



## Intramural Sports 12" Softball Rules

Last Updated: April 2022

### GENERAL RULES:

1. All participants must meet the eligibility requirements listed in the Intramural Sports Participant Handbook. **Each player must be an NIU student or current NIU Recreation Member (faculty/staff).** All expired memberships must be updated before the individual may play in any game.
2. Participants must have their *NIU OneCard* at every game. Any games in which an ineligible player signs in will be considered a forfeit.
3. All intramural participants must personally sign the **Waiver Release** and are responsible for their own medical expenses.
4. **Teams are responsible for keeping their players and spectators under control.** Misconduct of players, coaches, managers or spectators can result in penalty, ejection or forfeiture of the game. Spectators must also remain within the area designated by the IM Sports staff.
5. Alcoholic beverages, smoking, and pets are prohibited from all intramural contests.
6. IM Sports Officials/Supervisors will have absolute authority during the contest and can make decisions on any matter or question not specifically covered in the rules.
7. ASA rules apply except where NIU Intramural Sports has made adaptations.

### The Game

1. All games shall be played on the date and hour scheduled.
2. Players can compete on one men's/women's team, and one co-rec team, regardless of division (A, B).
3. All players must have checked in with the official and be recorded on the game sheet before they are allowed to participate.

### The Field

1. All games will be at the Outdoor Recreational Sports Complex. *NIU OneCard* must be presented to gain access to the facility.
2. Home to pitcher's plate = 46 feet.
3. Baselines = 60 feet.
4. Foul territory and/or out-of-play areas may vary due to field/playing areas.

## The Players

1. The game shall be played between two teams of **ten (10)** players. A team can play with a minimum of **eight (8)** players. The game can continue with less than 8 players if the official determines they have a chance to win. A team's roster shall have a maximum of **fifteen (15)** players.
2. All players on the roster are eligible to be in the batting line up. If a player is ejected for inappropriate conduct, the players place may not be a substitute for forcing the team to play short by one person. An automatic out will be charged whenever that person's place in the batting order would have batted.

## Game Equipment

1. Bats must be of the "official" softball bat variety (I.M. Staff reserve the right to make judgments). Baseball bats and Chicago 16" bats are **not** allowed. All bats must be ASA certified. Teams have the right to protest a bat. After this occurs, the IM staff will check the bat and make sure it is appropriate for play.

## Player Equipment

1. A player is required to wear a shirt with sleeves, shorts/pants, and footwear (athletic attire).
2. All players must wear close-toed sneakers or cleats. Cleats must be rubber or a rubber-type synthetic material, (metal, ceramic, or detachable cleats) **NO FIVE FINGERED SHOES**
2. All players on the team must have a similar color shirt on.
3. All jewelry must be removed before participating, including bracelets.
4. Players may not wear headwear containing any hard, unyielding material, or items containing exposed knots.
5. Players may not wear pads or braces above the waist and may not wear casts anywhere on the body.
6. Players may wear soft, pliable kneepads. Players may wear leg or knee braces only if the brace is covered with at least ½" of closed cell, slow recovery rubber, or a material of similar thickness and physical properties.

## Game Play

1. Games are scheduled for 7 innings. In case of rain a four-inning game will be sufficient enough to be called a full game (three and one-half innings if the home team is winning).
2. A new inning may not begin after 50 minutes have elapsed from the start of the game. If the score is tied, the game will be scored as a tie. (Exception will be during playoffs).
3. Umpires reserve the right to announce when the last inning will be based on the game/time/inning situation.
4. Substitutions are allowed on an inning basis. Once a player has sat one complete inning, they may reenter the game, but must reenter in the same spot of the batting order they left.
5. On overthrows into foul territory, runners may advance at their own risk. On throws out-of-play, the runner gets one base from the last base occupied at the time the ball left the hands of the fielder.

6. The infield rule applies. The rule is as follows: (not including a line drive) a fair fly “infield” ball that can be caught with relative normal ease with runners on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> or 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> and with less than two outs will result in the batter declared out and the runners advancing at their own risk.
7. Mercy Rule: 10 runs after 4 innings.

## Batting

1. Each batter will start with a 1-1 count with **one (1)** courtesy foul.
  - a. The courtesy foul will be used on the last strike, meaning a player can foul on their first pitch and this will not count as a courtesy foul. Courtesy foul occurs when there are 2 strikes.
2. The batter is out if the bat is thrown.
3. Bunting is not allowed. Players must make a full swing attempt at the ball.
4. Bats must be covered with a non-slip tape or other approved covering on the handle (10 inches).
5. Infield Fly Rule is in effect.
6. The batter’s box will not be marked off; however, the batter may not cross the imaginary plane of the base until the ball is contacted. For the safety of the batter and catcher, the batter may be required to move up in the box.
7. Once the batting order is created at the start of the game, it may not be altered thereafter.
8. If the ball is hit and the ball hits the foul line, this is a fair ball.
9. If the ball is hit and rolls over the base, this is a fair ball.

## Base Running

1. Leadoffs are illegal.
2. Stealing bases is illegal.
3. The runner cannot leave the base until the ball has been contacted by the bat.
4. Fielders have the right to make a play in the “baseline.” Runners should not “attempt” to break up a play. If the runner attempts to break up the play than they will be called out.
5. The runner may not cause contact with a fielder in order to try and make the fielder drop the ball.
6. If the runner chooses to slide, they must slide feet first. Any runner who slides/dives headfirst will be automatically out.
7. Runners must avoid contact with fielders and fielders must avoid contact with runners.

