



UNC

INTRAMURAL SPORTS

**CAMPUS RECREATION
INTRAMURAL SPORTS
2024-2025 SOFTBALL (TOURNAMENT) RULES**

THE GAME WILL BE PLAYED ACCORDING TO THE NFHS SOFTBALL RULES WITH THE FOLLOWING EXCEPTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS:

MEN AND WOMEN

STARTING THE GAME

1. **START TIME:** Teams are to be at the field and signed in before the official game time. If any team is not at the field and ready to play at the scheduled game time, the game will be declared a forfeit. It is recommended that teams arrive at the game site fifteen (15) minutes prior to the scheduled start time.
2. **IDENTIFICATION:** All participants must bring their current valid UNC identification card to the field area in order to be checked in and ruled eligible to participate prior to the beginning of each game. Late arriving players must sign in with a scorekeeper before entering the game.
3. **SCORING:** An Intramural Supervisor will keep the official score for each game.
4. **TEAMS:** A team may have up to thirteen (13) players on their line up; 10 players in the field and batter will be considered a complete team. A game may be started with no less than eight (8) players per team. A team will forfeit if they do not have eight (8) players at any point in the game. *Clarification: a team will not receive an out for an unfilled ninth or tenth spot in the lineup.*
5. **EXTRA HITTERS:** Teams are permitted (but not required) to have extra hitters in the lineup. An extra hitter is considered a spot in the lineup, but the player(s) does not play in the field. An extra hitter may switch positions with a field player. The only stipulation is that the batting order may not change. A substitute may enter the game into an extra hitter's position. That player is now considered an extra hitter. The extra hitter may bat anywhere in the line-up. A team may use up to four (4) extra hitters, but the total number of places in a lineup may not change once the game begins unless due to injury or ejection.
6. **GAME TIME:** No new inning may be started after the Intramural Supervisor has made the announcement that the **fifty (50) minute time limit** has expired. The game will official end after 55 minutes of play. If tied, score will revert back to the last time the score was not tied at the completion of an inning.
7. **GAME EQUIPMENT:** Team's must use the ball provided by UNC Intramural Sports. **All bats will be provided by UNC and personal bats MAY NOT be used during play.** Only UNC IM bats are legal for play in Intramural Softball. All catchers are required to wear the mask provided by Intramural Sports.
8. **GROUND RULES:** Special ground rules may be implemented by the Intramural Supervisor if special conditions exist that would warrant an alteration of ground rules already in place.

PLAYING THE GAME

9. **INNINGS:** **Seven (7) innings** will constitute a game. Four (4) completed innings are necessary for an official game that is ended early due to inclement weather.

10. TIE GAMES: All games must have a winner. If the score is tied, an extra inning will be played with the last player being out starting on second base. Each team will have a normal chance to bat in that inning.
11. SUBSTITUTES: All starters and substitutes will be permitted unlimited re-entries, provided they return to the same spot in the batting order.
12. BATTING: **Batters must use one of UNC's provided bats. Teams are NOT allowed to bring their own bats.** Bunting and chop-swings are prohibited. Batters may not leave the batter's box to swing at a ball. The result will be a dead ball out, and all runners will have to return to their previous base.
13. BATTER'S COUNT: Batters will begin each at-bat with a one (1) ball, one (1) strike count. All legal pitches that the umpire calls a strike, missed swings, and foul balls will be counted as a strike. All pitches that are illegal or are not called a strike will be counted as a ball. **Each batter may receive one courtesy foul ball when there is a 2-strike count, but a second foul ball after the second strike will be considered a strike-out.**
14. BASE RUNNING: Stealing and leading off are prohibited. Sliding is permitted, but not required. A base runner is NEVER required to slide. However, a player who initiates malicious contact will be called out and ejected from the game. Designated hitters are not permitted. Batter/runners may not advance to first base on a dropped third strike.
15. PITCHING: The pitcher must have at least one (1) foot on the pitching rubber from the time the pitching motion begins until the ball is released. The motion of the arm must be in one steady, continuous flow past the hip. It is illegal to double-clutch, or to act like you are going to throw, stop, then throw on the second part of the same motion. No revolving arm motions may be used, for example, bringing the arm "full circle" from in front of the body, over the head, then past the hip and releasing the pitch.
16. PITCH ARC: Pitches must have a perceptible arc of between six (6) and twelve (12) feet. If not, the umpire will call "illegal pitch" while the ball is in flight. If the batter takes the pitch, it will be called a ball, regardless of where the pitch lands. However, the batter may swing at the pitch. If so, the result of the swing (miss, foul ball, or ball in play) will override the "illegal pitch" call and a ball in play will be considered a live ball.
17. STRIKE ZONE: The slow-pitch softball mat is provided to have more consistency with the strike zone. If the pitched ball strikes any part of the mat (without bouncing), the pitch is to be called a strike. If the ball hits home plate, without it hitting the strike zone mat, and without a swing attempt by the batter, it will be called a ball. There are NO walks due to being hit by a pitch in slow-pitch softball.
18. BALLS OUT OF PLAY: The umpire will call time-out anytime a ball crosses the out of play line. If a batted ball travels out of play in the air, it will be considered a foul ball. If a live ball is thrown out of play, runners shall advance one (1) base from the point when the ball was thrown. If a defensive player carries a live ball out of play, runners shall advance one base from the time the defensive player crosses the out of play line.
19. APPEAL PLAYS: An appeal for leaving a base early or missing a base may be made by the defense after the ball is declared dead by the umpire and before the next legal pitch. The appeal must be announced to the umpire, and then a defensive player in possession of the ball must touch the base in question. The umpire's decision on an appeal is not subject to protest.
20. RUN LIMIT RULE: No team may score more than **eight (8) runs** in an inning. Once the tenth run crosses the plate, that team's inning will end, regardless of the number of outs recorded.
21. **MERCY RULE: Games shall end if one team is ahead by twenty-one (21) runs after the fourth inning or eleven (11) runs after the fifth inning, providing the team behind has had its turn to bat that inning.**

