

Williamsburg Softball League Official Rules

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Official Williamsburg Softball League Rules
2024 Edition

Commissioner

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Table of Contents

FOREWORD	4
IMPORTANT NOTES	5
LEAGUE FORMAT & PLAYOFFS	6
GAME FORMAT & SCHEDULE	8
EQUIPMENT	11
BAT RULES	12
ROSTERS	14
GUEST PLAYERS	19
GAME MANAGEMENT	20
FORFEITS	23
PITCHING	25
STRIKE ZONE	27
BATTING	29
BASE RUNNING	30
COURTESY RUNNERS	34
FIELDING	36
FAIR/FOUL	38
UMPIRES	41
CLEANING UP	44
CODE OF CONDUCT	45
THE GOLDEN RULE(S)	47
WSL WEBSITE	48
WSL FACEBOOK PAGE	49
APPROVED BATS	50

FOREWORD

This code of rules governs the playing of softball games by teams and players of the Williamsburg Softball League. All teams and players in the league have agreed to compete under these rules.

We recognize that we are an amateur (i.e., non-professional) organization and play our games under the rules found in this document. We are happy to make our rules available as widely as possible to the larger softball community.

It is well to remember that specifications as to fields, equipment, etc., are modified to meet the needs of the Williamsburg Softball League. Monetary fines, long-term suspensions and similar penalties imposed by these rules are not practicable for all groups or leagues, but officers and umpires of such organizations should insist on strict observance of all the other rules governing the play of the game.

IMPORTANT NOTES

- The Williamsburg Softball League (WSL) was established in 2000. Initially, most rules were cobbled together but were updated over time to add as much clarity as possible.
- There will always be questions and suggestions, but in no part does that allow for teams, managers, umpires, or players to change any rule on a whim.
- Any rule not covered in this rule book, the WSL will default to the rules covered in Major League Baseball's (MLB's) Rules.
- By agreeing to play in the WSL, you have agreed to play by the rules in this rule book. Teams, managers, and players who do not agree to play by the rules included in this document are not welcome to play.
- It is incumbent upon all teams, managers, players, umpires, officers, and other stakeholders in the WSL to read, comprehend and follow the rules listed herein. Any failure to do so can result in suspension or removal from the WSL.

LEAGUE FORMAT & PLAYOFFS

1. **League Format:** As of 2024 there will be two conferences. Each conference shall have two divisions, with each division containing 4 teams for a total of 8 teams per conference.
 - The Ronnie Ortiz Conference – 8 teams total
 - North Division – 4 teams
 - South Division – 4 teams
 - The Joe Fashion Conference – 8 teams total
 - North Division – 4 teams
 - South Division – 4 teams
2. **Seeding:** As of 2024 teams in the WSL will be reseeded before each season. Reseeding is done as follows:
 - Each team will be evaluated and designated as a 1 seed (meaning elite), 2 seed, 3 seed or 4 seed.
 - All 1 seed teams will be placed together in a hat/cup, etc. and all other seeds will likewise be placed in their respective hats/cups.
 - A team is then drawn at random from each cup (1, 2, 3, 4) to create a division.
 - This process will be repeated a total of 4 times to ensure that each conference has two divisions of 4 teams.
 - The Commissioner can reorganize/shift/move teams if he/she feels that the divisions are unbalanced.
 - The Commissioner has the final say on reseeding.
3. **Playoff Format:** As of 2024 the following format shall apply:
 - All teams make the playoffs.
 - The team with the BEST overall record in its Conference shall be the #1 seed in that CONFERENCE.
 - The second seed shall always be the team with the BEST RECORD in the *other division*.
 - Example: The team in the **Ronnie Ortiz Conference North** has the most wins in the entire Conference, so they are the #1 seed. The team who wins the **Ronnie Ortiz Conference South** shall be the #2 seed *regardless* if the team in second place in the Ronnie Ortiz Conference North has a better record than the winner of the Ronnie Ortiz Conference South.
 - Remaining seeding (3-8) in each Conference shall be decided by best record.

- Ties will be settled by the following (in order): head-to-head, runs allowed and coin flip.
 - Playoff format shall be bracket style play and seeding will be:
 - 1 vs. 8
 - 2 vs. 7
 - 3 vs. 6
 - 4 vs. 5
 - Winner of The Ronnie Ortiz Conference shall play the winner of The Joe Fashion Conference in the Williamsburg Softball League Championship.
4. **Two Umpires for All Playoff Games:** Due to the importance of playoffs, two umpires will be assigned to each playoff game so that *every play* can be viewed from multiple angles and to allow for collaboration on the interpretation of league rules and circumstances on the field. On close, difficult, or controversial plays, umpires may take time to consult with each other before making a definitive call.
- ***Collaboration is encouraged.*** If an umpire makes a call that one of the managers feels is incorrect, they have every right to request the two umpires discuss it. From this collaboration, umpires can either reverse or stand by the original ruling.
5. **Choosing Umpires for Semi-Finals and Championship:** Each team in the semi-finals and the championship will have the right to choose 1 umpire from the pool of qualified and highly rated umpires. Both managers may have a ***civilized*** discussion about who they are choosing. However, each manager still has the right to stick with their choice. Any unresolved dispute will be settled by the Commissioner.
6. **Home/Away:** For each playoff game, the higher ranked team will be the home team in the divisional playoffs. Championship home/away will be determined by head-to-head record from the regular season, with the winner having the option of being the home or away team.
- The WSL Championship shall ALWAYS be held on Field 2 unless a catastrophic disaster or unforeseen circumstance results in Field 2 being unplayable.
7. **Field Dimensions:** As of 2024, the WSL uses the following dimensions:
- It is exactly 60 feet from base to base.
 - It is 45 feet from the pitcher's rubber to home plate.
 - The Lady Line is 100 feet beyond each base.

