

MANITOWOC PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT
RULES AND REGULATIONS
ADULT SOFTBALL LEAGUE Fall 2021

1. Player Eligibility
 - a. Men's League players must be 16 years of age or older.
 - b. Coed League players must be 16 years of age or older
 - c. Players must be registered with the Recreation Department before participating in play. Registration includes payment of team fee and player's signature and information on the team roster. There will be no limit to team membership. Teams may register players any time during the season prior to Aug 1.
2. Fees
 - a. A Team Fee is established by the Recreation Department with Public Infrastructure Committee approval. The Team Fee must be paid at registration in order for a team to be eligible for participation. Tax is included in fee. An unlimited number of residents and non-residents may be on a team's roster.
3. Leagues
 - a. Men's- Thursday: 8 Weeks
 - b. Coed- Tuesday: 8 Weeks
4. Divisions
 - a. Divisions will be split into upper (Competitive) and lower (Average/Recreational) divisions as needed.
5. Forfeits
 - a. Game time is go time; there is no "grace period." Game time is when the umpire declares "play ball". A team shall have at least 8 players to start the game. A team may not continue with less than 8 players. Players added after the start of the game must bat last in the order.
 - b. Teams using ineligible players will forfeit all games in which the player played. Teams that repeatedly use ineligible players will be dropped from the league. There are no fee refunds. Violating player conduct rules may also be cause for team forfeit.
6. Roster Additions or Changes
 - a. There will not be any player add to a roster after 9/21 unless approved by the Recreation Department. A release form must be filled out and turned in at least seven days prior to any team changes. **Players may only play for 1 team per division per night**, unless approved by opposing team and game officials.
7. Player Conduct
 - a. Managers are responsible for ensuring that all players know and abide by these rules and regulations. **Managers will be held responsible for the actions of their players.** Teams or players not abiding by these rules or other policies and regulations established by the Recreation Department will be dropped from the league. No refund will be made. Disciplinary decisions on player conduct violations may be appealed by the team manager. Appeals must be made with Recreation Department within 24 hours of the team manager's notification of the disciplinary decision.
 - b. **In the case of a dispute, the manager or captain shall be the only person to talk to the official.**
 - c. **Any unsportsmanlike tactic, profanity or derogatory remarks by a player or manager may result in eviction from the game and field. In addition, an ejected player will be suspended from one game. Flagrant or continuous violations will result in suspension or elimination from play for the remainder of the season. The staff on site will not hesitate to contact police if unsportsmanlike conduct escalates and it is unsafe for staff, players and/or spectators.**
 - d. The Umpire is the official representative of the Recreation Department and is not expected to tolerate abuse. The Department will support the Umpire in all judgement calls.
 - e. **Alcohol Policy** - Excessive use of alcohol during a game will not be tolerated. It will be up to the game officials if an individual has consumed too much for safe play to occur. If a player is ejected during a game for excessive use of alcohol, suspensions will be imposed, including the possibility of being removed from the league- If a team has more than two (2) players ejected due to excessive alcohol use the team will be dropped from the league without a refund. **Alcohol will NOT be allowed on the field of play.** Cans and bottles need to be picked up from the park prior to leaving the park, or privileges will be revoked.
8. Canceled and Postponed Games

- a. The Recreation Department reserves the right to postpone or cancel any games as deemed necessary by Department personnel. In the event of rain or wet conditions, the Department will decide at 4:00 p.m. if the fields are suitable for play. After 4:00 p.m., cancellation or postponement decisions will be made by the Umpire when he/she arrives at the field. **If sirens go off 30 minutes before game time or during play all games will be cancelled.**
- b. **Cancellation information will be made available to managers via their preferred method of communication and on the Manitowoc Park and Rec Facebook page.**

9. Pitchers

- a. Pitchers are HIGHLY encouraged to wear a protective facemask while pitching.