SPORTSMANSHIP

22. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT: Any unsportsmanlike conduct including, but not limited to, arguments with officials by any player, coach, manager, or spectator, flagrant fouling, fighting, etc. will result in expulsion of that individual and/or team from further participation in that scheduled game. Officials/supervisors have the authority to impose penalties for teams behaving in an unsportsmanlike manner.
23. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT FOUL LIMIT: If two (2) players from the same team are ejected from a game, that game will be ended and that team will receive a loss and a zero (0) sportsmanship rating, regardless of the score and the time remaining.
24. BENCH CONDUCT: All substitutes, coaches, and spectators must adhere to Intramural Sports and UNC Field rules, and are subject to the authority of the Intramural Sports Supervisor and all sportsmanship-related rules and policies.
25. DRUG, ALCOHOL & TOBACCO POLICY: Teams and fans are not permitted to bring alcohol and/or drugs, or come under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs. Teams and fans are also not permitted to use any tobacco products on UNC Fields. Violators may be removed from the facilities with possible forfeiture of the game, at the discretion of the Supervisor.
26. INTRAMURAL POLICIES: Team captains are responsible for making sure that all members of their team are aware of all Intramural Sports policies and rules. Captains are responsible for their teams' sportsmanship, and may be held accountable for the actions of individuals on their team.
27. RATING: Sportsmanship Ratings are on a ranking from 0-3. The intramural supervisor will distribute sportsmanship for each team at the end of every game and will be noted on the score sheet. General description of each rating and the behavior that is expected of all participants, spectators, and bench personnel (including the coach):
 - 3 – **Above Average**: High level of respect consistently shown to opponents, staff, officials. Conducts themselves in a calm respectful manner. The team does not show verbal dissent or aggression towards the opposing team or officials.
 - 2 – **Average**: No incidents of poor conduct or one minor unsporting incident (ie: talking back to an official more than once during the game). Any team receiving one sportsmanship-related yellow card will receive a (2).
 - 1 – **Below Average**: frequent swearing, disrespect towards opponents, supervisors and officials. Consistent arguing with the officials' calls or a player is ejected.. Any team receiving two sportsmanship-related yellow cards or one red card will receive a (1).
 - 0 – Unacceptable sportsmanship and conduct: The team is completely uncooperative, resulting in several yellow and/or red cards to be issued. Any team receiving three sportsmanship-related cards and/or causing the game to be ended early will receive a (0).

CO-RECREATION

All of the above rules apply with the following exceptions:

28. TEAMS: A team may start a game with as few as eight (8) players. If only playing with eight (8) players the ratio male/female must be 4:4 with no outs when the ninth & tenth spot comes up in the batting order. If only nine (9) players are available, the male/female ratio may be 5:4 or 4:5 and the last spot will be counted as an out whenever it appears in the batting order because males or females cannot bat back to back.

29. **BATTING ORDER:** Team members must bat in alternating order (i.e., woman, man, woman, or man, woman, man, etc.). If a team is playing with nine players (see rule #28), ten (10) spots must be made in the lineup. If a tenth player arrives late, he/she may take the vacant spot without penalty.
30. **EXTRA HITTERS:** Teams are permitted (but not required) to have extra hitters in the lineup. An extra hitter is considered a spot in the lineup, but the player does not play in the field. An extra hitter may switch positions with a field player. The only stipulation is that the batting order may not change. A substitute may enter the game into an extra hitter's position. That player is now considered an extra hitter. The extra hitter(s) may bat anywhere in the lineup. A team may use two (2) or four (4) extra hitters, so that the batting order rule (#28) is followed. The total number of places in a lineup may not change once the game begins unless due to injury or ejection.
31. **WALKING A MALE: If a male batter is walked, the female that follows may choose to walk or bat.**
NOTE: walked male batters will not be awarded 2nd base unless the following female walks.
32. **FIELD PLAYERS:** Players may play any position on the field.
33. **SUBSTITUTIONS:** Males must substitute for males, and females must substitute for females.