Softball Rules

The following is a summary of rules and regulations for Intramural Softball. It is not the complete set of rules but includes those rules most frequently in question. All other rules are deferred to the NFHS Softball rulebook. Some alterations may have been made specifically for WWU Campus Recreation. A complete list of our policies and procedures can be found in the Intramural Sport Participant Handbook. Questions can be directed to the Intramural Sports Office during normal business hours at intramurals@wwu.edu.

All participants must have their physical WWU ID in order to participate in any and all Intramural Sports. Please read the Intramural Participant Handbook for more participation policies.

Facility

All Intramural Softball games are played on Harrington Field. Your game schedule on IMLeagues will indicate which field you will be playing on. Should you need assistance locating your field, please ask the on-duty Intramural Sports Supervisor in the blue polo. The address for Harrington Field is: 458-, 798 S College Dr, Bellingham, WA 98225

Teams

No Intramural Softball team can have more than 2 players that are on a sport club roster on their intramural roster. They also cannot have any players who are on the varsity roster for that specific sport. Please read the Intramural Participant Handbook for more participation policies.

Open

Teams consist of 10 players with a minimum of 8 required to start the game. A team can have a maximum of 20 players on their roster. There are no gender requirements for open games, all are welcome to participate together!
**Equipment**

A player wearing illegal equipment may not be permitted to play. This applies to any equipment which, in the opinion of the Intramural Sports staff, is dangerous or confusing. Types of equipment or substances which will always be declared illegal include:

- Jewelry
- Metal cleats
- Non-athletic shoes or clothing
- Exposed metal or hard plastic
- Anything Intramural Staff deems dangerous

**Gameplay**

The Playing area

- Fair/foul lines and out of play lines will govern fair/foul ball territory and the dead ball area.
- The bases are 60’ apart and the pitchers’ plate is 42’ from home.
- The backside of the field is determined by the backstop.

Equipment

- A regulation ball shall be used as provided by the Campus Recreation Office or another ball may be used if mutually agreed upon by both teams, and the referee. The referee shall approve the game ball(s).
- Legal Intramural Sports bats must have the ASA logo visible on the base of the bat. Intramural staff will check all bats before each game. Bats will also be provided for teams without bats.

Players/Game

- If a team does not have the minimum number of players to start a contest at the scheduled time, they will be given 5 minutes to secure the correct number before the game is declared a forfeit or default.
- If, during the course of play a team falls below the minimum number of players the game shall be forfeited regardless of score.
- There is no limit on the amount of players a team may have in their batting order. If a team has more than 10 players they may:
  - Select ten players to play. From this point the team may make substitutions.
  - All batters must play at least one inning
  - Allow all players to be on the batting order. In this case all players on the team are on the batting order and they may play defense at any time
  - If a player leaves the batting order for any reason (injury, leaves, ejection) they will be skipped over and no out will be recorded.
- Games are seven (7) innings or 45 min (whichever comes first) in length. Games that end in a tie during the regular season will be scored as a tie. If the game is still tied, the game will go into extra innings until a winner is declared.
- No new innings may begin after 40 minutes of game play; the supervisors’ watch shall be the factor to determine game time; playoff games may not be shortened due to the time limit.
- If the umpire or IM Staff determines that inclement weather makes it unsafe to play the game may be suspended or canceled: A game is considered official after four innings.
- If a game is called due to weather or lightning in the middle of an inning, the game will revert back to the end of the previous completed inning. Example: If it rains in the middle of the 4th inning, score will revert back to the end of the 3rd inning.
- Mercy Rule: If a team is leading the game by 20 or more runs after the completion of three (3) innings (3½ if the home team is leading), 15 after 4, and 10 after 5 the game shall end.

Updated: 03/17/2022
● Any player visibly bleeding must leave the field and may return with the referee’s permission after the wound is cleaned and bandaged; clothing must be changed if blood is visible/present before the player may reenter the match.

The Game Procedures

● Pitching
  ○ The pitcher must begin the pitching motion with one foot on the pitching plate
  ○ The pitch must be made in a smooth motion with no stops or hesitations. The batter may not play the ball again until it has been played by another player on either team.
  ○ The pitch must be delivered at a slow speed and with an arc of 6’ to 12’.
  ○ The pitcher must give the batter adequate time to ready themselves before pitching the ball.
  ○ If the pitcher accidentally drops the ball during their delivery the ball is dead and a ‘no-pitch’ is declared.
  ○ The pitcher may ‘declare’ an intentional walk at any time. This declaration is irrevocable.
  ○ Failure to conform to any other above, results in an illegal pitch.
  ○ If the batter attempts an illegal pitch, the result of the hit shall stand

● Batting
  ○ 4 balls equals a walk and 3 strikes equals a strike out, also see courtesy foul written below
  ○ Any ball hitting home plate or home plate extension is considered a strike, as long as the pitch is considered legal
  ○ Any ball from a pitch missing the home plate or home plate extension is considered a ball
  ○ A batter will get two “courtesy” fouls per at bat. A courtesy foul is the first foul ball after the batter has two strikes against them.
  ○ The batter is out if they hit an infield fly.
    ■ An infield fly is a non-line drive that can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort. This condition only applies with runners on at least first and second and less than two outs.