10. Rules of Play

- a. Strikes & Balls -- Each batter will be allowed two strikes or three balls. A foul ball on the second strike results in an out. A third ball results in a walk.
- b. **Base Stealing** -- Under no circumstances is a runner permitted to steal a base. He may leave his base only when a pitched ball has been hit, or results in a walk. The runner shall be called out if he/she leaves the base before the ball is hit or a walk has been declared.
- c. **Base Running** -- Players may slide when there is a play at the base with the exception of a play at first. The runner can be called out for intentionally taking out the fielder or for unnecessary contact, if they do not slide. The runner does not have to alter their path to the base if the fielder is on the base path. The fielder must be positioned out of the baseline, not standing on or straddling a base to prevent interference by the fielder. The player, based on the umpires' judgement will be removed from the game as well as be suspended for the next game if they intentionally take out or unnecessarily contact the fielder. **IF CATCHER IS BLOCKING HOME PLATE THE PLAY WILL BE AUTOMATICALLY BE CALLED "SAFE".**
- d. Strike Zone -- A ball striking any part of the plate or mat will be called a strike, providing the arch of the pitch reached a minimum of six (6) foot above ground and did not exceed twelve (12) feet above ground at its highest point.
- e. Batting the Roster -- A team may choose to bat as many of its players as it likes beyond the required full roster of 10. A team may not bat less than 10 players if ten or more are available. Players that arrive late may be inserted into the last position in the batting order provided the team has not batted through the order yet. Free substitution shall be applied to these players. A team may also carry substitutes as long as there are at least 10 batters in the declared batting order.
- f. Free Substitution -- Any ten players in the declared batting order may play any of the defensive positions at any time in the game without notifying the scorekeeper of changes. Players may leave and reenter the game on defense freely. However, substitutions will not be allowed mid-inning unless there is a good reason for the substitution. The umpire's judgement will determine the "goodness" of the reason. Examples may include player injury or pitching change.
- g. Substitutes -- A starter (someone in the declared batting order) may be replaced by a substitute and then may re-enter the game. However, they must re-enter in the same spot in the batting order that they originally were in. Substitutes may not re-enter once they are removed, unless a player has been injured and all substitutes have played. In the event of an injury when all substitutes have played, the opposing team's manager shall select which substitute will re-enter the game and the injured player may not re-enter to play.
- h. Lineups -- A team may begin a game with eight (8) players. A team may not continue play with less than eight (8) players in its lineup. A team may add players, to get to ten (10), at any point in the game. Players beyond ten (10) may only be added to the end of the lineup if the team has not batted through the order yet. Once the team has batted through the order, any new players beyond ten (10) may only be added as substitutes. The catcher position must be covered at all times.
- i. Ground Rules -- Ground rules will be outlined by the Umpire prior to the start of the game. Out of play - when a batted ball, either fair or foul is legally caught on the fly while fielder's feet are still within the established playing area, the batter is out, even though momentum may cause the player to leave the field of play. The ball is declared dead and each and every runner is advanced one base after the catch. This will be the case regardless if the ball is carried into the dead ball area intentionally or unintentionally.