GAME FORMAT & SCHEDULE

1. Game format: As of 2024 the WSL game format shall be a 9-inning game with no ties and no mercy rule.

- Games are allotted roughly 2 hours to complete. However, if a game goes over 2 hours, it will not be stopped. That said, it is incumbent upon the umpire to keep the game moving and do their best to stay within the 2-hour window.
- 2. Umpires:** Each regular season game shall have a minimum of 1 umpire.
- 3. Bench:** The home team will always use the 1B bench/dugout and the away team will always use the 3B bench/dugout.
- 4. Bases, chalk, paint for the lines:** Before games begin on Sunday, the league shall provide bases and a pitcher's rubber on each field. They will also chalk the foul lines extending from home to 1B and home to 3B, paint the outfield lines, and the "Lady Line," for each field.
- 5. Number of Games Per Season:** As of 2024, each team shall play 18 regular season games. They will play teams in their own division twice (6 games) and 1 game against every other team in the league (12 games) for a total of 18.
- 6. Regular Season Schedule:** The schedule is posted on the [league website \(www.williamsburgsoftball.com\)](http://www.williamsburgsoftball.com). It has been made as fair as possible with every team playing in each of four time slots: 11am, 1pm, 3pm and 5pm. Each team will play a minimum of 3 games per slot with some teams playing the maximum of 6 games per slot.
- 7. Rain Out/Make Up Regular Season:** Rainouts will be made up at the end of the year and/or double header Sundays will be scheduled throughout the season. Rescheduling games is not easy, but all efforts will be made to ensure everyone is treated fairly. Please collaborate with each other and exercise patience.
- In the event that too many rainouts, other weather events, political upheavals, virus outbreaks, etc....prevent games from being made up, the Commissioner has the right to shorten the season.
- 8. An Official Game:** If rain, snow, or another weather event stops a game, we follow MLB's rule:
- If the home team is winning in the bottom of the 5th and poor weather prevents the game from continuing, the game will be considered over unless it is a tie game at which point it will be completed later. The home team does not need to complete their final at-bat in the bottom of the 5th.
- 9. If the game is suspended and less than 5 innings have been played:** The teams can decide to either:
- Start the game over from the beginning (0-0) at a later date.

- Pick up from where the game left off at a later date (please refer to Continuation rule below).
- Both teams need to agree to one of the above.
- If the teams cannot agree to one of these two options, the Commissioner will have final say.

10. Rain-Out/Make Up Playoff Game: All playoff games must be played a full 9-innings unless a team will not be able to field a team the following week and therefore must forfeit.

- If the game is paused before the 5th inning, then the game shall start over.
- If the game is paused after the conclusion of the 5th inning, then the game will continue where it left off.
- The makeup game will be played the following Sunday.
 - If the game is being continued:
 - The game shall pick up *exactly* where it left off.
 - If a player(s) that was in the original game is not there, the team may substitute in players who were NOT in the game.
 - All substitute players must have been on the regular season roster and qualify for playoffs.
 - The lineup shall remain the same. They cannot “reorder” their lineup.

11. Tie Game/Continuation of Regular Season Game: There are NO tie games in the WSL. If a game is stopped due to rain, darkness, riots, etc....and needs to continue at a later date due to a tie score, the following shall apply:

- The game shall pick up *exactly* where it left off.
- If the player(s) that were in the original game are not there, the team may substitute players who were NOT in the game.
- The lineup shall remain the same. Managers cannot “reorder” their lineup.
- If players who were in the lineup are not there, they can be substituted by players who were NOT in the game.
- The only time games will not be made up is in the event the losing team is getting blown out when the game is called, and they won’t be able to field a team the following week. This qualifies as a forfeit.

12. Postponements/Moving Games: If a team would like to postpone their game or move their game to a different time slot because a team cannot get enough players on a certain date or time due to a wedding, summer vacations, etc....it is up to *that team* to work with their opponents and other teams to switch dates/times. Teams cannot just say they don’t want to play a game due to lack of players and postpone the game to a later date and expect the Commissioner or other teams to figure it out. This is the responsibility of the team who wants to postpone their game.

- If a team cannot successfully move their game and simply don't show up, the game is a forfeit.

13. **Mercy Rule/Blowouts:** As of 2024, there is no such thing as a mercy rule in the WSL. All teams are expected to play a full 9-innings. Technically, all games play within a 2-hour window. This is the expectation, but it is understood that there are many factors that come into play.

- If a team is getting blown out it is incumbent upon the umpire to move the game along quickly. This means limiting the number of warm up pitches, not throwing the ball around between outs etc.
- If a team is getting blown out, the umpire has every right to politely ask both teams if they'd like to give up their at bats to keep the game within the 2-hour window.
- This DOES NOT allow the umpire to call every pitch a strike, make poor and egregious calls on the basepaths or do things that are clearly wrong just to move the game along. **The integrity of the game still matters.**

EQUIPMENT

1. **Game equipment:** Each team must bring the following to each game:
 - One new Clincher softball. The umpire will introduce one at the beginning of the game and the second in the bottom of the 5th inning.
 - A scorebook (or scoresheet) to record the game they are playing in. This is necessary as umpires must take a photo of each book to send to the league. Teams who do not have a book (or sheet) to be photographed are at risk of having their player(s) *not being credited* with a game played, which will ultimately count against your players' playoff eligibility.
2. **Approved Bats:** Please refer to the **Bat Rules** and list of **Approved Bats** for details.
3. **Approved Gloves for Fielders:** Pitchers, catchers and 1B are the ONLY players allowed to use an official first baseman's glove. If a player is using a 1B glove at any other position, they will be asked to replace it with another glove. This will be considered a warning. If the player continues to use the 1B glove while playing another position, any play made by the player will be considered "safe" for the hitter and the hitter shall NOT be out.
4. **Cleats:** Metal spikes are not permitted. Any player wearing metal spikes will not be allowed to play. Only rubber cleats are allowed. If a player is asked to remove his/her spikes and he/she does not do so and is found to be playing with metal spikes, the player is out of the game and will serve a 1 game suspension.
5. **Returning bases to the shed after games are over:** After the final games of the day, the home team on each field is responsible for gathering the bases and bringing them to the shed behind Turkey's Nest.
 - To get into the shed: As of 2024 there is a lock on a gate to get into the Turkey's Nest area. The Commissioner has the lock combination, and you can get it from him by texting him. There is a lock on the Turkey's Nest shed. You can get this combination from the Commissioner as well. The bases go INTO the shed and are not to be left out.

BAT RULES

1. **League supplied bats:** As of 2024, the WSL will not be supplying league bats. A list of approved bats can be found at the end of this document. For questions about a particular bat please contact the Commissioner at: WSLcommish@gmail.com.
2. **Borrowing bats:** Players are allowed to borrow bats from other teams/players, with the understanding that the person borrowing said bat will not damage/break it. Should a player break/damage someone else's bat, they are responsible for replacing it. If a dispute arises over a broken bat, the owner and/or the borrower must reach out to the Commissioner who will issue an official ruling.
3. **Male Bat Rules:**
 - Legal bat:
 - Aluminum or metal alloy.
 - Single or multi-wall.
 - One piece or two-piece (the handle can be composite – which may be titled as 'hybrid').
 - Women's fastpitch bats are allowed as long as they meet the above criteria.
 - Wood bats are legal but must be "softball" bats.
 - A softball bat is 34" long and 2 1/4" in diameter at the barrel.
 - Illegal bat:
 - Titanium or composite barrel.
 - Any bat that has been tampered with or "enhanced" in any way, including, but not limited to, shaving and/or rolling.
 - A bat that has been altered but would otherwise conform to the official rules.
 - Baseball bats, whether metal or wood, are NOT allowed.
4. **Female Bat Rules:**
 - Legal Bat:
 - Females are allowed to use composite bats.
 - The bats must be marked with bright colored tape.
5. **Penalties for Violating Bat Rules:**
 - Managers and umpires are to report any offenses to the Commissioner.
 - Penalties for using an illegal bat are as follows:
 - 1st offense: Results in an automatic end to the inning. Runs prior to that at bat will count but any runs scored as a result of that at bat will not.

