

Alpharetta Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services
Adult Softball Rules

1. League Organization:

- 1.1. The governing body of this league will be Alpharetta Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services (ARPCS).
- 1.2. ARPCS reserves the right to edit, remove, change, or add rules at any time.
- 1.3. The league will abide by USSSA rules unless superseded by ARPCS rules.
- 1.4. A season will consist of 10 regular season games played in 7 weeks, weather and time permitting. The top 6 teams in each league will enter a post-season, single elimination tournament, weather and time permitting.
- 1.5. Games will be scheduled to begin as early as early as 6:30 PM and as late as 9:30 PM.
 - 1.5.1. Actual game start-times may be delayed due to weather, grace periods for teams to field a team in order to avoid forfeit, extra innings due to tied games, and other extenuating circumstances.

2. Player Eligibility:

- 2.1. Players must be at least 18 years of age to participate.
- 2.2. **Rosters:** All players must be registered online for their specific team in order to be eligible to participate on said team. Online player registration serves as each team's roster.
 - 2.2.1. After the midway point of the season has been reached as deemed by the league coordinator, teams may not add any new players to their roster.
 - 2.2.2. A player may not be on the roster of two team in the same league.
 - 2.2.3. A player may not be on the roster of a C League team and an E League team in the same season.
 - 2.2.4. Teams may have up to 20 players on their roster.
 - 2.2.5. Players may not be released from one team's roster in order to join another team's roster after either team's roster is set at the aforementioned midway point.
- 2.3. A team found using an ineligible player in a game will forfeit said game. A game may be called a forfeit after its completion if it is later determined that a team was using an ineligible player.
- 2.4. **Substitute Players:** A team may use substitute players if the following criteria are met:
 - 2.4.1. The player must be registered to play on another team in the ARPCS adult softball league for the current season.
 - 2.4.2. Prior to the start of the game, the coach of the team requesting to use a substitute player(s) must request permission from the opposing team's head coach in the presence of the home plate umpire.
 - 2.4.2.1. The opposing team may deny the request of the use of substitute players without reason even if it results in the requesting team forfeiting.
 - 2.4.2.2. A team found using substitute players without permission from the opposing team may forfeit that game.

3. Games:

- 3.1. **Players/Lineups:** A copy of each team's lineup must be submitted to ARPCS staff and the home plate umpire prior to the start of a game
- 3.2. A team must be able to field 8 players to complete a game.
 - 3.2.1. A team may start a game with 7 players; however, the team must have at least 8 players before 30 minutes have expired on the game clock or the game will be ruled a forfeit.
 - 3.2.2. If a team has at least 7 players present, they must begin play.
- 3.3. For the first game of the night on a given field, there will be a 10-minute start-time grace period for teams to field 7 players.
 - 3.3.1. The 10-minute grace period will not be subtracted from the game clock.
- 3.4. Once a game has started, a team may add any additional eligible players to the bottom of their lineup as those players arrive.
- 3.5. If a team has more than 10 players on their lineup, all players must bat, and all players may be freely substituted in the field at the start of each inning.
- 3.6. If a player must leave or come out of a game for any reason (ejection, injury, time conflict, etc.), an out will be called the next time that player comes up in the batting order. Any subsequent at bats by that player will be skipped free of an out being called.
- 3.7. **Game Clock:** All regular season games will have a 60-minute game clock. There is no game clock in post-season championship games.
 - 3.7.1. A 5-minute countdown clock will be set prior to each game. When the countdown clock expires, the 60-minute game clock will be set and started.
 - 3.7.1.1. If a game ends early, the countdown clock will be set to coincide with the next game's scheduled start time. If a game ends late the countdown clock will still be set to 5 minutes.
 - 3.7.1.2. Teams of games that have just ended should exit the field and dugout area promptly to allow the next game's teams to enter.
 - 3.7.2. Unless a game is tied, another inning will not begin after time has expired.
 - 3.7.2.1. If there is any time left after the third out of the bottom of an inning is called, another inning will be played.
 - 3.7.3. In the event of a tied game after time is expired, one extra inning will be played. Games that remain tied after one extra inning has been completed will be scored as such.
 - 3.7.3.1. The post-season tournament championship game will be played untimed until a winner is determined.
 - 3.7.4. A game that has completed the 4th inning and must be stopped for any reason including weather or lighting failure will be considered complete.
 - 3.7.4.1. The score recorded will be that of the last completed inning.
 - 3.7.4.2. If the home team is winning after the top of the 4th inning, the game will also be considered complete.
 - 3.7.5. A game stopped prior to completion of the 4th inning will be rescheduled and replayed as a new game.
- 3.8. **Courtesy Runner:** One courtesy runner will be allowed per inning to run for another player on base. The courtesy runner does not have to be the last player in a team's batting order to have been called out.