- j. Balls -- Two new balls will be provided for each game. To start a game each team will hit with one of the new balls. After inning one, both balls will be used by both teams. A ball is to be used until it is hit out of play; subsequent balls will then be put into play as necessary. Used balls will be used when both new balls are put out of play. The team at bat must retrieve balls hit out of play immediately.
- k. Bats – All bats must be properly tagged by the Manitowoc Recreation Department in order to be used in a game. All bats listed on the current MPRD Illegal Bat List shall be prohibited from use in all Manitowoc Recreation Department league. In addition, all bats deemed illegal by Amateur Softball Association of America (ASA) shall be prohibited from use in all Manitowoc Recreation Department leagues. Use of women’s bats (if it states on bat) and fast pitch bats will be illegal in the Men’s Leagues. For the first offense of using an illegal bat, the batter shall be called out, and the infraction will be recorded. For the second offense, the player will be ejected from the game and subject to next game suspension. For a third offense, the player will be suspended for one calendar year from the date of the offense. A fourth offense will result in the player’s ban from participation in Manitowoc Recreation Softball. Wooden bats will be allowed as long as it states that it is a slow pitch bat. Wooden baseball bats are illegal.
- l. Time Limit- In all leagues, no new innings shall begin after 60 minutes of playing time has elapsed. Except in the case of a tie. In the even there is less than 60 minutes elapsed on the time limit when the previous inning is completed, the game should continue to the next inning. The umpire will announce the official start time at the beginning of a game. The score keeper will record this time. The umpire will give a fifteen minute warning call to signify the approach of the time limit. If seven innings are completed and the game is not tied OR the 15 run rule is in effect, before the 60 minutes time limit expires, the game is over.
- m. 15 Run Rule: The 15 run rule will take effect between the top of the fifth inning or at the end of the fifth inning if one team is leading by 15 runs. Ex: It is the top of the fifth inning- the visiting team just batted and is still losing by 15 runs: the game will be ended OR at the bottom of the 5th inning and the home team just batted. If after the home team has had their chance to bat and they did not close the 15 run gap, the game will end.
- n. Home Run Rule -- All fair untouched fly balls over-the-fence in excess of the limit will be ruled an out. Anytime the batter is ruled out because of an over-the-fence home run in excess of the limit, the ball is dead and no runners can advance. Any fair fly ball touched by a defensive player which then goes over the fence in fair territory will be declared a four base award and is not to be included in the total of over-the-fence home runs. All over the fence home runs will be considered dead ball walk off home runs. All base runners will score, but do not have to touch any bases. This includes the hitter who does not have to touch first base.
 - i. Home Run Limits by division:
 - 1. Upper: 7
 - 2. Lower: 5
 - 3. Co-Ed: 5
- o. Metal Cleats -- will be prohibited during Manitowoc Parks & Recreation Department softball league play. Players found wearing metal cleats will be immediately ejected from the game. A second violation by the same individual will mean suspension from further league play for the remainder of the season.
- p. Courtesy Runner -- In all Leagues a courtesy runner will be allowed. Only one courtesy runner will be allowed per inning. The courtesy runner will be the last player to make an out. (If it is the first inning and no outs have been made, the courtesy runner will be the player in the last position of the batting order). In the Co-Ed League the runner must stay the same gender (The last male or female to make and out).
- q. Safety Base -- On the initial throw to first base from the infield or outfield the batter-runner MUST touch the red or orange portion of the base. The defensive player MUST always touch the white portion. This rule is in effect only on the initial play at first base which does not include:
 - i. Returning to the base after over running.
 - ii. Running on a base hit to the outfield (runner may touch the red or white part).
 - iii. Tag Up to advance on a fly ball.
 - iv. *EFFECT: If the base runner uses the orange portion at any time after the first attempt at first base and is not in contact with the white portion, then he is considered off the base.*

- r. Quick Return Pitch- is a pitch made by a pitcher with the obvious attempt to catch a batter off guard and balance. This could be when a batter first takes his position in the batter's box and before he is ready, or when the batter is still off balance from the previous pitch. If this is called it is treated like a flat or "too high" pitch, THIS PITCH is to be called a ball.

11. Coed Rules: Coed Leagues will follow the above rules as well as the following additions

- a. Rosters- Coed teams must field at least as many women as men. Batting line ups shall not allow consecutive male batters. There shall be at least as many women as there are men in defensive positions at all times. Teams may play with 6 males and 4 females if this is determined before the start of the game and both teams agree. **A team playing more males than females in their lineup will take an out between the two male batters.** If a male makes an out and then first batter in the next inning is a male the batting team will start with one out. No team can play with more than two extra males than females in their lineup. No teams can play with less than 4 women.
- b. Equipment – Equipment in the coed league shall be restricted as in all MPRD leagues. All bats must be properly tagged by the Manitowoc Parks & Recreation Department in order to be used in a game. All bats listed on the current MPRD Illegal Bat List shall be prohibited from use in all Manitowoc Recreation Department league. All bats deemed illegal by Amateur Softball Association of America (ASA) shall be prohibited from use in all Manitowoc Recreation Department leagues immediately upon becoming illegal. Use of women's bats will be able to be used by women only. For the first offense of using an illegal bat, the batter shall be called out, and the infraction will be recorded. For the second offense, the player will be ejected from the game and subject to next game suspension. For a third offense, the player will be suspended for one calendar year from the date of the offense. A fourth offense will result in the player's ban from participation in Manitowoc Parks & Recreation
- c. Outfield Line – Per the end of season wrap up in 2020, we will no longer observe this rule.
- d. Walks – All players will bat. If a male batter walks he will automatically get second base, the female batting next will **not** have to option to walk. She must bat.
- e. Home Run Rule Exception: If a female player hits an over the fence home run, it will be counted as a home run, but will not count towards the teams home run limit (see 10.n.).