



OSHKOSH RECREATION DEPARTMENT SOFTBALL RULES 2024

RULE I-POLICY

1. All Recreation Department teams shall have the entry fee paid in the Recreation Department Office by April 5, 2024. This includes the completed roster. League play is scheduled to start on April 29, 2024.
2. A team must have a minimum of 12 players but not more than 18 players on their roster at any time. Players may be added to the roster at any time provided the team does not exceed the player limit of 18. The player must add themselves to the official roster in the Recreation Department Office prior to playing in a league game. ORD office hours are Monday through Friday, 7:30am-4:00pm.

ROSTERS WILL BE FROZEN AS OF JUNE 28.

3. Players are permitted to play on 4 Recreation slow pitch teams; limited to one team per night. (Exception-a player may participate in one regular league and one specialized league on a given night and cannot be guaranteed that the schedule will work in his favor.)

RULE II-ELIGIBILITY

1. **NO RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS!**
2. High school students are allowed to play in the adult softball program. The minimum eligibility requirement is that a student must be in 9th grade at the beginning of the softball season.
3. **The deadline to make changes on a roster is Friday, June 28, 2024.** Roster maximum is 18 players. Any changes to a roster must have their name added to a roster by 4:00pm prior to or on the day of play. No player can transfer teams. A player dropped from a roster may not be re-added at any time.

RULE III-POSTPONEMENTS, FORFEITS AND PROTESTS

1. There will be no postponement of any games other than for inclement weather.
2. A game called by the umpire shall be regulation if 5 or more complete innings have been played, or if the team second at bat has scored more runs in 4 or more innings than the other team has scored in 5 or more innings. The umpire is empowered to call a game at any time because of darkness, rain, fire, panic or other causes which place the players in peril. This will include any games called due to the 11:00pm curfew. A game that is rained out prior to being an official contact will be rescheduled and replayed from the beginning of the game provided it can be rescheduled before September 1.
3. Any team forfeiting 3 games for non-appearances will be dropped from the league.

4. Postponement because of poor weather conditions shall be made by the Recreation Department before 4:00pm. Prior to 4:00pm, all postponed games will be posted at www.oshkoshrecdept.com and posted to the ORD Facebook page.

If games are not officially postponed prior to 4:00pm and poor weather conditions prevail, it is the umpire's responsibility to postpone the game at the playing field. Teams should report to the assigned diamond to await the umpire's decision. If a 6:00pm game is postponed by the umpire at a particular diamond due to inclement weather, all remaining games for that night will also be postponed at that particular diamond. At this time, an announcement will be posted to the ORD Facebook page only.

Managers and players are encouraged to "like" and "follow" the Oshkosh Recreation Department Facebook page to receive updates.

5. All rule interpretation protests will be handled at the field by the umpires. The umpire's call is final.

6. Ineligible player(s). All player protests need to be completed prior to the opponents team batting through the roster (a completely batted roster is complete once the first batter in the line-up bats a 2nd time). The player must present a valid driver's license (or other picture identification) as verification at that time or the player will be considered ineligible for play. Only the opposing team's manager can call for a protest. Once an opposing team has batted through their order, a protest can only take place if that team adds another player to their batting order. If so, that player is the only player who can be protested and the protest needs to take place prior to that player completing his/her at bat.

7. Teams may begin and play with only 8 players. If neither team has 8 players available, both teams will be charged with a forfeit. If one team has less than 8 players and the other has 8 players or more players, the one with insufficient players at forfeit time, will forfeit the game.

8. A team may not continue a game with less than the number of players required to start a game. A forfeit shall be declared by the umpire at any time during the game when a team falls below the minimum number of 8 players. This included any player who cannot continue to play due to expulsions or injury.

9. No smoking, vaping or drinking of alcoholic beverages on the bench, in the dugout or on the field at any time. This rule will be enforced by the umpires and will result in a forfeit for non-compliance, following suitable warning. City of Oshkosh ordinance prohibits the carry- in of alcoholic beverages at the Reetz Softball Complex. The City of Oshkosh will enforce this ordinance.

