


**Official
Slow Pitch
League Guidelines
City of Burnsville**

Published and Distributed by
City of Burnsville's Parks, Recreation and Facilities Department

The City of Burnsville uses the USSSA program as a foundation for the league rules that govern each season of play. However, in some cases the league director and the Burnsville Softball Council have voted to modify the national rule based on feedback from our players and managers. The following document is a list of the rules that are either different or are more defined than the National USSSA rules as well as a highlight of some of the more popular rules that managers and players should know.

GENERAL INFORMATION & REQUIREMENTS

- A. The following rules apply to player eligibility:
 - a. All players must be 18 years of age or older AND out of high school before participating in a game.
 - b. Players may participate on more than one team provided that:
 - i. All teams are sanctioned at the same level with USSSA.
 - ii. Teams do not play on the same night of the week.
 - iii. Penalty for illegal participation may be 2 week suspension for both the illegal player and the manager that used an illegal player.
- B. Players may be asked to produce a valid picture ID if eligibility is questioned or an ejection occurs
- C. Rosters must be turned in via a paper copy to the office prior to the start of the season. The roster must include name, and address (a Burnsville work or home address should be used whenever possible) for each player before they step onto the field. Visit www.burnsville.org/softball for more details related to roster requirements and deadlines.
- D. Standings are generally updated online by 12:00 pm the day after a game is completed M-F. A tie at the end of the season will be broken using the following tie breaking system:
 - a. Least number of forfeits during the regular season.
 - b. Comparison of win/loss record in head-to-head games.
 - c. Total run differential in those head-to-head games.
 - d. Least runs allowed for the season in all games.
 - e. If three teams or more are tied, items A-C will be used until one or more are eliminated and then the process will start over with any teams still tied that were not eliminated.
- E. Teams that win/lose their league may be required to move up or down. Teams can petition this requirement in writing at the time of registration the following year.
- F. Teams are classified with USSSA at the level of the league they enroll in unless:
 - a. The state mandates a different classification.
 - b. A manager petitions a different classification and the request is approved by the league director
- G. Team insurance is available (but not required) through the USSSA National Office.
- H. Post season play is coordinated with the USSSA program. If your team is planning to play in the post season, be sure to visit our website for all the details on how to register your team for a tournament.
- I. The USSSA has a specific protest policy. If you want to protest a rule interpretation by an umpire, be sure to follow the process properly or it is null and void (even if you were right).
- J. Alcoholic beverages are not permitted on the field, in the dugout, or within 30 feet of the parking lot.
- K. Glass bottles are strictly prohibited. They are dangerous and must not be brought to the park by players or fans. An umpire or agent of the Burnsville softball program has the right to ask any person (coach, player, fan etc.) to leave the park for the remainder of the day if they are found to have a glass bottle in their possession. This is not viewed as an ejection for players or coaches but any person who chooses to bring a glass bottle to the park will not be welcome to be there that day.
- L. Smoking is prohibited on the field or in dugout.
- M. Parks close at 10:00. If it is after 10:00 when your game ends, it is recommended that you make your way to your vehicle and leave in a reasonable and timely manner. If you choose to hang out in the lot after 10:00 you may be tagged.

- N. For questions about uniform requirements, please visit our website.
- O. The official scorebook is kept by the home team. Once a new half inning has begun the score cannot be changed so be sure to check after each half inning.
- P. Once a final score has been posted online and more than 2 weeks have passed, that score may not be challenged.
- Q. Forfeited games are reported as 7-0.

WEATHER CANCELLATIONS AND GAME MAKE-UPS

Weather/Game Cancellations

All players and fans should know that weather conditions can change dramatically in a short period of time. A team is never “required” to play a game even if the weather line or the umpire has not cancelled the game. If there is a safety concern, players, managers and fans should always choose safety ahead of choosing to stay at the fields. The determination on make-ups, forfeits, etc can be made at a future time.

Weather/Game Cancellations will be made AFTER 4 pm daily. The phone line is the first and most reliable source for receiving up to the minute information on the status of games for the night.

- A. The phone line is 952.895.4507 (press 1 when prompted and 1 again). This phone number is provided on all the schedules and I would encourage you share this with your players so they don’t call you with questions.
- B. Twitter – I will be attempting to use Twitter to update followers on game changes.
- C. www.burnsville.org/softball will also be updated if the league director is by a computer.
- D. Facebook will be used to let managers know that changes have been made to the Burnsville website.
- E. If conditions become unplayable at game-time or after games have started for the night, umpires should delay games for 15 minutes. The manager and umpire should discuss a time and meeting place, and after the 15 minute delay has passed, umpires/managers should make a decision on the status for games for the rest of the night based on field and weather conditions at that time. If games are resumed, teams will have their games shortened if required to complete the remaining games by no later than 10:10 pm (lights are shut off by timer).

