

## INTRAMURAL SOFTBALL RULES

Participants should be aware that there is a risk of injury in participation of intramural sports due to the inherent nature of the activity. Individuals are encouraged to have a physical examination and to obtain adequate health and accident insurance prior to participation. Individuals participate in intramural activities at their own risk!

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## GENERAL INFORMATION

The team captain is responsible for all information contained in the Intramural Rules and [2016- 2017 IM Handbook](#).

**Location:** All Intramural softball games are played at the COMPLEX FIELDS located on Florida Avenue and Lincoln Avenue in Urbana.

**Advancing to Playoffs:** Teams that meet the following criteria will advance to compete in the playoffs:

- a) Team must have won
  - 3 games or more (out of 4) during the regular season = Regular length season
  - 2 games or more (out of 3) during the regular season = Shortened season
- b) Team must have an average sportsmanship rating of at least a 3
- c) Team must have completed the online captains quiz
- d) Team must have NO regular season forfeits

Playoff criteria will only be adjusted in situations where facility or weather conditions limit play. It is the captain's responsibility to check their playoff schedules which will be made available on IMLeagues as soon as possible after the regular season has concluded.

**Game Time:** Game time is the scheduled division time, unless the previous game goes over the allotted time. Schedules can be accessed through the [IM Leagues website interface](#).

- a) Teams should be warmed up and ready to play as soon as the previous game ends on their field
- b) Teams should report to the check in table a minimum of 15 minutes prior to the scheduled game time to sign in

**i-card Sign-In Procedures:** All players must present a valid i-card in order to participate in an Intramural contest. Upon arrival prior to an intramural contest, all participants must sign in with the Intramurals staff assistant and present their i-card for identification purposes.

**Failure to Sign in:** If a player is found participating in the contest without having signed in on the official intramural gamesheet and doesn't have their i-card present or are ineligible for the One-Time Exception Policy, said team will forfeit the game and all forfeit fees and consequences will apply. If the participant has their i-card present or has not used their 1 time exception, the team may still play the game with designated disadvantages.

**One – Time Exception:** The One-Time exception policy is designed so that students who have forgotten their i-card, but are printed on the roster, may still sign-in for their game. Each participant may use this exception policy once per semester. To use the One-Time exception policy the following criteria must be met:

- a) Must be pre-printed on their team roster
- b) Must have a valid government Photo ID (Driver's License, Passport, State issued ID)
- c) Must not have previously used a One-Time Exception during that semester

**Roster Policy:** An individual is bound to the *first* team that they sign into a game for. Participants must sign up on the online roster before 2pm on the day of the contest (except for Sunday games) or they will not be allowed to sign-in onsite or participate. For Sunday games, players must be added to the roster before 2pm on the preceding Friday. A participant is not formally considered to be on that team's official roster until he or she physically signs in for that team at an actual contest.

- a) No more than 2 members of the U of I Club Team are permitted to be on an IM roster

**IMLeagues Mobile Confirmation:** In the event a player has not signed up for their team before the rosters are printed, they may show the Intramural Staff their name on the IMLeagues Roster online. This must be done by an Intramural Supervisor so you will have to be patient and wait until one is available to help out. If you show as ineligible on the mobile site, nothing can be done until the office is opened. IT is highly recommended that you join your team roster before 2pm on the day of your game (2pm on Friday for Sunday games) to ensure your ability to play in the contest.

**Defaults:** Should a team know in advance that they cannot field a team on a given night; they may avoid forfeit fee and loss of playoff eligibility consequences by contacting the Intramural Office at 217-244-1344, or [intramurals@illinois.edu](mailto:intramurals@illinois.edu) to default their game. All defaults must be called or emailed in before 2pm on the business day of the contest, or before 2pm on the Friday before a Sunday contest. Please make sure to include your name (captain), team name, sport, and the day and time you are playing so that your game can be defaulted properly.

- a) Teams losing by default will lose the contest by the same scoring structure that is applied for forfeits.
- b) Teams losing by default will receive a sportsmanship rating of "C".
- c) Teams losing by default will remain eligible for playoffs.

