after the start of the game shall be added to the very end of the batting order without penalty.
4. If a player arrives late or leaves a game before it is over, the other team must be notified.
5. Upon departure of any player, all remaining batters move up one spot in the batting order.
6. The “free Substitution Rule” shall be in effect. Any player can substitute for any defensive player at any time. The replaced player can re-enter the game at any defensive position anytime. However, every player’s batting position always remains the same. Player must be on roster.
7. Each team will be allowed one courtesy runner per inning. In case of injury, another courtesy runner is allowed. Courtesy runners can be any player. Exception: In Co-Ed leagues, teams can now use a courtesy runner for each gender per inning.
8. If your team is caught playing with an illegal player during the season, game will be forfeited and possible forfeit from the remainder of the season, depending on circumstance.

### Pitching

1. The pitcher may use any delivery except for the overhand pitch or one that is released above the hip. The pitch must be an underhand delivery.
2. The ball must be delivered to the batter at a moderate speed. If, in the opinion of the umpire, it is pitched too fast, it will be called a ball.
3. The ball must be delivered with an arc of at least 6 feet from the ground. The pitched ball shall not reach a height of more than 10 feet at its highest point from the ground. If the pitch is over 10 feet, the umpire will immediately call illegal pitch and it will be called a ball.
4. The strike zone is that space over any part of home plate which is between the batter’s back shoulder and his front knee when the batter assumes his natural batting stance.
5. If a pitched ball hits any part of home plate, it will be called a ball.
6. Each batter begins with a one ball and one strike count upon entering batter’s box. Once you reach two strikes, you will be permitted one grace foul.
7. The pitcher may take a position from the front edge of the pitcher’s plate up to 6 feet behind the pitcher’s plate, withing the 24-inch width of the pitcher’s plate, with both feet firmly on the ground.

### Batting out of the Batter’s Box

1. The batter should take his position within the lines of the batter’s box. The lines of the batter’s box are considered inside the box. The batter is to be called out if his foot is touching home plate when he hits the ball, even though he may be touching the lines of the batter’s box.

2. Hitting the ball while out of the batter's box is not an appeal play. It will be called immediately by the umpire. The batter is out whether the ball is hit fair or foul. In cases where there are no batter's box line evident, good judgment will be used by the umpire. The batter's box is 3' by 7' in dimension.

### Game Time

1. Games will begin at 6:15pm and 7:25pm.
2. Game time is forfeit time. There will be a five (5) minute grace period for 6:15pm games. However, for the 7:25pm game, game time will be forfeit time.
3. Time limit of a game is 1 hour.
4. No new inning will begin after the 1-hour time limit. EXCEPTION: in case of a tie and time permits, the international tie breaker rule will be used – 1 out to begin the inning.
5. Infield practice will only be allowed if time permits.

### Team Seating

1. The home team sits on the third base side and the visiting team on the first base side. Home team is the first number on the schedule.
2. Only team members, managers, coaches, and the scorer are to be on the team's bench.

### Team Conduct

1. Players and teams shall be suspended or placed on probation and games may be forfeited if conduct is considered detrimental to the league. One warning per team will be issued. Profane language, smoking on a diamond, drinking any alcoholic beverage, continued disagreement with umpires etc., are examples of undesirable conduct. A player, coach or manager will be suspended for one year or longer from the date of violation if the conduct involves physical contact with the official or representative of the City.
2. Intentional roughness (e.g., overly aggressive sliding or knocking a player over with undue roughness) is judgment made by the umpire. At the judgment of the umpire, a player may be immediately ejected from the game. The fake tag is considered obstructing the runner and bases will be awarded per the situation. Any player using a fake tag will be ejected from the game.
3. Smoking or drinking alcohol is not allowed on the playing field, in the team bench area, or anywhere inside the fence separating the out of play area. This includes e-cigarettes.
4. Managers will be held responsible for any misconduct among their players and supporting spectators. Recurring problems will mean ejection from the league.
5. On any dispute which may arise, the manager or his designate is the only person who is to converse with the umpire at any time during the dispute. Violators of this rule will be penalized by the umpire. Penalties may range from ejection to forfeiture of the game.
6. Any player ejected from a game by the umpire must leave the field entirely. The player will also be suspended from the next game his team plays. Exception: Ejection for wearing metal spiked shoes will only be ejected for the game the shoes are worn in.
7. If a player is ejected from two games in one softball season, he will be suspended from the Walker League for a period of one year beginning the date of the second ejection.
8. Players, coaches, sponsors, and managers using derogatory remarks toward game officials or Walker Recreation employees before, during and after any game will be subject to suspension.
9. A player who throws the bat in disgust or anger will be ejected from the game and further action may be taken as necessary.
  - Accidental slippage of the bat from the batter's hand during a swing is not subject to ejection unless the action is flagrant and endangers players or umpires.
  - After all play is finished, the batter throwing the bat will be called out (dead ball situation).
10. Overthrows: on an overthrow, two bases are awarded from the last base touched at the time the thrown ball was released.