- 2nd offense (in same game): First penalty applies and then player is asked to leave the game immediately. The game will not count toward their individual playoff eligibility.
- 3rd offense (or more): Shall result in 2+ game suspension for the individual and a minimum 1 game suspension for the manager.
- Continuing offense: If a team continues to break this rule, they are at risk of being asked to leave the WSL.

ROSTERS

1. **Roster Size:** Each team can carry a max of 25 players on their roster.
2. **Women on the Roster:** Teams **MUST** have a minimum of 4 women on their roster. This is to avoid having a lack of women resulting in teams needing to continuously borrow women from other teams.
 - If a team roster does not include a minimum of 4 women, and they cannot field enough women for a game, they **SHALL NOT be allowed to borrow women, even if the women are on another WSL roster.**
 - **Example:** A team only has 3 (or less) women on their roster, and they have a game. Only 1 of their women shows up, the other two do not. This team shall **NOT** be allowed to pick up any women and shall therefore have to play with 9 players and take the 10th slot as an automatic out.
 - **Example:** A team only has 3 (or less) women on their roster, and they have a game. If **NONE** of their women show up, then the game is forfeited (10-0).
 - **Example:** If a team has 4 (or more) women on their roster and only 1 of their women show up, they are allowed to pick up a second woman to make a team of 10 players.
 - **Example:** If a team has 4 (or more) women on their roster and none of their women show up, they are allowed to pick up two women to make a team of 10 players.
3. **Roster Submissions:** If a roster is not submitted to the league before the season starts then **NO GAMES** shall count towards playoff qualifications.
 - Only after the league has received a roster can games qualify for playoffs.
 - If a manager(s) fails to send the roster to the League, then no games will qualify for playoffs. No exceptions. That's the managers fault and they must deal with the consequences.
4. **Manager Responsibilities:**
 - Keep score of the game with a scorebook or scoresheet. If the umpire has nothing to take a photo of, the manager is in danger of having a player(s) lose playoff eligibility due to the league's inability to track games.
 - Use legible handwriting. If the league cannot read what is written, you are in danger of having a player(s) lose playoff eligibility due to poor penmanship.
 - If there are multiple players on your team with the same first name, you must add a nickname, last name or initial to identify each individual.
 - Ensure the umpire takes a photo of your scoresheet at the end of every game.

5. **Playoff Qualifications:** For a game to count towards playoff qualifications, the player MUST be on the roster. If the player is NOT on the roster, the game shall not count towards playoff qualification.
6. **To Submit a Roster:** You must email your roster to wslstats@gmail.com.
 - The roster must contain:
 1. First Name
 2. Last Name
 3. Nickname
 4. Gender (M/F)
 5. Email address
7. **Players MUST be on a WSL Roster to play in the WSL:** In order for a player to play in the WSL, they MUST be on a WSL roster.
8. **Players playing in the WSL who are NOT on a WSL Roster:** This is strictly prohibited. If a team is found to be playing players who are not on a roster, the following penalties shall apply:
 - Said player who played and is not on the roster is now no longer eligible to play in that season of the WSL.
 - If said player does in fact play another game in the WSL, that game shall be an immediate forfeit (10-0).
 - First offense: A manager will receive a warning for playing a player who is not on the roster.
 - Second offense: If a manager plays a player who is not on the roster again, the manager will receive a 1 game suspension, to be applied the following Sunday. Said player who was allowed to play and is not on the roster, is now no longer eligible to play in that season of the WSL. That game shall be an immediate forfeit (10-0).
 - Third offense: If a manager plays a player who is not on the roster yet again, the manager will receive a 2-game suspension, which will be applied the following two Sundays. Said player who was allowed to play and is not on the roster, is now no longer eligible to play in that season of the WSL. That game shall be an immediate forfeit (10-0).
 - Fourth offense: If a manager plays a player who is not on the roster for a fourth time, the manager will be suspended for the rest of the WSL season. Said player who was allowed to play and is not on the roster, is now no longer eligible to play in that season of the WSL. That game shall be an immediate forfeit (10-0).
9. **Adding Players to the Roster:** Players can be added to the roster at ANY TIME during the season.

10. Adding Players on Game Days: Players can be added at any time BEFORE their game begins but only if the manager emails wslstats@gmail.com prior to the start of the game. For example: A team is scheduled to play at 1pm. They MUST email wslstats@gmail.com no later than 12:59pm for that person to be allowed to play. It would be best to confirm with the umpire and the opposing manager that you have done this to avoid confrontation.

- Once a new player joins a team, the manager must inform wslstats@gmail.com and add them to their team roster, or the above penalties will apply.
- Any changes to the current roster must be made BEFORE the player has played the game.
- If the player is not on the roster when the game begins, the player shall not be allowed to play.

11. Mentioning to the Commissioner vs. Submitting a Roster Change: A TEAM SHALL NOT MENTION TO THE COMMISSIONER THAT THERE IS A ROSTER CHANGE WITHOUT SUBMITTING THE ROSTER CHANGE IN AN ATTEMPT TO HAVE THE ROSTER CHANGE DEEMED OFFICIAL. ALL ROSTER CHANGES ARE TO BE MADE BY ADBIDING WITH THE FOLLOWING PROTOCOL:

- Managers MUST submit the change, new player, etc. to wslstats@gmail.com. If they do not do this before the player has played, the game shall NOT count towards playoff qualifications.
- Simply mentioning that you are adding a player, changing your roster, or anything else to the Commissioner while he is at the field, at the bar, in the bathroom, on the subway, etc. is NOT sufficient. The Commissioner is NOT responsible for your roster...at ALL.
- Claiming that you “told the Commissioner” is against the rules and managers will be immediately at risk of being suspended or removed from the WSL for blaming the Commissioner for your inability to run a co-ed softball team.
- Managers could have told the Commissioner 100 times that they are making a roster change or adding a player. Again, the Commissioner takes 0 responsibility and has no control over you or your team. You will have to submit any and all roster changes to wslstats@gmail.com for them to apply.

12. Dropped Players: Once a player is dropped from a roster, they cannot be added back to the same team’s roster later in the season. Zero exceptions.

- **Game Qualification:** For a game to count towards playoff eligibility, a player must play a full inning in the field, take a full at bat which results in an out or reaching base via a hit, walk or error, or pinch/courtesy run until the inning ends.