**Forfeit:** Teams who are not present at their scheduled contest by game time or are unable to produce enough eligible players to field a team, will be assessed a forfeit aside from the following Grace Period Exception

**Grace Period Exception:** A team may delay its right to win by forfeit and allow the other team a grace period of ten minutes to acquire a properly equipped team.

- a) Once a ten minute grace period is granted by the team who is ready, they may not rescind their decision and take a forfeit before the ten minute period passes.
- b) If ten minutes passes after the scheduled game time, and the minimum number of eligible players required to play for the opposing team has not arrived, then the team that is ready to play must accept the forfeit.
- c) If the forfeiting team is able to obtain the minimum number of properly equipped players before the ten-minute grace period expires, the game shall be started the opposing team shall be given the ball and choice of goal awarded to the opposing team.

**Forfeit Consequences:** Teams who are assessed a forfeit will

- a) Be charged a \$75.00 forfeit fee.
- b) Is ineligible to advance to the playoffs.
- c) Upon a second forfeit, teams will be assessed a second \$75.00 forfeit fee, and will be removed from the league.
- d) Teams losing by forfeit will lose the contest by a score of 5-0 and a sportsmanship rating of a 0.

**Sportsmanship Ratings:** In order for a team to qualify for post season playoffs, they must have a 3.0 average in sportsmanship during regular season pool play. Any team receiving an "0" rating during the regular season will be declared ineligible for post-season tournament play.

The Intramural Activities Program expects all participants to respect and abide by all rules and policies, show respect and concern for their opponent and intramural staff, and refrain from abusive language, poor attitude, and manipulation of the rules to further their chance of winning. Upholding high standards of integrity and fair play is of the utmost importance to the Intramural Activities Program. Each participant is accountable for their actions, and each team captain is responsible for the actions of the team members as well as team spectators.

Sportsmanship ratings are given to teams after each contest by the intramural manager, supervisors, staff assistants, and game officials. These ratings reflect behavior before, during, and after the contest. The decision reached will be final. Ratings will be given according to the following scale:

- 4** = Team shows above average conduct and sportsmanship
- 3** = Team shows average conduct and sportsmanship.
- 2** = Team shows below average conduct and sportsmanship.
- 1** = Team shows poor conduct and sportsmanship.
- 0** = Team has unacceptable conduct and sportsmanship.

**Protests:** Protests are restricted to matters of rule interpretation and player eligibility. Protests concerning judgment calls by an official and protests of sportsmanship ratings will not be reviewed. In the case of a rule interpretation, notification of a protest must be made to a game official at the time of the alleged infraction and prior to the next live ball. For protests of player eligibility, a team may protest no more than three participants on any given night. All eligibility protests must be made prior to the end of the contest. Please note that captains cannot protest eligibility or a rule interpretation once the gamesheet with the final score and sportsmanship rating has been signed. **If a protest form has been filed, Captain's and or designated team members should not sign the gamesheet.**

**For additional information:** Please review the 2016- 2017 IM Handbook  
[www.campusrec.illinois.edu/intramurals/docs/IM\\_handbook.pdf](http://www.campusrec.illinois.edu/intramurals/docs/IM_handbook.pdf)

## **Equipment**

All players are required to bring a valid UIUC ID (i-card) to all Intramural games.

**Jersey Policy:** The Intramural jersey policy is NOT in affect for Softball

**Game balls:** Game softballs will be provided by Campus Recreation. Teams must use the ball provided and may check-out softballs to warm up with.

**Bats:** In order for a bat to be deemed legal it must be an official ASA approved softball bat and may not be on the ASA Hot Bat List. It must have a safety grip (no smooth tape) and must be free of rough or sharp edges. Baseball bats and fungo bats are not legal.

**Gloves:** Only fielding gloves that are clearly designed for baseball and/or softball are permitted.

**Shoes:** Closed-toed shoes are required. Gym or running shoes are recommended. Rubber training shoes and single molded plastic/rubber soccer-type cleats are permitted. Metal cleats or spikes of any type are not allowed. Shoes with screw in cleats of any kind are illegal.