RULE IV-GAMES

1. Games shall be played under official ASA Slow Pitch Softball rules except for changes noted in these rules.

2. Ground rules shall be agreed upon by the 2 managers and chief umpire before each game. (Any special ground rules for particular diamonds will be explained to all umpires.)

3. The run rules are as follows:

- 20 runs after four innings.
- 15 runs after five innings.
- 10 runs after six innings.

Home team gets the last half inning if they are losing. (The Monday Veteran's Leagues have their own special run rule as detailed under their league rules.)

4. No inning shall start after 55 minutes of playing time has elapsed, except in a case of a tie. In the event there is less than 55 minutes elapsed on the time limit when the previous full inning is completed, the game should be continued into the next inning. Home teams must get last bats if the time limit elapses in mid-inning. (This time limit will be utilized in all leagues except the Monday Veteran's Leagues.)
5. At the beginning of each half inning after the 1st inning of the game, the pitcher will be allowed one warm-up pitch. For excessive warm-up pitches, a pitcher shall be penalized by awarding a ball to the batter for each pitch in excess of one. The pitcher may take as many warm-up pitches as desired in the 1st inning prior to the umpire officially beginning that inning.
6. There is no grace period of games. A completed line-up including players first and last name is to be submitted by the manager to the scorer prior to game time. Failure to do so may result in a forfeit upon protest. If teams are ready, umpires present and both managers agree, the game may start sooner.
7. Lighted diamonds-no inning may start after 11:00pm.
8. The ASA re-entry rule may be used in the slow pitch leagues. The re-entry rule does not apply to teams who have chosen to bat their roster.
9. Each batter will be entitled to 3 balls and 2 strikes.
10. Each team will be responsible for supplying 2 game balls to the umpires prior to the game. The team will hit the legal softball (see #14) of their preference.
11. A double first base will be utilized at all diamonds. This base has a white portion and orange portion with the white portion designated for use by the defensive player for put-out and the orange portion designated for the batter-runner. The batter-runner must touch the orange portion of the base while approaching first base in a force-out situation. Failure to comply will result in an automatic out call against the batter-runner.
12. **Collisions-deliberately crashing into a fielder with the ball:**
 - When a defensive player has the ball and the runner remains on his/her feet and deliberately crashes into the defensive player waiting to apply the tag, the runner is out, the ball is dead and all other runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the collision.
 - If the act is determined by the umpire(s) to be flagrant, the offender shall be ejected.
 - In order to prevent a deliberate crash ruling, the runner can give up, slide, go around the defender within the baseline or return to the previous base touched. (Simply running and advancing to the base needed to be safe is not an act of interference.)
 - While there is no mandatory slide or veer rule, runners are expected to slide or get out of the way on a double play.
 - This rule will be strictly enforced in order to prevent injury and protect the defensive player who has possession of the ball.

- **Fielders should not block the base without possession of the ball (that is obstruction), they shall stand to the side of the base, catch the ball and then apply the tag.**
- **If a defensive player is fielding a thrown ball and the flight of the ball draws the fielder into the path of the runner, this would not be a deliberate crash.**
- **If the ball, runner and the defensive player all arrive at the same time and contact is made, the umpire should not invoke the crash rule or obstruction-this is merely incidental contact.**

13. In the event a player sustains an open cut or wound, that player must leave the game and may not return until the cut or wound is completely covered and the external bleeding is controlled. Furthermore, a player who has an excessive amount of blood on his/her clothing will be directed to leave the game and cannot return until replacement clothing is secured.