## Pitching

1. The pitcher shall take a position with both feet on the ground with one or both feet in contact with the pitcher’s plate.
2. The ball shall be held in one or both hands in front of the body
3. The pitch must be underhand.
4. The pitcher may take one “normal” step to the side or back of the pitcher’s plate before the pitch is released.
5. The pitcher may not make any hesitation before pitching the ball.
6. Faking a pitch, faking a throw or running at a runner are all considered hesitations.
7. The ball must be delivered to the batter at a height of 6 feet and no greater than 12 feet. The arc is measured from the ground.

8. If the pitch arc is lower than 6 feet or higher than 12 feet, the official shall say “illegal” loud enough for the catcher and batter to hear it and extend their left arm with a closed fist to signal the fielders for an illegal pitch. The batter has the option to swing at the pitch. If the batter swings, they will take the result of the play. If the batter does not swing, the pitch will be considered a “ball”.
9. A pitch is considered a strike when it meets the height (arc) requirements, hits any part of the strike mat.
  - a. This is a judgment call for the home plate umpire.
10. A pitch that hits the plate and not the strike mat is considered a ball.

### **Co-Rec Rules**

1. A team consists of 10 players (5 females and 5 males) with a minimum of 8 players (4 females and 4 males).
2. If a team is playing with an odd number of team members, any gender can be outnumbered by one.
3. Defensive positioning shall include 2 males and 2 females in the outfield, 2 males and 2 females in the infield and one male and one female in the pitcher-catcher positions.
4. The batting order shall alternate sexes, two of the same sex can bat after each other only if it's the first and last batter of line up.

### **Sportsmanship**

1. Sportsmanship is an important part of intramural sports. Teams receive sportsmanship ratings at the conclusion of each game on a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 as an excellent rating. Teams must average a 3.0 during the regular season to qualify for the playoffs.
2. Teams are responsible for keeping their spectators under control. Misconduct of spectators and players may result in ejection and/or forfeiture of the game. Spectators must remain in the out-of-play areas. Only players are permitted in the playing area.
3. Any player who uses foul language, violently protests a call, or curses an official or supervisor, will be removed from the game and will automatically be suspended from his/her team's next game. Any player who touches an official or supervisor will be placed on suspension from all Intramural activities for a minimum period of one calendar year from the time of the incident.
4. If at any time a team has 2 players or spectators ejected from the game, the offending team will immediately forfeit the game.
5. Teams shall assist in removing trash and equipment from their game area at the conclusion of their game, if the area is determined to be not picked up by the team, the team will face a deduction of sportsmanship rating.
6. Officials and supervisors are college students employed by Campus Recreation to provide a service to the participants of Intramural Sports. Officials are employed regardless of experience to fulfil a need for a large number of officials to cover all the games being played. Officials undergo clinics and evaluations to help them to constantly improve in their abilities. Supervisors are trained to handle conflicts that occur during games and are there to answer questions that participants may have regarding Intramurals. The supervisors can be identified by the IM polo they will be wearing. IM supervisors are veteran officials or trained tournament personnel who have complete authority to make decisions regarding problems or special situations. Supervisors have been selected for their knowledge of intramural sports regulations and rules, maturity, professionalism and a sincere interest in Intramural Sports.

**4 - Excellent** - Players and spectators were positive throughout the game and completely respectful towards the supervisors, officials, and opposing team. If the captain converses with the officials about rule interpretations and calls he/she does so respectfully and calmly. No verbal warnings. No instances of unsportsmanlike physical contact. The team captain has full control of his/her teammates/fans. Players and spectators show appreciation toward Intramural Staff and opponents at the end of the game.

**3 - Average** - Players and spectators cooperate with the supervisors and officials and show respect for opposing team members most of the game. Emotions were kept under control. No instances of excessive physical contact. Team members respectfully disagree about some decisions made by Intramural Staff or show minor dissension which may not receive an unsportsmanlike penalty (technical foul, yellow card). Shows respect toward opponents throughout game and pregame captain's meetings. All complaints or concerns are filtered through captain to voice to Intramural Staff.

**2 - Below Average** - Team/spectators show minor verbal dissent toward Intramural Staff or opposing team, which may or may not merit an unsportsmanlike penalty. Most complaints or concerns are filtered through captain to voice to Intramural Staff. A few instances of physical contact. A few instances of vulgar language and/or profanity are displayed by members of the team. Captain exhibits control over team and spectators. Teams receiving one unsportsmanlike penalty and/or warning will receive no higher than a "3" rating.

**1 - Poor** - Teams/spectator constantly commenting disrespectful verbiage to Intramural Staff or opposing team. Captain exhibits minor control over team and spectators. Vulgar language and/or profanity are displayed by members of the team. Players/Team/Spectators use racial insults, anger motivated outburst, demeaning, degrading and derogatory statements or homophobic comments before, during or after a game. Teams receiving three unsportsmanlike penalties and/or warning or one player ejection will receive no higher than a "2" rating.

**0 - Extremely Poor** - Team is completely uncooperative toward Intramural Staff. Captain has absolutely no control over team, spectators, and/or his/herself. Team, player or spectator makes intimidating physical contact with a staff and/or opposing team. A team, player or spectator threatens harm or violence toward the staff. Any team causing a game to be forfeited by result of unsportsmanlike behavior or have multiple unsportsmanlike penalties and or having more than one player ejected will receive no higher than a "1".