## **Game Regulations**

**Umpire:** Campus Recreation will furnish one umpire per game. They will call balls/strikes, safe/out, and arc/height of pitches.

**Rosters:** Ten (10) players constitute a softball team. A team may play with eight (8) players without being considered a forfeit. A team must start play with eight (8) players present. A batting order must be turned in before game time. Players arriving late may be added to the bottom of the batting order at any time. If a team drops below eight (8) players for any reason, they may continue playing if the umpire feels they still have a legitimate chance to win the game.

- a) Team rosters are limited to a maximum of 20 players

**Timing / Innings:** A half inning will consist of 3 outs. The game will consist of 7 innings. In the event of rain or darkness, 5 innings or 4 ½ if the home team is ahead, will constitute a game. A 15-run rule will be in effect after 3 innings and a 10-run rule after 5 innings.

- a) No new inning may be started, unless the score is tied, after 50 minutes have elapsed from when the game began. The umpire and/or Intramural Supervisor will keep the official game time.

**Batting Order:** A batting order must be turned in before game time.

**Substitution:** Unlimited substitution is permitted at each position in the batting order. Player A & B may "share" a spot in the batting order - either may bat or either may play the field, but may not play in the

field at the same time. Once a player enters the game, either as a starter or substitute, he or she may only re-enter the game in the same batting position.

- a) Unless a player is injured and cannot continue no pinch runners will be allowed under any circumstance. If players are sharing a spot in the order, the player that begins an at-bat must finish the at-bat. The player sharing the position may not pinch run unless the other player is too injured to continue. See Injured Runner Rule.
- b) If a team begins with less than 10 players there is no penalty for the empty spots in the batting order. Players arriving late may be added to the bottom of the line-up at any time. If a team begins with a full batting order (10 players) and a player is injured or cannot otherwise continue and the team does not have an eligible substitute, then the team must take an out for that spot in the order. An eligible substitute is one who has yet to have played in the game, either as a batter or fielder.

**The Playing Field:** Bases will be 65 feet apart. Umpires will establish ground rules prior to the game regarding out of play areas, permanent obstacles in the field of play, etc.

**Starting the game:** The choice of first or last bat (home/visitors) in the inning shall be determined on the scorecard prior to the game.

- a) Players start with a one strike and one ball count when at bat.
- b) Infield practice is not allowed after the first inning.

**End of the game:** Captains are required to check and verify all information by signing the scorecard.

**Mercy Rule:** A 15-run mercy rule will be in effect after 3 innings and a 10-run rule after 5 innings.

**Extra Innings:** Ties will be resolved in extra innings.

**Inclement Weather:** A game shall be considered "official" and the result final if after the conclusion of 5<sup>th</sup> inning or 4 ½ if the home team is ahead, the game is stopped for inclement weather. In the event that the first half was complete, but the contest was tied, an overtime period will be scheduled to determine a winner. If the first half of the game was not completed when the contest was stopped, the game will be rescheduled and started over from the beginning on the reschedule date.

- a) Information regarding cancellations will be relayed to captains either in an email from the intramural office staff or in a message recorded to the intramural activities and club sports rain line (217-244-0329). If the weather is inclement, intramural participants should call the rain line to see whether intramural activities have been cancelled. The rain line will be updated by 4:30 PM daily. In some cases, the rain line may not explicitly specify whether intramural activities are cancelled. Unless teams have received an explicit cancellation message in regard to their sport via email or through the rain line, teams should assume that all intramural contests will play as scheduled.

## **CO-REC (Only) SLOW PITCH SOFTBALL RULES**

**Current Men's and Women's Intramural Slow Pitch Softball Rules will be in effect for all games with the following emphases and modifications:**

- a) A female may only substitute for a female, a male for a male.