● Base Running
  ○ It is the responsibility of the base runner to avoid contact with the baseman. A failure to do so will result in an out.
  ○ During a play, that in the judgment of the Umpire is an obvious double play, the runner must slide, or get out of the way of the throw. If the Umpire determines that failure to move on the part of the runner took away a double play the runner going to first may be declared out.
  ○ Runners may not leave their base until the ball has been hit or crossed the plate. Base stealing is not permitted.
  ○ If a ball is overthrown or becomes out of play, the runner is awarded the two bases from the last base touched. If the ball is carried out of play (“Catch and Carry”) the runner is awarded one base.
  ○ If a player intentionally or carelessly crashes into another player to jar a ball loose, they will be ejected from further play.
  ○ A runner is out if a fair, batted ball strikes them, when they are not on a base and the ball has not yet passed an infielder other than the pitcher.
  ○ In the spirit of sportsmanship, Courtesy runners are allowed. Courtesy runners may only be granted if the batter-runner is on first base. The last out of the batting team shall be the courtesy runner. Courtesy Runners should only be used if a player cannot run the bases due to injury or other medical concern.
  ○ A runner may not deliberately run into a fielder. Any flagrant act will result in an ejection.
    ■ A defensive player cannot stand in the base path or obstruct the path of a base runner unless he/she is making a play on the ball. In the event of an obstruction, the umpire shall award the obstructed runner the base they would have reached had there been no obstruction.
  ○ Fake tags by any fielder are illegal. All fake tags are considered obstruction. The first offense will result in a warning and the next offense will result in an ejection.

Updated: 03/17/2022
IM Field Rules

- If a player runs into the dead ball area on the way to home plate, they must re-tag third base before proceeding to home plate; failure to do so will result in an out.
- No home runs will be allowed. Any ball that leaves the field past the outfield in fair ball territory in the air will be considered an out. Any bouncing ball that leaves the field past the outfield in fair ball territory will be a ground rule double.
- The position of the ball (not the player) will determine if a ball is fair/foul or in dead/live ball territory

Injury and Blood Rule

Campus Recreation does not provide accident insurance coverage for injuries received by Intramural Sports participants. Each participant should make sure they have their own coverage prior to participating. Injuries are a possibility. Campus Rec Intramural Sports assumes no responsibility for injuries. However, basic First Aid will be available.

A player who is bleeding, has an open wound, or has any amount of blood on his/her uniform or on the player shall be considered an injured player. No player will be permitted to enter or reenter the game as long as there is blood on his/her jersey or uniform.

Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the game and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate healthcare professional.

*Intramural sports staff has the right to withhold a player from play*

Sportsmanship

The Sportsmanship Rating System is intended to be an objective scale by which teams’ attitude and behavior can be assessed throughout the regular season and the playoffs. Behavior before, during, and after an Intramural Sports contest is included in the rating. The team captain is responsible for educating and informing all players and spectators affiliated with their team about the system. Furthermore, the team is responsible for the actions of the individual team members and spectators related to it.

At the conclusion of each contest, the Intramural Sports staff present will assign each team a Sportsmanship rating based on a grading scale of “1-5”. These assignments are nonnegotiable and will not be changed after being entered into IMLeagues.

5 pts- Above and Beyond Conduct and Sportsmanship: Players work to create a fun, inclusive, and welcoming space for everyone on the field/court. They keep a positive attitude and ensure their pace is clean after their game. These teams embody what Intramural Sports strives to be through good sportsmanship and friendly competition. They show no descent towards any of the intramural sports staff or participants and go above and beyond what is asked of teams.

4 pts- Good Conduct and Sportsmanship: Players cooperate fully with the officials and Intramural Sports staff. The captain is the only player to converse about rule interpretations and calls and does so in a polite and respectful manner. The captain also has full control of their teammates. Team is respectful to their opponents, officials, scorekeepers, spectators and Intramural Sports staff.
*Teams who default will receive a 4-sportsmanship rating

3 pts- Average Conduct and Sportsmanship: Team members complain about decisions made by the Officials and/or show minor dissention. Team members show minor disrespect to someone involved in the contest.

2 pts- Below Average Conduct and Sportsmanship: Team shows verbal dissent towards officials And/or the opposing team. Captain exhibits minor self-control and little or no control over their team.

Updated: 03/17/2022
1 pts - Poor Conduct and Sportsmanship: Players constantly comment to the officials and/or opposing team from the playing area or sidelines. Team captain has no self-control and no control over their team’s actions.

0 pts - Very Poor Conduct and Sportsmanship: Team is completely uncooperative. Captain has no control over teammates and/or themselves.
* Teams who no show
* 3 Unsportsmanlike infractions or game forfeiture.

Any player that is ejected during an intramural sports game will be removed from the game. Please see the ejection process outlined in the Intramural Sport Participant Handbook to review the process of returning to play.