3.8.1. In co-ed leagues a male courtesy runner may not run for a female on base.
3.9. Batters begin their at bat with a 1 ball, 1 strike count.

3.10. **Mercy Rule:** For all leagues, games will be called if a team is winning by:

3.10.1. 20 runs after 3 innings

3.10.2. 15 runs after 4 innings

3.10.3. 10 runs after 5 innings

3.11. **Homerun Limits:**

3.11.1. C League is allowed 5 homeruns. After a team has reached 5 homeruns and the opposing team has reached 4 homeruns, the one-up rule will apply.

3.11.2. D League is allowed 3 homeruns. After a team has reached 3 homeruns and the opposing team has reached 2 homeruns, the one-up rule will apply.

3.11.3. For E and Co-ed leagues, the one up-rule will apply.

3.11.3.1. One-up rule: A team may not hit more than one more homerun than the opposing team has hit.

3.11.3.2. A homerun hit exceeding the home run limit will be called an out.

3.12. **Flip Flop Rule:** With under 5 minutes remaining on the game clock, if the home team is losing at the end of an inning, home and visiting teams will “flip.” The home team will clear the bases and bat again as the visiting team.

3.12.1. If another inning is completed and the new home team (original visitor) is now losing, the teams will flip back.

4. **Jerseys:** Players on a team must wear official jerseys (matching jerseys with non-duplicating numbers).

4.1. Teams will be allowed a one-week grace period to obtain official jerseys at the beginning of the season.

4.2. Numbers may not be drawn or taped on.

4.3. A team must obtain permission from the recreation department to field a player(s) without an official jersey.

4.4. If a team cannot field at least 8 players with official jerseys, the game may be called a forfeit.

5. **Equipment:**

5.1. **Balls:** Teams supply their own game balls.

5.1.1. Balls must be official USSSA stamped, 12 inch, yellow, slowpitch softballs.

5.1.1.1. “Stadium” and “Senior” balls are not allowed.

5.1.2. Balls must be in new to good condition as determined by recreation staff or officiating umpires.

5.2. **Bats:** Teams supply their own bats.

5.2.1. Bats must carry the USSSA BPF rating stamp from 2013 or later. Either of the 2 stamps below are acceptable.



5.2.1.1.

5.2.2. All bats must be compression tested by ARPCS staff and marked with an ARPCS sticker proving they have passed testing for each season.

5.2.3. Wooden bats are allowed as long as they are marked USSSA Official Softball.

5.3. **Cleats:** Metal cleats or metal tipped cleats are not allowed.

5.4. **Safety Base:** A safety base will be used at first base.

5.4.1. If a batter is running to first and there is a play at first, the runner must use/tag the orange half of the base and the fielder making the play at first must use/tag the white part of the base.

5.4.2. If a fielder blocks the orange part of the base when a runner is advancing to first, the runner will be awarded first base.

5.4.3. After a ball is dead and time is called, a runner on first must use the white half of the safety base. Failure to do so will be viewed as the runner being off base, result in the runner being called out.