If the league director becomes aware of a cancellation of games by the umpire after games have started play for the night, an attempt will be made to update the phone line, website and Twitter accounts accordingly. Therefore, teams that play later games should check the options before leaving for the field if the weather is questionable.

Rescheduled Games

All games are listed online and can be viewed via the online schedule. Managers should check the schedule 2 to 3 business days after the rain-out to view the rescheduled dates and times.

RULE 1: THE PLAYING FIELD

- A. 70 foot baselines are used in the adult softball program
- B. The pitchers distance is 50 feet along with a Pitching Area the width of the Pitcher’s Plate up to six (6) feet behind the back edge of the Pitcher’s Plate.
- C. Batter’s Boxes are not provided. It is the judgment of the umpire as to where the box begins and ends.
- D. A Mixed Arc Line is provided on all adult fields. Players standing in the grass during Mixed league play must be behind the Mixed Arc Line until the ball is struck by the batter.

RULE 2: EQUIPMENT

- A. All bats used in City of Burnsville league play must have the USSSA “Finger Print” stamp on them to be used in league play. Older grandfathered bats and bats from other associations are not allowed (wood bats in the wood bat league are the exception to this rule). To determine if a bat you currently own or one you are considering buying meets the minimum standards, please find it on the legal bat list posted on the USSSA website if it is a new “fingerprint” stamped bat. There is no illegal bat list available for distribution.
- B. If in the judgment of an umpire, after a batted ball, a reasonable infield player fails to have the opportunity to react to the ball off the bat due to the speed of the ball, the following action will occur:
- The bat will be removed from that game and turned over to the umpire until it can be tested or
 - The player keeps his/her bat and accepts an immediate suspension from the league of up to one year.
- C. All City of Burnsville summer softball teams receive the appropriate number of softballs required for league play at the start of the season. The home team (home and visitor in the Open league) must supply one new ball at the umpire/manager meeting before each game or be subject to a 2 run penalty.
- 12 inch men's ball model # 4U-536Y**: The official ball for men is the Dudley Thunder SY. The ball shall have a yellow cover with the USSSA logo stamped on the cover, a .40 cor and a 325 compression.
- 11 inch women's ball model # 4U-522Y**: The official ball for women is the Dudley Thunder SY. The ball shall have a yellow cover with the USSSA logo stamped on the cover, a .44 cor and a 400 compression.
- For fall play, teams can use official new or used balls for their game ball.
- D. Safety bases are used at first base at all City of Burnsville adult fields. The Batter-Runner must touch the orange portion of the base on any initial throw to first base from the infield or the outfield. If legally appealed by the defense during a live ball situation, the runner will be called out.
- E. Shoes must be worn at all times and the all-purpose molded cleat softball shoe is the primary shoe of choice. Metal cleats are prohibited. If any portion of the shoe that makes primary contact with ground has exposed metal, that shoe is illegal and must be removed from play.
- F. The City of Burnsville does not require teams to wear official uniforms with numbers. If a team chooses not to have an official uniform, please have players wear shirts that are similar in color.

RULE 3: THE GAME

- A. The “away” team is listed first on the schedule. The “home” team is listed second on the schedule. Each team has a balance of home and away games throughout the season.
- B. The “manager” for the game is the person who meets with the umpire at the umpire/manager meeting before each game.
- C. Only official rostered coaches and players can be in the dugout or on the field. Scorekeepers, pets, children under the age of 18 and fans are not permitted on the field or in the dugout at anytime.
- D. A regulation game shall consist of seven innings or 55 minutes, unless otherwise listed below:
- The home team is leading after the visiting team has batted in the seventh inning
 - A game is tied after seven innings and the 55 minute time limit has not been reached allowing for extra inning(s) to be played.
 - The 55 minute time limit prevents the start of a new inning as no new inning may start after 55 minutes has elapsed from the start of the game.
 - A game is called by an umpire and four full innings have been played or the home team is leading after the visiting team has batted for four full innings.