- Again, this player must ALREADY be on the roster for the game to count towards playoff qualification.
- 13. Playoff Eligibility for Men:** Men must appear in at least 8 games to be playoff eligible. There are no exceptions for special circumstances.
 - 14. Playoff Eligibility for Women:** Women must appear in at least 6 games in order to be playoff eligible. There are no exceptions for special circumstances.
 - 15. Grandfather Rule:** There is no Grandfather Rule. It does not matter if a player has been in the league for 10 years. ALL players must meet the minimum requirements (8 for men, 6 for women) to qualify for playoffs that season. No exceptions!
 - 16. Players Switching Teams:** Players are allowed to leave one team and join another at any time during the season.
 - **Men:** A male player switching teams qualifies for playoffs if he appears in a minimum of 6 games for the team he switches to, *for a total of 8 games the entire season.*
 - **Women:** A female player switching teams qualifies for playoffs if she appears in a minimum of 4 games for the team she switches to, *for a total of 6 games the entire season.*
 - 17. Playoff Rosters:** After each game, the umpire of the game will take a photograph of your score book and will email it to wslumps@gmail.com.
 - The league tracks all games played for all teams. At the end of the regular season, WSL Stats will email each team their playoff rosters. These are the players who are eligible to play in the playoffs for your team.
 - 18. Picking Up Guest Players for Playoffs:** Teams are NOT allowed to pick up guest players for the playoffs. No exceptions.
 - If a team is short players for the playoffs and cannot field a team, they cannot pick up guest players for the playoffs.
 - If a team plays a player who is ineligible for playoffs, the game is a forfeit, no matter the outcome.
 - If a team is short players for the playoffs and still wants to play, the opposing team can allow them to pick up a guest player. However, the game is a forfeit and essentially becomes a scrimmage, regardless of the outcome.

19. Writing a player in the scorebook who did not play:

- 4 game suspension for the manager and a warning from the Commissioner that they will be removed from the league as a manager.
 - A second offense, the manager is no longer eligible to manage in the WSL.
- Player who was added is ineligible for the playoffs.
- Managers bringing players into the game should be diligent in announcing to both the umpire and the opposing manager that this player is entering. This avoids suspicion that someone who isn't there has been added to the book.
- Managers must be diligent in keeping track of the opposing manager's scoresheet to ensure that players in the lineup actually played in the game.

GUEST PLAYERS

1. **Guest Players:** Teams may recruit guest players *from other WSL rosters* to avoid forfeiting or playing with less than 10 players.
 - Any guest player must be on a WSL roster. If the player is not on a WSL roster, the forfeiture penalties discussed previously will apply. It is incumbent on managers to confirm whether or not a player it intends to use as a guest player is on a WSL roster prior to the game.
 - If a team has 10 healthy rostered players present (with a minimum of 2 women), they cannot pick up guest players.
 - A team can only pick up guest players to bring their total to 10. A team cannot pick up multiple guest players to field a team of 11, 12, or 13.
 - If a team has zero women, then the first two guest players must be women, to bring their total to 10 players.
 - If a team has one woman, then the first guest player must be a woman, to bring their total to 10 players.
 - If a team has two women, they can pick up enough men to make it to 10 players.
 - If a team has three women, for a total of 10 players, they cannot pick up another male. They play with their 10 players.
2. **Qualified Guest Players:** In addition to being on a WSL roster, the league respectfully asks captains recruiting guest players to find players whose talents do not greatly exceed that of the average player. Each guest player must be approved to play by the opposing team's captain.
 - Harassment by the team that is short players, due to the opposing manager not approving the guest, is not permitted.
3. **Where to Play Guest Players:** Guest players must bat at the end of the lineup and play catcher or *other positions approved by the opposing manager*.
 - If a team picks up more than one guest player, the opposing manager can tell the team where these players can play the field and bat in the lineup.
 - The team who is picking up the guest player CANNOT argue, fight, criticize or antagonize the opposing team for telling them where the player can play the field and bat in the lineup.

GAME MANAGEMENT

1. **Trading Lineups:** It is not mandatory, but if requested by one of the managers, teams may trade lineup cards before the start of the game. No questions asked.
2. **Batting Lineup:** A team may use a 10, 11, 12 or 13 player line-up.
3. **10, 11 or 12-player lineup:**
 - At least 2 of the players *must be women*.
4. **13 player lineups:** At least **3 of the players** in the batting order must be women.
5. **Minimum Lineup:** A team must have a minimum of 10 slots in the batting order.
 - As noted above, an order with 10 slots must include at least 2 women.
 - If a team can only bat 9 players, the 10th slot is an automatic out.
 - Teams can pick up guest players to bring their total to 10 players.
 - If a team can only bat 8 players, the 9th and 10th slots are automatic outs.
 - Teams can pick up guest players to bring their total to 10 players.
 - If a team can only bat 7 players, they must forfeit the game.
 - Teams can pick up guest players to bring their total to 10 players.
6. **1-Woman Lineup:** A team that has only 1 woman, and is unable to pick up a guest player, must use a 10 player lineup where one position in the batting order is an automatic out.
 - Example: 8 men, 1 woman and the last slot (10th) is an automatic out.
 - They cannot bat 9 men and 1 woman.
 - They cannot bat 10 men and 1 woman.
7. **Batting Through a Lineup:** After a team goes through their lineup once, the lineup is now set, and they CANNOT add additional players.
 - **Example 1:** A team is batting 10 and all 10 batters have already batted when the 11th player shows up. The player arriving late must take the slot of a player in the lineup. *They cannot be added* to the end of the lineup.
 - **Example 2:** If a team bats through their lineup and one or more of their players leave during the game, and there is no replacement to fill that slot(s), each time that slot(s) comes to bat, it is an automatic out.
 - **Example 3:** If a team has 10 players and is waiting for their 11th player, they can have an 11-player lineup and take the 11th slot as an out if the player doesn't show up in time for his/her at-bat. If the player shows up, they can insert the player into this 11th slot. However, if this player never shows up, that 11th slot will be an out for the duration of the game.
8. **Designated Hitter (DH) Rule:** All teams have the option to use a Designated Hitter. The designated hitter rule allows teams to use another player to bat in place of the pitcher or another designated fielder. Because the pitcher/fielder is still part

of the team's ten defensive players, the designated hitter -- or "DH" -- does not take the field on defense.