- i) Exception: If a team has more females than males in the line-up, a male may substitute for a female in order to bring the team to a 5/5 ratio, as long as the batting order alternates.
- b) Teams must alternate positions in the batting order by gender. At any point if two players of the same sex bat back to back, an automatic out must be assessed for the vacant spot between them.
- c) A team consists of 10 defensive players. In addition, a team may play legally with 8 players, provided they have four male players and four female players. A team may play with as many as 12 players (6 men, 6 women; 10 on defense and 2 Extra Hitters). Teams may also play with 9 or 11 players. If a team plays with 8, 10, or 12 players, they will not be assessed automatic out.

#### **Legal Lineups**

<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>
6 (Extra Hitter)	6 (Extra Hitter)
6	5
5	6
5	5
4	4
5	4
4	5

- d) Check with the Intramural Supervisor if you need clarification regarding a lineup.
- e) Males and females do not have to alternate defensively on the bases or in the outfield. The catcher and pitcher do not have to be of opposite sexes and are considered infielders. Teams are not regulated as far as the number of infielders or outfielders or gender of each.

**Walks:** On a walk to a male batter (intentional or not) the male batter will advance to second base and the following female will bat for herself. All base runners will advance to the next base forced to, on a walk to a male batter. If a male batter is walked and there are two outs, the female may be given the option of hitting or receiving an automatic walk.

### **Rule Enforcement**

#### **FAIR AND DEAD BALLS:**

- a) The ball is dead and not in play:
  - When no pitch is declared.
  - When a foul ball is not caught.
  - When a runner is called out for leaving a base too soon.
  - When offensive interference occurs.
  - When a defensive player carries the ball out of play (intentionally or unintentionally).
- b) The ball is in play:
  - When the infield fly rule is enforced.
  - When a thrown ball remains in playable territory.
  - When a base is dislodged while base runners are progressing around the bases.
  - When a thrown ball strikes an offensive player.
  - When a thrown ball or fair-batted ball strikes an umpire.
  - When a thrown ball strikes a coach.

- c) The ball remains alive until the umpire declares time, which will be done when the ball is held by a player on the infield area and in the opinion of the umpire all play has ceased.
- d) A foul ball must reach a height of six feet or more to be legally caught for an out.

### **PITCHING RULES, BALLS AND STRIKES :**

**Count:** Each batter will start with a 1 ball and 1 strike count. The regulation 4 balls will result in a walk and 3 strikes is an out. With a two-strike count, the batter will be allowed one foul ball called a “courtesy foul.” The batter will be declared out on the second foul ball of a two-strike count. The ball is dead and runners may not advance.

- a) Exception: If a player catches a foul ball, the ball is live and runners may tag and advance at the risk of being put out.

**Strike Zone:** is the zone over home plate from the bottom of the batter's front knee to the top of the back shoulder.

**Legal Pitch:** A legal pitch is delivered with a continuous, underhand motion at a moderate speed with an arc of at least 6 feet from the ground. The pitched ball must not reach a height of more than 12 feet at its highest point above the ground.

- a) The pitcher must pause with at least one foot contacting the rubber prior to pitching the ball. The pitcher's foot must remain in contact with the rubber throughout the delivery.
- b) If a step is taken it may be forward, backward, or to the side provided the foot stays in contact with the rubber and the step is taken simultaneously with the pitch.

**Illegal Pitch:** Will be called if the pitched ball does not meet this requirement. All “illegal” pitches are considered “balls” unless the batter chooses to swing, in which the result of the play will count.

**Walking:** If the pitcher desires to walk a batter intentionally, the pitcher notifies the plate umpire who awards the batter first base.

- a) A pitched ball striking a batter does not entitle them to first base. The pitch shall be a strike or a ball as determined by the Umpire.

**Warm Ups:** Each pitcher is permitted five warm-up pitches at the beginning of the game only. No warm-ups or infield throws will be allowed between innings.

- i) Exception: Substitute pitchers will be allowed three pitches (or one minute), before they begin pitching.