14. **Teams must provide their own 52/300 12 inch softball. Balls must be yellow in color. Umpires will be checking softballs prior to game start and any time a different ball is put into play. PLEASE HAVE AN AMPLE SUPPLY OF SOFTBALLS NEARBY AS TO NOT DELAY THE GAME RETRIEVING FOUL BALLS OR HOME RUN BALLS.**

15. Only official softball bats as outlined by ASA will be allowed. See <https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Softball/Certified-Equipment/Equipment-Bats>. An umpire or the opposing team may challenge whether a bat is approved. The USA Softball non-approved bat with certification marks can also be located at www.oshkoshrecdept.com. Penalty for use of a non-approved bat will be as follows:

- **1st offense-player ejected from game**
- **2nd offense-player ejection for remainder of season from all leagues he/she participates; team forfeit of game bat was utilized in and forfeit of next scheduled game**
- **3rd offense-team ejection from league play for remainder of season**

16. Slow Pitch:

- **6' minimum arc from ground; 15' maximum arc from ground**
- ORD will provide a mat to be used in all leagues. If a legally pitched ball touches any portion of the home plate or mat, that pitch shall be considered a strike.
- A runner may not step off a base from the time the pitcher has the ball with intent to pitch until the ball has crossed home plate.
- Pitching distance 50'; base path distance 70' (women 65').
- All players must wear plastic cleats in all Recreation Department games.

17. A team may exercise the option of "batting the entire roster" or not. Once this option is chosen, it must remain intact for the entire game.

- In the event a player becomes injured and cannot continue to play, there is no automatic out even if there are less than 10 players remaining on the roster.
- Free substitution is allowed on defense after a complete inning.
- A player may be added to the batting order at the very end position only, at any time (even if the roster has been batted through one complete time).
- The re-entry rule does not apply to teams who have chosen to bat their roster for that game.

18. On any fair ball hit over the fence for a home run, the batter and all base runners will go directly to the dugout. (No appeals can be made for runners missing a base.)

19. Teams will be awarded 1 courtesy runner per inning. If the same player comes up twice in the same inning, they will be permitted a second courtesy runner. EXCEPTION: If a courtesy runner is granted in an inning and a player then becomes injured in the same inning, an additional courtesy runner may be granted and the injured player IS REMOVED FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE GAME.

The courtesy runner must be in the batting order and will be the player who made the last out. In coed, the courtesy runner must be male for male, female for female.

If a courtesy runner situation arises in the first inning and no outs have been recorded, the courtesy runner may be the last batter listed in the batting order.

A courtesy runner may be used at any base and may be used for the runner starting on second under the Tie Breaker Rule. In the case of a Tie Breaker, the courtesy runner would be the player who made the second to last out.

If the player serving as the courtesy runner comes up to bat while on the bases, they will be out on the bases. If there are less than two outs at the time, they will still be able to bat.

(The Monday/Wednesday Veteran's Leagues courtesy runner rule is detailed under their league rules.)

20. A warning of a forfeited game shall be declared by the umpires in favor of the team not at fault if both umpires agree that a team employs tactics noticeably designed to delay or hasten the game.

21. A limit of 7 over-the-fence home runs will be used. For any in excess, the ball is dead, the batter is out and no runners can advance. Note: Any fair fly ball touched by a defensive player that clears or has cleared 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. A home run will be charged for any ball hit over the fence whether runs score or not.

22. International Tie-Breaker Rule-after the completion of 7 innings or when time limits have expired and the score is still tied, the tie-breaker procedure will begin. The offensive team shall begin its turn at bat with the player who is scheduled to bat last in that respective half inning being placed on 2nd base (e.g., if the number 5 batter is lead-off batter, the number 4 batter in the batting order will be placed on 2nd base).

23. On a play at home plate, the runner may touch the white home plate or the mat and the defensive player must touch the white home plate on force outs. Runners can be tagged out at plays at home plate. If there is no play at the plate or the runner is trying to avoid contact, the runner may touch either the mat or white home plate. (If the mat becomes displaced during a play (e.g., a preceding runner slides and the mat is kicked out into the left-handed batters box), a runner must touch the white home plate on a force out or non-force out play). (This rule will be applied in all leagues except for Monday/Wednesday Veteran's and Thursday Coed)

RULE V-UMPIRES

1. Umpires employed by the Recreation Department shall be in full authority of the game.

2. Only team managers may question a decision of the umpire and then only in case of rule interpretation and not in cases of judgment.

