



## **MSCR SOFTBALL - 2024 ALL GENDER LOCAL RULES AND PROCEDURES**

*In an effort to be more inclusive of our diverse community, In 2022, MSCR replaced “coed” leagues with “all gender leagues”. All Gender leagues are inclusive of people who identify as male, female, non-binary or any other identity on the spectrum. MSCR encourages individuals to register for the leagues that best represent their identity. The all gender leagues are intended for teams who are interested in playing against other teams with a mix of genders. In 2024 MSCR added back some rules associated with gender. By moving to a minimum/maximum around gender, it is our hope that people who identify outside of the binary will find a place where they fit.*

MSCR softball is intended to be an inclusive and participatory experience with an emphasis on fun and recreation. We understand that competition is part of sport, but we believe that the focus of our leagues is on the benefits of recreation: building community, providing social and physical opportunities while having fun.

**The following points of emphasis have being highlighted and incorporated into the local rules and procedures:**

**Gender Minimums/Maximums:** Female identifying = 4, Male identifying = 6\*

The unintended consequences of removing all gender rules last year resulted in a loss of women to the game. In an effort to correct that, we now require a minimum number of 4 female identifying players for a legal game. There must be a minimum of 4 women in the field and the batting order. In no circumstance can a male identifying player take the place of a woman identifying player (ie, if there are 11 players 6 men/5 women all 5 women must play in the field and bat). The male identifying maximum of 6 is for a team of 10 players. Male players can be added with the addition of more female players; however there can never be more than +2 men (so with 12 players you could have 7 males & 5 females, or 6/6 but you could not have 8 males and 4 females).

**Batting Order:**

No more than 2 men may bat back to back (this includes the bottom/top of the order).

**Courtesy Runners:**

Courtesy runners are allowed; however the courtesy runner is the last out of the requesting runner's gender (ie, men only run for other men).

**Intentional Walks:**

When walked, all batters regardless of gender will go to 1st base.

**Subs:**

MSCR has removed the fee attached to subs. Additionally a sub can be any rostered player (subs from the same league are allowed). Subs are only allowed to bring a team to 10 players. Any sub that is not a rostered player must sign the substitute agreement card (should be turned in with the scorecard at the end of the night). Point of emphasis - a player can only be rostered to one team per night, but can sub in more than one game per night.

**Continuing from 2022:**

- Time Limit: Games are 55 minutes in length
- Home Runs - Limited to 1 over the fence home run per team per inning. Excess of the 1 will result in an out and runners may not advance.
- Scheduling - All games will be scheduled centrally (Bowman or Goodman) to allow for more parity and mid-season adjustments.

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The current edition of the USA Official Playing Rules, along with the "MSCR Local - Softball Rules and Procedures," will be the official rules governing this program. All Gender rule modifications will supersede all others, where applicable. Also, refer to the Points of Emphasis document for additional program rules.

Teams will play a 10-game schedule with all rain-outs rescheduled. For all leagues, standings will be kept and the members of the league champion team will receive individual League Champion awards to recognize the accomplishment. MSCR slow pitch pitching rules, as outlined under #2, A-E will be used. The same rules apply to Monday, Wednesday and Friday nights of play. Two competing teams or managers may not agree to alter any rules.

1. **Umpires:** Only one umpire is assigned to each game.
2. **Pitching & Base Length: Distance - 50 foot pitch and 65 foot bases**
  - A. Three balls will constitute a base-on-balls. A strike-out will consist of two strikes:
    1. Two called.
    2. One called - one swing and miss
    3. One called - one fouled
    4. Two fouled
    5. One swing/miss - one fouled
    6. Two swinging misses
  - C. Home plate and the mat will be used in determining balls and strikes. If any part of the pitched ball lands on any part of the plate, including the black perimeter, and/or mat, it shall be a strike.
  - D. **MSCR local rule - SP Pitching Rule** - Arc limits will be a minimum of 6 feet and a maximum of **12 feet** from the ground.
  - E. A 12" **optic yellow** softball, issued by and marked "MSCR", will be used for all batters.
3. **The Game:** Games will be seven innings or 55 minute time limit whichever comes first. No new inning shall be started after the time limit expires unless the game is tied. **Run limits** will be as follows: **Before the time limit Expires**, a game will be over after 5 innings (4 ½ if home team leads), if either team leads by 15 runs. Note: If the visiting team leads by 15 runs after 5 ½ innings, the home team will be allowed to bat. **After the time limit expires**, the game is over immediately if either team is leading by 15 runs, the ½ inning is not completed.
  - A. TIE BREAKER - Any time the score is tied **and the time limit has expired**, the next inning will begin using the tie breaker procedure.
  - B. TIE BREAKER PROCEDURE
    1. The visiting team will place a runner (the last **batter** from the previous inning) on second base.
    2. The visiting team has 3 outs with which to score as many runs as possible.
    3. After 3 outs, the home team will follow the same procedure as outlined in steps 1 & 2.
    4. Whichever team scores the most runs is declared the winner. If the score remains tied at the completion of each additional inning, the procedure will be repeated from step 1.
4. **Batting Order:**
  - A. No more than 2 men can bat consecutively, including from the bottom of the batting order to the top.
  - B. A team may begin, and play a game with only eight (8) players but there must be at least 4 female players.
  - C. Teams may elect to bat more than 10 players provided that they are present at the start of the game.
  - D. A minimum of 4 women must bat. Women can not sit out to allow additional men to play. If there are 5 women present all 5 women must bat and play defense in the field.
  - E. Teams may elect to bat more than (10) players provided that they are present at the start of the game but under no circumstances to start the game, can more than two consecutive men be listed in the batting order. (Exception is during the game and a player leaves for injury).
5. **Fielding:**
  - A. There will be ten (10) players in the field 4 of which must be women. If 5 women are present all 5 must play in the field.
  - B. Players listed in the batting order have free substitution in the field. All players listed on the batting order should play defense during the game. Refer to Local Rule III-C 1, 2, 3.
  - C. There is no requirement as to where players must be positioned in regards to gender while in the field. ASA rule 4-1-C-3e does not apply.