### **BATTING RULES**

- a) A batted ball in the out-of-play area is a dead ball and may not be played.
- b) A batter shall be out if the batter bunts or intentionally chops the ball downward.
- c) If a batter throws their bat, a team warning will be issued. After the warning, any team member throwing the bat will be called out, the ball will become dead, and all runners will return to their original base.
- d) A batter who steps on the plate or clearly and completely in front of the plate while contacting the ball will be called out.

### **BASE RUNNING RULES**

**Advancement:** A base runner can advance or return only by touching the bases in legal order, from first base, to second base, to third base, to home plate. A base runner advances to the next base by touching it

before being put out. The player may hold a base until he or she legally touches the next base or until the batter becomes a base runner and forces the player to leave the base.

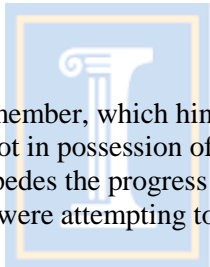
- a) Base runners are entitled to advance but accept the liability to be put out under the following circumstances:
  - When the ball is overthrown into fair or foul territory and remains in play.
  - When the ball is batted into fair territory.
  - When a legally caught fly ball is first touched.
- a) Base runners are entitled to advance without liability to be put out:
  - When a fielder obstructs the base runner from making a base unless the fielder is trying to field the batted ball or has the ball ready to touch the base runner.
  - When the ball is in play and is overthrown and goes out of play, all runners advance two bases from where they were when the ball left the thrower's hand.

**Running Out of the Baseline:** Runners cannot run outside of the baseline, 3ft Base Runner is Out

- a) May only run outside the base line to avoid making contact with a defensive player attempting to field a ball.= Not Out

**Sliding:** Base runners must slide or run around a fielder making a defensive play on the ball when trying to reach a base. The runner is responsible for avoiding contact in these situations. When sliding, runners must always slide for the base and will be ejected for purposely sliding into a fielder, or physically running into a fielder.

- a) Head first sliding is allowed
- b) No Cleats up sliding



**Obstruction:** A defensive player or team member, which hinders or prevents a batter from striking or hitting a pitched ball. OR A fielder, while not in possession of the ball, in the act of fielding a batted ball, or about to receive a thrown ball, which impedes the progress of a base runner who is legally running the bases. Base Runner is Safe at the base they were attempting to go to.

**Interference:** Is the act of an offensive player or team member, which impedes or confuses a defensive player attempting to execute a play. Base Runner is Out

- a) Ex: obvious attempt to prevent a double play (including shouting or waving the arms to distract the defense) the immediate succeeding runner shall also be called out.

**Base Stealing:** Base stealing is not allowed. Each base runner may leave their base when a pitched ball is batted or reaches home plate, but must return to that base immediately after each pitch not hit by the batter. Leaving the base early or stealing will be called an out.

**Baser Runner Struck by Ball:**

- a) Out: When a base runner is struck with a fair-batted ball while off base and before it passes an infielder that could have otherwise made a play.
- b) Not Out: When a base runner is hit with a fair-batted ball that has passed through an infielder, excluding the pitcher, and in the umpire's judgment no other infielder had a chance to play the ball. The ball remains "alive" under this condition.
- c) Not Out: When a base runner is hit by a fair-batted ball after it is touched or touches any fielder.
- d) Not Out : When a base runner is hit by a fair-batted ball while in contact with a base.

**OVERTHROW RULE**



- a) When the ball is overthrown into foul territory, every base runner may advance at their own risk. The ball remains in play and such runners are liable to be put out while advancing. There is no limit on the number of bases a runner may take.
- b) Should the overthrown ball go into out-of-play territory, the ball is dead and the awarding of bases automatic. Balls that rebound from the light poles are in play until they pass beyond the pole line.
- c) In determining the award of bases: Runners are awarded two bases on overthrows. The two bases are from the last base touched at the time the ball left the thrower's hand. The award of bases is determined by the position of the front runner if there are two runners between the same base at the time of award.

### **INJURED RUNNER**

If an accident to a batter-runner or base runner prevents him/her from proceeding in the game, a substitute runner will be permitted. If no substitutes are available, the runner will be declared out.