3. Umpires shall be in full authority to recommend suspension of players to the Recreation Department and must present the same in writing. The length of suspension shall be determined by the Recreation Department Office.

RULE VI-CONDUCT OF PLAYERS AND SPECTATORS

1. A player or team guilty of unsportsmanlike conduct in connection with any game or decision may be suspended from the league. The length of the suspension will be determined by the Recreation Department Office.
2. Any player who is ejected from a game will be directed to leave the ball-park vicinity (including all spectator areas) immediately for the remainder of the afternoon/evening. Failure to do so will result in forfeiture of the game and the Oshkosh Police Department contacted. If the ejected player does not leave the vicinity of the ball park immediately and/or harasses an umpire, scorer, participant or spectator, the player will be suspended from all teams. The length of the suspension will be determined by the Recreation Department Office.
3. Two ejections charged to a player in a season will result in that player's suspension for the remainder of the current season for all teams the player is registered with.
4. The ORD in its transaction with a team will only recognize the team's manager or sponsor.
5. Physical contact by player(s) or spectators with an umpire or scorer will result in forfeiture of game by players' team. The player(s) shall be suspended from participation in all Recreation Department programs. The length of suspension will be determined by the Recreation Department Office.
6. **Casual Profanity Rule - Casual profanity pertains to "expletives" not directed at the umpires or opposing players, but at the players uttering them as a vent of frustration". This type of profanity will be penalized "OUTS" being declared by the umpire against the offensive or defensive team, whichever is guilty of the violation. If the offending team is at bat and profanity is used, the umpire will declare a team out and play will continue. If the offending team is on the field, team out(s) will be assessed when their team comes to bat in their half inning. The "OUTS" will be treated in a delayed, dead ball situation. Profanity directed at others, especially umpires WILL result in ejection.**

RULE VII-AWARDS

The Recreation Department will provide suitable awards for league champions. In the event 2 or more teams end the season in a tie for the league championship, a one or more playoff game(s) will be scheduled to determine the final champion. The Recreation Department will determine the date, time and location of a playoff game(s).

RULE VIII-WEDNESDAY VETERAN'S LEAGUE (40+)

1. Any new player entering the Wednesday Veteran's League must be 40 years of age or older or turn 40 years of age in the calendar year.
2. "Batting the Roster" is mandatory. Therefore, a player may be added to the batting roster at the very end position only, at any time (even if the roster has been batted through one complete time).

3. There is free substitution, however, a defensive player must complete one inning (unless taken out for injury).
4. Play a 7 inning game (6 innings of 4 run limit; 7th inning unlimited runs. No other run rules will apply. In the event of a tie score at the end of regulation, the tie-breaker rule will be applied.
5. Commitment Line 25' from the Scoring Line will be used. Once a runner's foot touches the ground on or past this line, the runner is committed to advancing to the Scoring Line. (If a runner re-crosses the commitment line, he will be declared out and the ball remains alive.)
6. Scoring Line will be used. A foot down on the "scoring line" prior to the ball being received by a defensive player touching home plate is the same as a foot down on home plate for the purpose of scoring a run. Sliding or diving into the scoring line is not permitted (will be called out).
7. **Any player on the roster and present may be a courtesy runner if listed on the official lineup. A courtesy runner may be used for a base runner at any time, but the same courtesy runner may not be used more than once per inning. Any courtesy runner found running more than once per inning will be called out. Any player on the team roster may be a courtesy runner; does not have to be playing defense or in the batting order. HAVE YOUR COURTESY RUNNER STANDING IN THE 1ST BASE COACH BOX (First base coach only). STAFF WILL NOT WAIT FOR A RUNNER COMING FROM OUTSIDE THE PLAYING AREA OR FROM THE PARKING LOT FURTHER DELAYING A GAME. (This rule is specific only to the Monday/Wednesday Veteran's Leagues.)**
8. **GHOST RUNNER - Each team for THE SEASON may identify ONE player who may utilize a "ghost" runner. The ONE player's name must be reported and documented on the official scoresheet by the ORD Scorekeeper prior to the game beginning.**
 - Request for runner. A batter or runner who is injured, sick or otherwise disabled may request a runner. A player may not request a runner simply because he is a slow runner and wishes to be replaced by a faster runner. ORD Umpire Staff may deny the player the opportunity to utilize a runner.
 - The runner for the batter must stand behind the "courtesy runner line", before a pitch is delivered. Once the pitch is delivered, the batter will be called out if the courtesy runner moves before the batter has struck the pitch. A batter who has requested a courtesy runner will be called out if he crosses the batter's commitment line.
 - The "ghost" runner may not advance past 1st base.
 - A player may serve as courtesy runner only once in an inning and only three times in a game. A player should not be used as a courtesy runner if his position in the batting order would potentially require him to bat while he is on base. A batter will be declared out if his turn at bat arrives while he is on base as a courtesy runner.
 - **HAVE YOUR 'GHOST' RUNNER READY! STAFF WILL NOT WAIT FOR A RUNNER COMING FROM OUTSIDE THE PLAYING AREA OR FROM THE PARKING LOT FURTHER DELAYING A GAME.**