- The DH must be selected prior to the game, and that selected hitter must come to bat at least one time. The player selected as DH must be announced to the opposing team and to the umpire.
 - A team that chooses not to select a DH prior to a game is barred from using a DH for the rest of that game once everyone in the lineup has batted once.
 - A player who enters the game in place of the DH -- either as a pinch-hitter or a pinch-runner -- becomes the DH in their team's lineup thereafter.
 - If a player serving as the DH is later used on defense, they continue to bat in the same lineup spot. But for the rest of the game, their team cannot use a DH to bat in place of that pitcher/fielder.
 - A team is also barred from using a DH for the rest of the game if the pitcher/fielder moves from the mound to another defensive position, a player pinch-hits for any other player and then becomes the pitcher/fielder, or the current pitcher pinch-hits or pinch-runs for the DH.
 - Women can DH for men.
 - Men can DH for women as long as there are 2 women hitting in the lineup.
9. **Extra Hitter:** Teams may use a maximum of 2 extra hitters (EHs) when they have 2 women in the lineup. Teams can also add a third woman to the lineup as an EH (see 13 player lineup).
- An EH can come in to play the field at any time.
 - If a team has only 1 woman in the lineup, they are not allowed to use any EHs.
10. **Pinch Hitter:** Pinch hitters are allowed. Both sexes can pinch hit for each other if they satisfy the 2 minimum women in the lineup rule.
- Example: A team has a 10-12 player lineup and they're batting **MORE** than 2 women. A man can now come in and hit for a woman as long as there are still 2 women remaining in the lineup. However, this player is now in the game and the woman, the person who this man hit for, is now **OUT** of the game.
11. **Men's Re-entry Rule:** Once removed from the game there is no re-entry for men.
- Example: If a manager brings in a pinch-hitter (Player B) for a batter (Player A), then Player A cannot re-enter the game.
 - Injured Player: There is one exception to this rule - In the event a player is substituted in, and then needs to exit the game due to injury, he can be replaced by a man who was removed. The player must be verified to be injured by the umpire.

12. **Women's Re-entry rule:** Women may enter or rotate, within the women's spots in the batting order, or in the field, as many times as they like.
- Example: If a team has 4 women, and 2 are batting in the lineup, those 4 women can rotate within those two slots in the lineup as many times as they want. If Woman 1 and Woman 2 are hitting in the 10th and 11th spots respectively, then Woman 3 and Woman 4 can hit in the 10th and 11th spots as well.
13. **Announcing a Sub:** If a team is subbing in a hitter or fielder, it must be announced to the umpire and opposing manager.
14. **Batting Out of Turn:** The onus is not on the umpire to notify either team if a team bats out of turn. The consequences of batting out of turn vary depending on the timing of the appeal.
- If the opposing team makes its appeal or the offensive team realizes its error before the incorrect batter's plate appearance has concluded, then the correct batter can take his place at bat while assuming the incorrect batter's count.
 - If the appeal occurs between the conclusion of the incorrect batter's plate appearance but before the next pitch or attempted play, the correct batter is called out. Furthermore, any score or advancement caused by the incorrect batter batting a ball or reaching first base is nullified.
 - If no appeal is made before the next pitch or attempted play following the conclusion of the incorrect batter's plate appearance, the incorrect batter is now considered to have batted in turn and all scores or advancements made during or as a result of his plate appearance are counted. The offensive team continues batting in its original designated order from that point and places the skipped batter back into his original lineup spot the next time around.
15. **Grace period for 11am games:** Games scheduled to start at 11am must start by 11:15 to allow for all of the day's games to be played.
16. **Grace period for post-11am games:** Teams have a grace period of 15 minutes after the scheduled start time to get all their players to the field or to pick up guest players if they have less than 10. If a team has 10 players and they are waiting for their 11th (or 12th) they cannot delay a game waiting for additional players. Once teams have a minimum of 10 players, the game begins.

FORFEITS

As of this writing, the WSL is one of the most popular leagues in New York City. There are roughly 320 players in the summer league and 224 players in the Fall League. The WSL Facebook page has over 1.5K followers. There should be ZERO excuse as to why a team cannot field enough players every Sunday. Managers who cannot field a team are at risk of losing their slots and their team.

1. **Removing a Team for Forfeiting:** Each team will get 2 forfeits a season. If a team forfeits a 3rd time in a season, the team shall be removed, and the Commissioner will determine which new team(s) and/or which manager(s) shall fill the open spot. In addition, the manager(s) of that team shall no longer manage a team in the WSL for a minimum of 5 years.
2. **Forfeiting a Playoff Game:** If a team cannot field enough players for a playoff game, resulting in a forfeit, then that team shall be removed immediately from the WSL for the following season. The slot is now considered “open.” and that slot shall be filled by the Commissioner who will determine which new team or manager(s) shall take it over. The offending manager(s) and their players are still allowed to play in the WSL. However, the manager(s) of that team shall no longer *manage* a team in the WSL for a minimum of 5 years.
3. **Forfeits:**
 - **Not enough players:** A team must have at least 8 players, at least 1 of those players must be a woman. If not, they must forfeit the game by a score of 10-0.
 - **Example:** A team cannot play with 10 men and 0 women. They must have at least 1 woman to play a game.
 - **Picking Up Players:** Teams can pick up guest players who are on a WSL roster to bring their total to 10 players. *They cannot pick up players to have a team of more than 10 players.*
4. **Players Playing in the WSL Who Are NOT on a WSL Roster:** This is strictly prohibited. If a team is found to be playing players who are not on a roster, the following penalties shall apply:
 - Said player who was allowed to play and is not on the roster, is now no longer eligible to play in that season of the WSL.
 - If said player does in fact play another game in the WSL, that game shall be an immediate forfeit (10-0).
5. **Qualified Games for Players Forfeited by Opponent:** If a team forfeits, all rostered members of the *non-forfeiting team*, whether present that day or not, will be credited with a game played. This game counts towards playoff eligibility.
6. **Qualified Games for Forfeiting Team Players:** If players of the forfeiting team arrive, but there are not enough players to field a team, then the players of the

forfeiting team **who were at the field** are credited with a game toward playoff eligibility.

7. **Manager NOT Getting a Qualified Game for a Forfeit:** Regardless of if they are at the field or not, **managers** who cannot field a team and must forfeit the game, are not credited with a game towards playoff eligibility.
8. **Forfeiting Before the Game:** If a team must forfeit, it is preferred that they do so in a timely manner so that players do not show up at the field.
9. **Paying the Umpire in the event of a Forfeit:** If both teams are at the field and one of the teams forfeits, the forfeiting team is responsible for the umpire fee for both teams. If the team forfeits in advance, i.e., the day before, then they will not be required to pay the umpire fee.
10. **Playing after a forfeit has been declared:** If a game has been declared a forfeit and teams still want to play, the opposing team can allow the forfeiting team to pick up enough guest players to field a team. However, the game is a forfeit and is now just a scrimmage, regardless of the outcome. The umpire(s) still must be paid by the forfeiting team. As such, the umpire must stay to call the game.
11. **Picking Up Guest Players for Playoffs:** Teams are NOT allowed to pick up guest players for the playoffs. No exceptions.
 - If a team is short of players for the playoffs and cannot field a team, they cannot pick up guest players for the playoffs and the game is considered a forfeit.
 - If a team plays a player who is ineligible for playoffs, the game is a forfeit, no matter the outcome.
 - If a team is short players for the playoffs and still wants to play, the opposing team can allow them to pick up a guest player. However, the game is a forfeit and is now just a scrimmage, regardless of the outcome.