- e. The umpire is empowered to call the game at anytime because of rain, darkness, sportsmanship, or any other cause which puts the umpire, players or patrons at risk.
 - f. 55 Minute Run Rule: If team has a run lead of 15 runs after 5 innings or more of play is complete (4.5 if the home team has the lead), the mandatory “55 Minute Run Rule” goes into effect. That rule allows play to continue but at exactly 55 minutes the game is over regardless of game situation at that time.
- E. The flip/flop rule is NOT used in league play.
- F. The following home runs shall be used with a one up rule in place once the limit is reached:
- | | |
|---|--|
| a. Mens Open | 4 (state rule 2) |
| b. Highest Thursday League Summer/Fall | 3 (state rule 0) |
| c. Men’s D Competitive, Rec and Fall D/Bronze | 2 (state rule 0) |
| d. Over 35 Recreational | 2 |
| e. Women’s | unlimited |
| f. Mixed Leagues with an ** Sun & Fri | 1 (state rule 0 and player is ejected) |
| g. All other Mixed Leagues | 0 |
- G. 1-Up Homerun Rule: For leagues that are allowed homeruns, once a team reaches the homerun limit, any ball hit over the fence after that is an out UNLESS their opponent is even with them or only 1 up in homeruns hit for that game. Basically once you are at the limit, you can’t have more than 1 homerun than your opponent that counts. **New in 2016: The home team cannot go 1-up in the 7th inning or any extra innings. The home team can go 1-up in innings 1 through 6.**
- H. Any ball hit over the fence after the home run limit has been reached and when the 1-up rule is not applicable, shall be declared an out.
- I. A protested game can result when there is a difference of opinion on the field between the protesting team and the umpire regarding the application or interpretation of an official rule. A team must follow the protest procedure correctly for the protest to be considered by the league director.
- J. A 5 minute grace period is given to teams for the first game of the day on each field. If the grace period is used to delay the start of the game, that time will come off of the official game time allotment.
- K. Forfeits are never a positive situation for adult softball. It is even worse when a team fails to show up for a game and fails to notify the other team/league administrator within a reasonable amount of time. Any team that no shows without proper notification will be fined \$25 per game. This fee must be paid to the Burnsville Softball Council before they can play the next game.
- L. The City of Burnsville will use a “no dig rule” in the batter’s box. If a player digs into batter’s box area, the penalty for this infraction is one strike. If it happens multiple times in a game by a single player, that player may be removed from the game.

RULE 4: PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTES

- A. A team must have a minimum 8 players at the field by the scheduled game time (with a 5 minute grace period for the first game of the day on that field) in order for the game to be official and the umpire to work the game.
- B. Players can be added to the line-up as they arrive to the field at the bottom of the batting order.
- C. All players listed on the batting order are eligible to play any position in the field at the frequency determined by the team.
- D. If a team is not batting everyone and is using subs during the game, the team should follow the USSSA guidelines for notifying the umpire of the entry and re-entry (once) into a game.
- E. A team shall have a maximum of two designated coaches. These coaches must be at least 18 years of age and are eligible to coach first/third base, talk to the umpire (if at the pre-game meeting)/players or remain in the dugout during the game.

- F. A player is prohibited from playing if they are bleeding and must come out of the game until the bleeding has stopped and the wound is covered.
- G. "Dugout Rule": RULE: OFFENSE & DEFENSE
- a. While on Offense, there shall be no more than two (2) players in the field of play at one time. These players shall be the on deck batter and the in-the-hole batter. The base coaches do not count as a "player". While on Defense, you may not have any player inside the field of play other than the maximum of 10 players scheduled to play official defensive positions. It is the managers or coaches responsibility to ensure every player, coach, or manager stay out of the field play during the game unless by rule it is intended that they be in the field of play. You will receive an explanation of this rule during the Pre-Game Managers Meeting and then YOU WILL GET ONE (1) ADDITIONAL WARNING.
 - b. If after the first warning during the game, a team violates the "Dugout Rule," the official manager or coach of that game from the managers meeting will be ejected from the game. If the "Dugout Rule" continues to be a problem for the warned/penalized team, any player(s), coach(s), or manager(s) (with the exception of the "on-deck" and "in-the-hole" batters) will be ejected for the remainder of the game.

RULE 5: PITCHING RULE

The Over-35 league has a different league rule for pitching. In Over 35 games, the pitcher must be on the rubber or directly behind the rubber up to 6 feet, present the ball for a minimum of 1 second and deliver the ball with one fluid motion.

For all other leagues, please refer to the USSSA Official Slow Pitch Playing Rules and by-laws for details related to USSSA pitching.