### Protests

1. No protests will be allowed on decisions made by umpires when it is a case of judgment. Protests may be made only on the misinterpretation of rules.
2. The protest must be made to the umpire when the alleged violation occurs (before the next pitch or a motion by the pitcher towards the batter), otherwise it will not be accepted. The umpire must record all details of the game at that point on the back of the official score sheet (i.e., outs, men on base, etc.). The team making the protest must explain in writing their protest by 5pm the next day.
3. Last game protests or ties will not be acted upon unless they have a bearing on the league championship.
4. Protests will be decided by the Walker Recreation Department.

### Appeal Plays

There are 4 major appeal plays:

- a. A base runner missing a base or touching the white portion only of the double first base when a play is being made on the batter-runner at first base.
- b. A base runner leaving a base before a caught fly is touched.
- c. Overrunning the first base and attempting to run to second.
- d. Batting out of order
  - In all games, once time has been granted, a dead ball appeal may be made.
  - An appeal can be made at any time by the coach/manager or the infielders (not outfielders.)
  - Once the pitcher has the ball and is anywhere within the vicinity of the pitcher's mound, he can then indicate to the umpire that an appeal is to be made. Note: The ball does not have to be thrown to the base being appealed.
  - Runners on base cannot advance during the appeal play procedure.

### Official Score

1. The team designated as the 'home' team will be responsible for keeping the official score.
2. If the home team does not have a scorekeeper available, the visitor's team can become the official scorekeeper.
3. All managers must have their team line up ready before game time.
4. Score sheets must be filled out with each player's first initial and last name.
5. Score sheets cannot be blank and turned in. Blank score sheets may be considered a forfeit.

### Co-Ed League Additional Rules

1. **Defensive Positioning:** Five men can play defense with 4 women, 5 on 5 is standard. Six women can play with 4 men (not 4 women with 6 men.) Five-person infield is not legal in co-ed play. Pitcher and catcher do not count as infielders.
2. **Batting order:** the batting order must be listed so that men and women bat alternately. Exception: women may bat back-to-back.
3. **Base on Balls to a Male Batter:** On any walk to a male batter (intentional or not) will result in a two-base award. The next batter, a female, will bat. Exception: with two outs, the female batter has the option of walking or batting.
4. **When a player is injured and removed from the game:** if a player reaches base safely, then is injured and must be removed from the game, the player who runs for the injured player can be anyone on the roster of the same gender.
5. **More women than men present at a game:** if a team has more women than men present at a game, two or more women will bat consecutively or share batting positions somewhere in the batting order.
6. **More men than women present at a game:** if a team has more women than men present at a game, the men will share a batting position somewhere in the batting order. Under no circumstances can two or more men bat consecutively.
7. **Only four men present at a game:** a co-ed team can play a game with only four men available to play if there are at least eight players available. In this case only, a game can begin and be played with eight players. Reminder: If five or more females are present at the game, two or more women will bat consecutively or share batting positions somewhere in the batting order. No weaving allowed.
8. **Only three women present at a game:** a co-ed team can play a game with only three women available to play if there are at least eight players. If there are more than eight players, you can play three women and five men defensively.

9. **Outfielders must stand behind the 150' line until the ball is hit.** Penalty for line being crossed; the batter has the option to swing at pitch. Whether the ball is hit or not, at the end of the play let the offensive team take the result of the play or give the batter/runner first base and all other runners that are forced to advance will move up one base.

#### Inclement Weather

1. During a severe thunderstorm watch or tornado watch, games will be played. If a severe thunderstorm warning or a tornado warning is issued after the game is started, games will be stopped immediately.
2. Games will not be played during a severe thunderstorm warning or a tornado warning unless the all-clear signal is given before 5pm.
3. If lightning is spotted, games will be stopped immediately. Wait 30 minutes after the last lightning strike before resuming.
4. A game started, and then stopped because of inclement weather, will be considered a regulation game if five innings have been completed. If less than five innings have been completed, the game will be replayed at a later date, if needed, to determine a league champion.
5. Cancellation of games due to rain or unplayable fields will be determined at the game site by the umpire. Make-up games will be rescheduled by the Recreation Department after the last game listed on the regular schedule.
6. Special Exception: if there is no bearing on the league championship, rain out games may not be rescheduled.

#### First Aid Procedures

1. If an injury is serious, contact the City of Walker Police Department (911). The injured person should not be moved.
2. Each team is responsible for administering basic first aid - first aid kits can be found in the base boxes. If the injury involves body fluids (*blood, pus, mucus*, etc.), please follow the Bloodborne Pathogen Procedures (provided at registration).
3. The injury should be recorded on a Recreation Department injury form.

#### Changes

The City of Walker Recreation Department reserves the right to make any decisions or changes in the rules during the season that are considered in the best interest and/or safety of the Walker Softball Program.