PITCHING

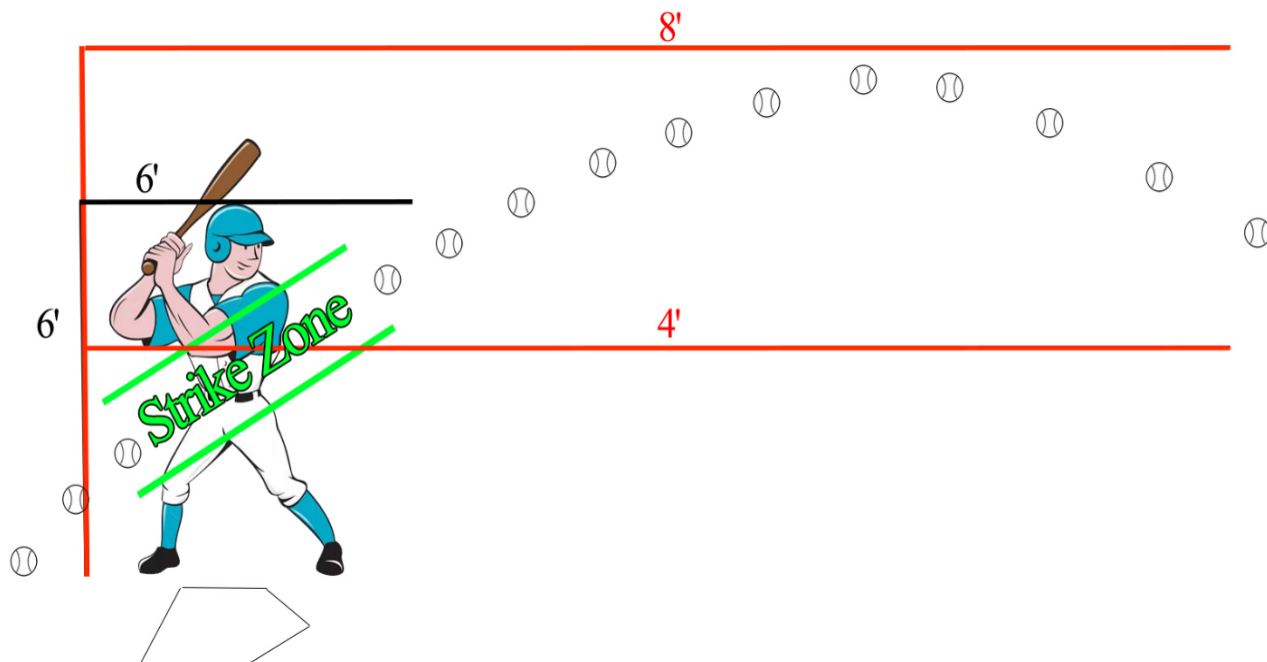
1. **Starting Position:** The pitcher must face home plate with at least one foot on the “rubber,” or the place designated as the pitching area (a chalk line). The pitch must be delivered in one continuous, underhand, forward motion with at least one foot on the rubber when the ball is released. The pitcher may take only one step toward home plate.
 - Prior to forward motion, or if the pitcher freezes or pauses, the batter has the right to ask for timeout. The umpire shall grant the timeout requested by the batter, but the batter must ask for it *loudly* and *clearly* so that the umpire can hear the request.
2. **“Trick” Pitch:**
 - Pitchers may throw knuckleballs, spinning balls or backhanded pitches.
 - Quick pitch: A pitcher may throw a “quick pitch” meaning immediately upon receiving the ball from the catcher, as long as their foot is on the rubber and the batter has both feet **IN THE BATTER’S BOX**. If the batter has both feet in the box and is not prepared to hit, they must have their hand up and ask the umpire for timeout.
3. **Illegal Pitch:**
 - **Fast pitch:** A pitch that is thrown at high velocity, has no arc and is intentionally thrown to deceive the hitter.
 - Umpires should watch for this pitch being thrown with two strikes or to lesser hitters with the intention of getting them due to increased speed.
 - **Stuttering or pausing during the pitch:** If a pitcher pauses, stutters, or freezes after his/her forward motion begins, in order to deceive, this is illegal.
 - Please note: Some pitchers have a natural hitch or funky motion. If it’s not done in an effort to deceive or fool the batter, this is considered OK.
 - **Foreign substances:** It is illegal to throw a ball covered in any foreign substance, including clumps of dirt.

4. **Flat Pitch:** The umpire should not yell “flat pitch” while the pitch is on the way to the hitter. *A flat pitch is not an illegal pitch.* Because it is low and has no/very little arc, it is a ball. By yelling “flat pitch” the umpire is liable to confuse the batter. It’s not illegal, it’s simply a ball, which means the hitter has the option to swing. After the pitch is delivered (if the batter did not swing) it is fine at this point for the umpire to say “that was a flat pitch” so that everyone is aware.
5. **Illegal Pitch Enforcement:** If the pitcher delivers an illegal pitch, it is the responsibility of the umpire to yell “**Illegal Pitch!**” and it immediately becomes a dead ball. No matter if the batter gets a single, a homerun or swings and misses, the play is dead. The pitch is called a BALL, and the pitcher is given a warning.
6. **Punishment:** There is a “three strike rule” for pitchers who throw illegal pitches. On the third violation, the player can no longer pitch in that game. The player is not kicked out of the game, but they are no longer eligible to pitch for the *remainder of that game.*

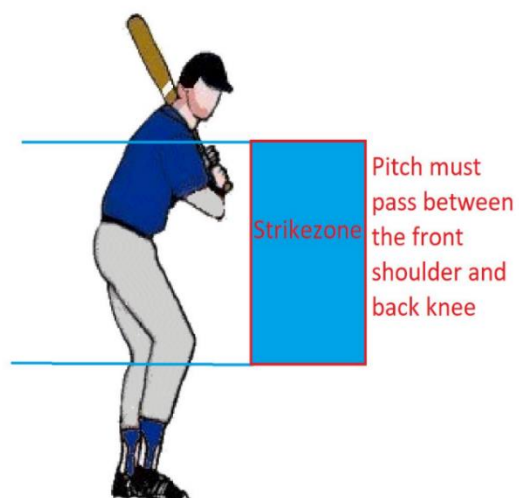
STRIKE ZONE

1. As of 2024, the WSL is a slow-pitch, lob softball league.
2. As previously noted, the ball must be delivered underhand with one foot remaining in contact with the pitching rubber until released.
3. For a pitch to be considered a strike, it **must travel in an arc reaching a minimum height of 4 feet, with a maximum height of 8 feet.**
4. The ball must cross some part of the plate between the batter's front shoulder and back knee, assuming they are standing in line with the plate.
5. Any pitch that hits any portion of the plate as it descends to the ground is a ball, even if it passes through the strike zone.
6. **A Note About the Strike Zone Relative to Home Plate:** The strike zone is always relative to the plate. As stated above, it extends from the batter's front shoulder to their back knee when the batter is standing in line with the plate. If the batter moves up or back in the box, the zone does not move with them.
 - Example: A batter can choose to "run up" so that he/she hits the ball in front of the plate. However, this does not change the strike zone. If this same batter takes a pitch that crosses a few inches above their front shoulder, it can be called a strike because it would have entered the zone at or below their shoulder had they remained even with home plate.