## MSCR SOFTBALL – ALL GENDER LOCAL RULES AND PROCEDURES . . . (Continued)

6. **Substitution:** See “MSCR Local - Softball Rules and Procedures”.
7. **At home plate, at all times (whether a play is being made or not) the base-runner must touch the BLACK mat while the catcher has the WHITE home plate. Catching the ball and stepping on the plate before the base runner arrives at the mat is all that is required to record an out. Sliding is allowed at home plate (this is a method of avoiding a collision). When sliding, base runners should attempt to slide toward the black mat, again in an effort to reduce contact around home plate. The runner may be put out at home by the catcher (or defensive player) tagging home plate (a force out) or runners may be tagged out.**  
*\*\*To create a “force situation” in all instances, a chalk line will be placed approximately 20 feet from home plate, across the baseline. Once a base runner has touched or crossed the line, the runner must continue toward home plate and cannot finish the play at third base. Note: If the runner who touched or crossed the “commit line” is on 3rd base when all play is completed, they may be called out on an appeal play, by the defensive team to the umpire.*
8. **Metal spikes** may not be worn. (*Penalty: removal to continue participation in game and legal shoes must be worn.*)
9. **Rain-out games:** All games that are rained out will be rescheduled at the end of the regular season and managers will be notified. It is possible that teams will be asked to play “doubleheaders” to complete the season in a timely fashion.

### **Rules that apply to all MSCR Slow Pitch Softball but noteworthy for All Gender Softball**

- A. 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. A base runner should not be called out for stepping off their base on a swing and miss or a pitch not swing at as long as they don't leave the base too soon.
- B. Exposed jewelry which is judged by the umpire to be dangerous must be removed and may not be worn during the game. Activity trackers are not considered jewelry for softball purposes only. (*Penalty: Player must remove or tape to continue participation; inability or refusal to do so will result in disqualification from game.*)
- C. Players are reminded to swing bats **only inside the protective fences**. Each team will be allowed one warning. Violation, after warning, will result in disqualification from the game.
- D. **A courtesy runner may be used** to replace an injured player who has reached the base safely and is unable to run the bases. The injured player may remain in the game defensively and have a courtesy runner each time they reach base.
  - a) **Prior to each game, in the presence of the umpire, teams must indicate on the scorecard, all players with a prior injury that require a courtesy runner for that game. The courtesy runner must be used each time they reach the base safely.**
  - b) **A player who is injured during the game may also have a courtesy runner for the remainder of the game. If the injured player chooses to leave the game, their position in the batting order is left vacant and no penalty is assessed.**  
The courtesy runner **must** be in the batting order and will be the player who made the last out. **In all gender, the courtesy runner shall be of the same gender.** If the injured player chooses to leave the game, their position in the batting order is left vacant and no penalty is assessed. *If a courtesy runner situation arises in the first inning and no outs have been recorded, the courtesy runner will be the last batter listed in the batting order of a similar gender.*
- E. Weather/Rain Number: A weather message is recorded daily at 4:15 pm at [www.mscr.org](http://www.mscr.org).
  - a) All managers, players and umpires are encouraged to use the **MSCR weather websites for the daily weather message: Go to [www.msccsportsleagues.org](http://www.msccsportsleagues.org)** and scroll down for the weather decision.  
**On nights when the weather decision is “Umpire’s Decision” MSCR will update the weather website until 8:00 pm from Monday - Thursday. (On Fridays the weather website will only be updated until 4:00 pm.)**