RULE 6: BATTING

- A. Managers have two options for reporting a batting line-up:
 - a. The batting order can be a specified number of 8, 9, 10, 11 or 12. If a player has to leave the game his/her position in the line-up is an out (must report to umpire) unless a sub is available to fill the vacated spot.
 - b. The batting order can be reported as "everyone". In that case every official player must bat. If a player has to leave the line-up, the line-up will collapse and no out occurs.
- B. All men's teams for both summer and fall will use a 3 ball/2 strike count with NO courtesy foul. As of 2014 USSSA no longer allows a courtesy foul in qualifiers and post season play.
- C. All summer women's competitive will use a 3 ball/2 strike with NO courtesy foul. USSSA allows a courtesy foul in qualifiers and post season play.
- D. All mixed leagues with an ** by league name will use 3 ball/2 strike count with NO courtesy foul. USSSA allows a courtesy foul in qualifiers and post season play.
- E. All summer women's recreational and all other mixed leagues not listed in Rule 6D will use a 3 ball/2 strike count WITH a courtesy foul. For fall, the women's D league(s) will have a courtesy foul.

RULE 7: BASE RUNNING

- A. Men's, Women's and Mixed league teams may designate up to two individuals per game who can have a courtesy runner run for them anytime they reach base.
- B. The Over 35 leagues are entitled to unlimited courtesy runners throughout the game.
- C. The courtesy runner shall be the player that made the last out on record.

- D. After a player hits a homerun over the fence, they can choose to run the bases or simply return to the dugout (hit-n-sit).
- E. Any player(s) on base when a homerun is hit may choose to run the bases or simply return to the dugout.

RULE 8: UMPIRES

Umpires are contracted employees through the Diamond Officials Association. As such, they are authorized and required to enforce the rules that govern league play. Umpires have the power and should use it with discretion to order managers, coaches, players and fans to do or not do any act within their judgment to manage the game and to enforce the rules of play. Umpires are required to obtain team and player names involved in any incident that leads to an ejection. Any persons refusing to cooperate with an umpire will receive additional disciplinary actions. An umpire can also eject players one-by-one until the team cooperates or there are not enough players remaining to complete a game.

At times it is possible that an umpire is late to a game or fails to show at all. If that happens to your team and more than 5 minutes have elapsed from the scheduled game time, the teams should jointly agree to one of two choices:

- A. Choose to not play the game and have the game rescheduled by the league director.
- B. Choose to find a person who can stand in as the umpire until the umpire arrives. This person will be paid if they work a complete game at the general umpire rate. If you choose to play the game with the stand in umpire:
 - a. The game is official regardless of how the stand in umpire performs
 - b. The winning team should report the score of the game to another umpire at the complex or to the league director via phone or email before 10:00 a.m. the next day.

Note: If teams cannot reach an agreement, the game will be rescheduled.

RULE 9: MIXED TEAM RULES

The line-up for mixed play is designed to consist of 5 men and 5 women or 6 men and 6 women alternating man, woman every other spot in the batting line-up. However, for recreational purposes, the City of Burnsville softball program also allows the following situations:

- A. A team may have more women than men in the batting line-up
- B. A team may only have more men than women in the line-up if they are willing to take an out when the woman's spot would be due up. Example: 5 men and 4 women – the 10th spot for the 5th woman would be an out that must be reported to the umpire.
- C. All leagues can use a floating men's line-up within a women's line-up (Snake Line-up). Example: If a team has 7 men and 5 women show up for a game, the team will bat a reported "everyone" using "10" batting positions. The 7 men will then rotate equally thru the 5 men's batting positions. All 12 players are eligible to play the 10 defensive positions but it must still be 5 men and 5 women in the field.
- D. Arc line's and base-line rules are in play. Defensive players must stay behind these lines until the ball is struck. PENALTY: Failure to abide by this rule will result in fielder's interference. A delayed dead ball will be called by the umpire. If the batter reaches base safely, the play will stand. If an out was made the batter will be placed on first base safely.

- E. Teams may choose to play any defensive position they prefer. However, they must keep that same defensive positioning for the entire inning. For example if 3 outfielders and a middle infielder is used to start an inning, that defensive format cannot change until the inning is over.
- F. There are no defensive position requirements other than teams must have the same number of men and women in the field. The exceptions are
 - i. More women than men
 - ii. A team that is playing with more men (5) than women (4) and taking an out.
- G. Women will hit the 11 inch ball. Men will hit the 12 inch ball.
- H. When a male batter is walked, he is awarded second base. The female batter due up next can choose to bat or go directly to first base.