*See diagrams on the following page to help identify the strike zone.



While the ball is traveling to the batter it must not go any higher than 8 feet nor any lower than 4 feet.



BATTING

1. **Legal bat:** The batter must follow the bat rules as laid out in this document.
2. **Starting count:** Every at bat begins with a 0-0 count.
3. **3 Strikes:** A batter gets three strikes. If a batter has 2 strikes on him/her and they hit a foul ball, this is considered strike three and the batter is out. A batter may also strike out looking at or swinging at a 3rd strike.
4. **4 Balls:** Four balls is a walk.
5. **4 Straight Balls:** If a man is walked on four straight balls, *without receiving a strike**, and a woman is on deck, the man goes to first base and the woman has the option to automatically walk or take her at bat.
 - If the woman takes the automatic walk, the man advances to second base as do any other runners who are forced to advance.
 - If the woman chooses to take her at bat, the man goes to first base as he normally would and that is it.

*If a pitcher throws a strike to a man and then delivers 4 straight balls, this does not give the woman on deck the option to take an automatic walk.

6. **Courtesy runner from Homeplate:** There are no courtesy runners allowed from home plate. The batter must make it to first base (or 2nd or 3rd) before he/she can have a courtesy runner.
7. **Bunting/Chopping:** Bunting, or “chopping” of any kind is not permitted. Any attempted bunt, half swing or chop intended to cause the effect of a bunt or a chop, results in an automatic out. Runners do not advance.

BASE RUNNING

1. **Safety First:** The primary goal on the base paths is to avoid dangerous collisions between runners and fielders.
2. **No Leading:** There is no leading. Runners must stay on their bag until the hitter makes contact.
 - If a runner leaves early, (i.e., before the batter swings) the runner is given a warning. If the runner leaves early and the batter puts the ball in play, the runner may be called out at the umpire's discretion.
 - If a runner leaves early again, he/she is out. For the remainder of the game, every time *any* runner on the offending team leaves the bag early, he/she will be called out.
3. **Runner's Base vs. Fielder's Base:** A double base (or two bases) will be used at first base. The orange base (or the outside base in foul territory) is designated as the "runner's base" and the white base (or the inside base in fair territory) is designated as the "fielder's base."
 - If there is a play at first base, the runner **MUST** step on the orange base (outside base in foul territory) and the first baseman must step on the white base (inside base in fair territory). Only when the runner is rounding first base or going for multiple bases can he/she use the white base (or the inside base in fair territory).
 - If the first baseman steps on the orange base (or the outside base in foul territory) and does not use the white base (or inside base) by the time the runner gets to first, the runner is safe.
 - If a fielder touches the white base and the orange base the runner is out. If the fielder only touches the orange base, the runner is safe.
4. **First baseman obstructing path to first base:** If the first baseman obstructs the baserunner headed to first in a way that puts the runner in danger or prevents the runner from reaching the base, the runner is awarded first base.
5. **First baseman obstructing path to second base:** On a base hit, when there is clearly no play at first base, the first baseman must allow the runner the opportunity to round the base and try for extra bases. It is the responsibility of the first baseman to get out of the runner's way.
 - Collisions which result from the first baseman failing to clear the way for the runner when there is no play at first base may result, according to the judgment of the umpire, in the next base being awarded to the runner.

6. **Baserunner interfering with first baseman:** A baserunner heading to first base must run in the runner's lane on the foul side of the first base line. A baserunner who runs on the fair side of the line and prevents the first baseman (or any other player) from fielding the first base position is automatically out.
7. **After the runner reaches first base:** After passing first base, the runner can turn right into foul territory or left into fair territory, and they are not considered "live." It is only when the runner makes a motion to advance that they are considered "live" and can be tagged out.
8. **Fielder obstructing a runner:** If a fielder, not in the act of fielding, obstructs the base path in a manner that causes a collision or significantly impedes the runner's progress around the bases, the umpire should rule the runner automatically safe and award the base they were advancing towards.
9. **Runner interfering with a fielder:** Fielders have a right to occupy any space needed to catch or field a batted ball. Runners may not hold, hug, slap the ball away or interfere with the fielder making a play. If a runner on the base path collides or interferes with a fielder who is in the act of fielding, thus preventing them from completing the play, the runner is out.
10. **Runner colliding with a fielder from ANOTHER game:**
 - Given the way the fields are set up, if a runner on one field bumps into a fielder who is playing in the OTHER game, the runner is still considered "live" and can be tagged out and must make it to the base they were going to or the base they were coming from to be called safe.
 - If the runner is PURPOSELY and EGREGIOUSLY interfered with by *a player from the other game*, the runner is deemed safe and will be awarded the base to which they were running. The fielder who purposely interfered with the runner is immediately **EJECTED** from the game on the OTHER field.
 - If a runner is in a run down, or sure to be tagged out, they cannot purposefully peel off and "collide" with a fielder from another game in an attempt to draw a "safe" call from the umpire. Umpires must be diligent in watching for this. In this instance, the runner should still be considered live, and therefore able to be tagged out.
 - It is asked that a player from the other game immediately get out of the way so as to not interfere with the play happening in the other field.
11. **Runner passing another runner:** If a runner passes the runner ahead of him, the trail runner is out. The play remains live and the lead runner (who was passed) may continue to run, but at their own risk. If passing the runner is the third out and there is a runner attempting to score, it is a timing play.
12. **Sliding:** Controlled feet first sliding on close plays is strongly encouraged, as it is generally a safer method than head-first sliding. Sliding is recommended but not mandatory.