RULE IX-MONDAY VETERAN'S LEAGUE (45+)

1. All teams must bat the roster.
 - Free substitution is allowed on defense after a complete inning.
 - The re-entry rule does not apply.

- The “Batting the Roster” rule is mandatory; therefore, a player may be added to the batting roster at the very end position only at any time (even if the roster has been batted through one complete time).

2. A Commitment Line 25’ from the Scoring Plate will be used. Once a runner’s foot touches the ground on or past this line, the runner is committed to advancing to the Scoring Plate (if a runner re-crosses the commitment line, he will be declared out and the ball remains alive).
3. A Scoring Line will be used. A foot down on the scoring line prior to the ball being received by a defensive player touching home plate is the same as a foot down on home plate for the purpose of scoring a run. Sliding or diving into the scoring line is not permitted (will be called out).
4. Players are not permitted to over run second or third base without being in jeopardy for being tagged out.
5. A player may slide or dive into 2nd or 3rd bases when returning to any base except the Scoring Line. (This option is included primarily so a player can avoid a collision.) Sliding or diving into 1st base or the Scoring Line is not permitted and such players will be called out.
6. Runners shall be called out for contact with a defensive player if, in the umpire’s judgment, the contact was deliberate on his part, or the runner could reasonably have been expected to minimize or avoid contact under the circumstances and failed to do so. If the umpire rules deliberate contact on the part of the defensive player, the runner shall be called safe.
7. Play a 7 inning game (6 innings of 4 run limit; 7th inning unlimited runs. No other run rules will apply. In the event of a tie score at the end of regulation, the tie-breaker rule will be applied.
8. **Any player on the roster and present may be a courtesy runner if listed on the official lineup. A courtesy runner may be used for a base runner at any time, but the same courtesy runner may not be used more than once per inning. Any courtesy runner found running more than once per inning will be called out. Any player on the team roster may be a courtesy runner; does not have to be playing defense or in the batting order. HAVE YOUR COURTESY RUNNER STANDING IN THE 1ST BASE COACH BOX (First base coach only). STAFF WILL NOT WAIT FOR A RUNNER COMING FROM OUTSIDE THE PLAYING AREA OR FROM THE PARKING LOT FURTHER DELAYING A GAME. (This rule is specific only to the Monday/Wednesday Veteran’s Leagues.)**
9. **GHOST RUNNER - Each team for THE SEASON may identify ONE player who may utilize a “ghost” runner. The ONE player’s name must be reported and documented on the official scoresheet by the ORD Scorekeeper prior to the game beginning.**
 - **Request for runner. A batter or runner who is injured, sick or otherwise disabled may request a runner. A player may not request a runner simply because he is a slow runner and wishes to be replaced by a faster runner. ORD Umpire Staff may deny the player the opportunity to utilize a runner.**
 - **The runner for the batter must stand behind the “courtesy runner line”, before a pitch is delivered. Once the pitch is delivered, the batter will be called out if the courtesy runner moves before the batter**

has struck the pitch. A batter who has requested a courtesy runner will be called out if he crosses the batter's commitment line.