RULE 10: OVER 35 TEAM RULES

The over 35 league(s) follow the same rules as the other men's leagues with the following exceptions:

1. Teams may have unlimited courtesy runners.
2. Pitchers must present the ball, pause for one second and deliver the ball in one motion.
3. All teams will receive a 16 game regular season schedule followed by a 3 game guaranteed playoff bracket.
4. Winners of the regular season receive \$50. Winners of the playoff bracket receive \$50
5. The winner of the lower league regular season and/or playoff bracket may be required to move to the upper league the following year based on the league director's guidelines for league parity.

RULE 11: SPORTSMANSHIP

Burnsville Sportsmanship Policy

The City of Burnsville offers a variety of competitive and recreational leagues. However, in all leagues, it is required that managers, coaches, players and fans treat their opponents, umpires and other fans appropriately. If individuals fail to display good sportsmanship before, during or after a game while on or near city property, their actions can be viewed as a violation of our sportsmanship requirements.

An umpire, the league director, or another agent of the Burnsville softball program has the authority to utilize any of the tools in any combination to maintain control and the integrity of the game:

- A. A warning
- B. An offensive out for Casual profanity (umpire judgment) for the next batter of the offending team
- C. Requesting that a manager voluntarily remove a player for an inning or more (prior to ejection)
- D. An ejection : no warning required (player must supply proper name or the player, manager and team may face additional penalties)
- E. Termination of the game

The base time period for an ejection is 2 weeks from the date of ejection and the player/coach is on probation for 1 year. This includes all games/teams the player/coach is involved during that time. If a player is ejected or a game is terminated as a result of continued unsportsmanlike conduct, the league director may increase the length of the ejection and may choose to forward a report on to the MN USSSA office for review. The league director reserves the right to increase or decrease the length of a suspension after reviewing the details of the incident.

If a player/coach is ejected, the individual has 24 hours to contact the league director via email or phone to appeal his/her ejection. Failure to contact the league director is a sign of acceptance of the penalty chosen by the league director. Ignorance of this rule does not grant one additional time to appeal his/her ejection.

SORR Sportsmanship Policy

The League Directors from the SORR communities of Apple Valley, Burnsville, Eagan, Farmington, Lakeville, Prior Lake, Rosemount and Savage are interested in ensuring that a high level of sportsmanship be maintained in the sports programs directed by each city. Therefore, the following policy for dealing with cases of unsportsmanlike conduct will be instituted:

- A. Any player, coach, manager or spectator ejected from a game for an unsportsmanlike act:
 - 1. Game(s) suspension will result for profanity, tantrum behavior, verbal abuse, etc., for that game plus at least the next two games.
 - a. A suspended person may not be present at any site where league games are in progress.
 - b. Violation will result in an extended period of suspension.
 - 2. The suspended player's name will be placed on one-year probation in the SORR communities.
- B. Any player, coach, manager or spectator ejected a second time for unsportsmanlike conduct shall be prohibited from participating in the SORR communities for at least one calendar year.
- C. An individual retains the right of a hearing when the action to be taken is **expulsion** from participation in the league.
 - 1. The player will provide a written explanation of the situation that resulted in his/her ejection from the game.
 - 2. Present at the hearing may be: the player, his/her manager, the SORR League Directors and the Umpire Assigner for the community.
 - 3. An appeal letter must be received within 7 days of being notified of the expulsion to your League Director. Failure to do so will result in a forfeiture of one's right to appeal.
 - 4. A suspended player (or representative) must be present at the next scheduled SORR meeting to review his/her case. Failure to attend this meeting will result in a forfeiture of one's right to appeal the expulsion.
 - 5. A majority vote of active/present League Directors is necessary to overturn a suspension/expulsion.
 - 6. A minimum of 5 SORR League Directors must be present at a review meeting.

Casual Profanity

Casual Profanity pertains to expletives and verbal unsportsmanlike language that most likely involves a player uttering them out of frustration. This type of behavior is penalized by "outs" being declared against the offending team.

- A. If the team is at bat and unsportsmanlike words are used, the next batter will be declared out.
- B. If the act is committed by a player remaining at bat he/she will be called out.
- C. If the defensive team commits the act, the first person to bat in the next inning will be declared out.
- D. The outs will be treated as a delayed dead ball situation.
- E. If the violation occurs in the bottom of the last inning where the fielding team may not bat again, apply the ejection rule.
- F. A game may be ended by a casual profanity out!

The Casual Profanity-Verbal Unsportsmanlike Rule provides a lesser penalty for the gray area between accepted conduct and those situations where the offender must be ejected.

Have a fun, safe season!