5.5. **Pitching Screens:** Protective pitching screens will be used on the field.

5.5.1. Screens must be placed in front of and parallel to the pitching rubber.

5.5.1.1. The left or right side of the screen frame must be within range of the 24" pitching rubber.

5.5.1.2. The screen frame must be no more than 3 feet in front of the pitching rubber.

5.5.2. During their warm up at the beginning of the top or bottom of each inning, a pitcher may adjust the placement of the screen within the aforementioned range.

5.5.2.1. Once the first pitch of the top or bottom of an inning is thrown, the placement of the screen should not be adjusted in order to avoid a delay of game penalty.

5.5.2.2. The screen may not be moved during a live ball in order to remove it as an obstruction to a play.

5.5.2.3. Screen placement may be adjusted if there is a change in pitchers in the middle of an inning.

5.5.3. A batted ball that hits any part of the screen, including the base and wheels, will be called a foul ball.

5.5.3.1. During gameplay, a ball that makes contact with the screen will remain a live ball unless the ball becomes lodged within or under the screen.

5.5.3.1.1. If a live ball becomes lodged within or under the screen, the player closest to the ball should raise both hands in the air, indicating so to the umpire.

5.5.3.1.1.1. Umpires will call time/dead ball. Any runners that are between bases will advance to the next base.

5.5.3.1.1.1.1. A runner who has run through first base and is in foul territory is not considered to be between bases.

6. Co-ed Specific Rules:

6.1. Batting:

6.1.1. At no time may there be more males than females in the field (unless otherwise agreed upon by both teams prior to the start of the game with the umpires present).

6.1.2. 2 females may bat back-to-back. 2 males may bat back to back, but an out must be taken between batters. (unless otherwise agreed upon by both teams prior to the start of the game with the umpires present).

6.1.3. If a male batter is walked, he advances to 2nd base.

6.1.3.1. If a male player is walked with 2 outs, the next female batter has the option of batting or taking a walk and advancing to 1st base

6.1.3.2. If a male batter is walked with less than 2 outs, the next female batter must bat.

6.2. Feilding:

6.2.1. There must be 1 female at either the pitching or catching position.

6.2.2. There may be any combination of 2 female players at the 1st, 2nd, shortstop and 3rd base positions.

6.2.3. There may be any combination of 2 female players in the outfield.

6.2.4. There is a 200 ft. line in the outfield that outfielders must remain behind when a female is at bat until a ball is hit. Failure to do so will result in the female batter taking 1st base.

6.2.5. Infielders must remain behind the baseline and in front of the outfield grass when a female batter is at bat until a ball is hit. Failure to do so will result in the female batter taking 1st base.

7. Conduct:

7.1. Players and spectators must behave respectfully towards opponents, other spectators, officials and ARPCS staff.

7.2. Profanity and unsportsmanlike conduct are not permitted.

7.3. Alcohol and tobacco are not permitted in the park.

7.4. Any discussion or challenge to a call by an umpire or explanation of a rule should take place only between a head coach and an umpire or ARPCS staff.

7.5. Any umpire or ARPCS staff may eject any player or spectator from the park at their discretion at any time.

7.5.1. An ejected player or spectator must leave the park immediately. Failure to do so may result in a forfeit.

7.5.2. Any player ejected from the park will receive a **minimum** suspension from the park during hours of league play for one week of gameplay.

- 7.5.2.1. If an ejected player plays on multiple teams, that player will not participate in any games that fall within their week suspension.
- 7.5.2.2. A break in scheduled games due to a holiday such as spring break will not count as a week of gameplay.
- 7.5.3. The ejected player may not be present in the park on the night of their team's next game.
 - 7.5.3.1. In the case of a double header, the second game played in the same night of a double header will not serve as the team's next game.
- 7.5.4. **Further suspension up to and including a lifetime banishment from the park may be determined by the recreation department on a case by case basis.**