- The "ghost" runner may not advance past 1st base.
- A player may serve as courtesy runner only once in an inning and only three times in a game. A player should not be used as a courtesy runner if his position in the batting order would potentially require him to bat while he is on base. A batter will be declared out if his turn at bat arrives while he is on base as a courtesy runner.
- **HAVE YOUR 'GHOST' RUNNER READY! STAFF WILL NOT WAIT FOR A RUNNER COMING FROM OUTSIDE THE PLAYING AREA OR FROM THE PARKING LOT FURTHER DELAYING A GAME.**

10. Defensive Players-allowed to have 11 players on defense. All 11 must be in the batting order.

11. Flip Flop Rule-the visiting team must be ahead by 10 or more runs after the 5th inning. If the visiting team is ahead by 10 or more runs, the home team will remain at bat and start a new at-bats (beginning their 6th inning at-bats), meaning all runners on the base will return to the dugout. It will be an open inning.

If the home team fails to tie or pull ahead of the visiting team, the game ends and the visiting team wins. If the home team ties or pulls ahead, the visiting team comes up to bat.

12. Players must individually pay a player registration fee and complete a player registration/release form in the Recreation Department Office by April 6, 2023. Team formation will occur with a draft of the individual players.

RULE X-THURSDAY COED LEAGUE

1. A team must have an even number of couples playing on the field. A couple is defined as one male player and one female player. The minimum number of couples required to start a game and play is 4 during the entire season. In the event there are less than 4 couples available to start a game, a forfeit will be called. The maximum number of couples to start a game is 9.

2. Fee substitution is allowed after a complete inning. (This will allow a player who has no "couple match" at a particular game the opportunity to participate). A male player must substitute for a male player and likewise, a female player must substitute for a female player.

3. Batting order must be submitted prior to the game and followed during the game. The batting order must list men and women separately and followed alternatively such that 2 batters of the same sex may never bat consecutively. This allows a team to bat an odd number of players.

4. Defensive line up must also alternate by sex. The fielding positions must be as follow:

- Pitcher and catcher must be alternate sex.
- 1st base, 2nd base, shortstop and 3rd base must alternate by sex.
- All outfielders must alternate by sex.

5. **HOME TEAM will be responsible for supplying game balls to the umpires prior to the game as follows:**

- **Men: DFX-12RFP-Flexiball-Softball Touch**
- **Women: 52/300 12 inch softball. Ball must be yellow in color**

6. BATS-See Page 4 detailing bats for 2024.
7. A walk to a male batter without any strikes being thrown will result in a 2 base award. The following female batter will have the option of accepting a walk or batting. A male batter receiving a strike who then walks, will be awarded one base and the following female must bat.
8. A Defensive Line will be marked in the outfield placed at 75' from each base. All defensive outfielders must remain behind this line until the pitched ball crosses home plate. The penalty for non-compliance is to allow the batter and runners to advance one base in the event an out is created by the play of the batter. In the event the offensive team, as a result of the play, successfully advances players beyond the noncompliance penalty (all players advancing beyond one base) when a defensive team violates this rule, the offensive team may be rewarded with the result of the play.
9. A Commitment Line 25' from the Scoring Plate will be used. Once a runner's foot touches the ground on or past this line, the runner is committed to advancing to the Scoring Plate. If a runner re-crosses the commitment line he/she will be declared out and the ball remains alive.
10. Scoring Line will be used. A foot down on the scoring line prior to the ball being received by a defensive player touching home plate is the same as a foot down on home for the purpose of scoring a run. Sliding or diving into the scoring line is not permitted (will be called out).

February, 2024