13. **Take Out Slides:** Take out slides are NOT allowed in the WSL. This is a co-ed softball league, and sliding hard to take out a player making a play is not only dangerous, but also stupid.
- In the event an umpire sees a takeout slide, the player is automatically out.
 - If egregious enough, as determined by the umpire, the player who slid can be removed from the game. Suspension is possible and will be determined by the commissioner.
14. **Aggressive base running:** If a runner aggressively or purposefully collides with a fielder, runs into a fielder, or slides with cleats up in a manner the umpire determines was intended to harm or injure anyone in the base path, the runner is out and immediately ejected from the game.
15. **Avoiding collisions on close plays:** To avoid interfering with the play of infielders and to avoid collisions, runners are strongly encouraged to slide on close plays, but doing so *is not* mandatory.
16. **Runner not sliding on a close play:** A baserunner who chooses not to slide on a close play must ease gently into the base standing up or avoid contact with the fielder by going around him/her. The runner may also simply give themselves up so as to avoid making contact with the fielder.
- A runner who goes into a base standing up and makes hard contact with the fielder will be ruled out, with the possibility of being ejected from the game.
17. **Force out rule:** When a player is forced out, they must peel out of the base path, slide, or duck - essentially get out of the way! A runner is not allowed to stand in the base path, wave their arms, run into the fielder, or interfere with a thrown ball. If the runner does not get out of the way, the player is out and so is the batter who hit the ball. It is a double play. If a runner does not get out of the way, they are at their own risk of being injured by a thrown ball.
18. **Dropped ball on a “peel out of the way” force:** If a runner is headed to a base where a force out is occurring, such as 2B, and the runner peels out of the way, but while doing this the ball is thrown away, the runner can safely get to the next base as long as when they peeled out of the way was not egregious.
- If the runner, in the attempt of peeling out of the way, peeled off 5-10 feet from the baseline, and the ball was dropped or thrown away, this runner can still get to 2B safely.
 - However, if the runner has peeled off to right field or center field, to the point where it’s egregious, the runner is out.
19. **Running to home plate:** Safety is of crucial importance around home plate. Ideally, the runner should slide to avoid a collision. If the runner does not slide, he or she must

ease into home plate or avoid contact with the player covering home. If they do not, he/she is automatically out.

20. **Avoiding collisions:** Avoiding collisions is mandatory. Typically, the on-deck batter is responsible for telling the runner whether to slide into home and teams are encouraged to teach all players to understand and use this system. But take care not to crowd the area around home plate.
21. **No play at home plate and catcher obstruction:** If there is no play at home plate and the catcher (or another fielder) is standing on or in front of home plate, thereby blocking the base path, the runner shall be awarded the vicinity around home plate and shall be called safe.
 - The runner should not barrel into the catcher or other fielders if they are in the way, *but the umpire should be aware that the fielder/catcher is standing on the plate and so the runner should be awarded the plate.*
22. **Runners obstructing home plate:** Once a runner(s) has scored, it is his/her responsibility to clear the area and allow the defense the opportunity to make a play at home if another runner is attempting to score. If runners who have scored are conglomering around home plate and have obstructed the fielder, thereby making it impossible for them to make a play at the plate, the runner attempting to score is out.
23. **Runner is hit by a batted ball:** If a runner is hit by a batted ball while running in fair territory, the runner is out. This includes being hit by a batted ball while standing on ANY of the bases. The ball is dead, and all other runners return to their base of origin.
 - If a runner is in foul territory and not on a base and is hit by a ball, he/she is not out, and it is declared a foul ball.
 - If a runner is on 2B and they are hit by a batted ball, they are OUT. 2B is not a safe haven for runners. This is still fair territory.
 - A runner on 3B or 1B may stand off the base in foul territory, parallel to the base. The umpire must be notified if the runner intends to stand off the bag. Once the ball is put in play, the runner must step on the base and then proceed to the next base (aka “retouch”).
24. **Runner Dragging the Base:** If a baserunner goes into a base and the base slips or slides away, as long as the runner is in the general vicinity of where the base should be, the runner is safe. However, the bases not being stationary does not give the baserunner the right to drag the base. If the runner runs past the base and uses his/her foot to drag the base from where it should be, the runner is considered off the base and therefore “live”.

COURTESY RUNNERS

1. A courtesy runner must be the last batted out or...
2. A courtesy runner can be a player on the bench who is not in the game.
3. In the event there is no last out (such as in the first inning) and there is no player on the bench, the courtesy runner can be the last batter in the lineup.
4. Each team is allowed 3 courtesy runners per game.
 - A team can use 2 courtesy runners for men and 1 courtesy runner for women.
 - A team can use 2 courtesy runners for women and 1 for men.
 - A team CANNOT use 3 courtesy runners for just men or just women.
 - If a team already has three courtesy runners and one of their players gets hurt and wants a FOURTH courtesy runner, this is not allowed. The injured player either runs or they are out of the game.
5. There are no courtesy runners allowed from home plate. The batter must make it to first base (or 2nd or 3rd) before he/she can have a courtesy runner.
6. Once the batter reaches base safely and time has been called, the courtesy runner may enter for the batter.
7. The player(s) who needs a courtesy runner can be designated before the game, before the player's at-bat or after they reach base safely.
8. If there are no runners who have been designated and a player gets injured and cannot run, this player can now have a courtesy runner.
 - Once this player is announced as needing a courtesy runner, they must have one for the rest of the game.
9. The courtesy runner must be of the same gender as the player they are running for.
10. If there are no female players available to courtesy run for a female, the opposing team has the right to choose the runner.
11. If an "all-time" courtesy runner comes in to play the field, they are no longer an "all-time" courtesy runner (unless they happen to be the last batted out). If that player is then taken out of the game, they cannot re-enter as a courtesy runner.
12. If a player who previously needed a courtesy runner is on base and there are no available courtesy runners for some reason (the last batted out also needs a courtesy runner, lack of players, etc....) then the opposing team has the right to choose who will be the courtesy runner.

13. Illegal courtesy runner:

- It is NOT the umpire's responsibility to know who was the last batted out, or who is on the bench and not in the game, or who qualifies as a courtesy runner.
- It is incumbent upon the teams playing to know who is being used as a courtesy runner.
- If an illegal courtesy runner is used, meaning a player who is not the last batted out, or not in the game, not the same gender or not a player who is agreed upon by both teams, this must be brought to the umpire's attention. If this is in fact the case, then a warning is issued to the offending team and the illegal runner is taken off the bases (this player is not out or removed from the game) and replaced with a legal courtesy runner.
 - However, if an illegal courtesy runner is used again (after a warning has been issued) in the same game and is on the bases when a ball is put in play, this runner is OUT. The outcome of the play doesn't matter – the runner is OUT. (Note: This player is not removed from the game).
 - Every subsequent time an illegal courtesy runner is used, the runner shall be called out once the ball is put into play.

FIELDING

1. **Maximum players in the field:** Teams can have a maximum of 10 fielders, 2 of which must be women.
2. **Minimum players in the field:** If a team fields less than 10 players (9 or 8), there must be a catcher and at least 1 woman on the field.
3. **Defending home plate:** On plays at home plate, the fielder taking the throw should be positioned to one side of the plate, giving the runner a clear lane to the plate. The fielder cannot stand on top of home plate or block the path to home plate to make a play.
 - The fielding team should have no more than 2 players near home plate. The fielder backing up the play should be standing near the backstop. If the fielding team has a conglomeration of fielders in front of the plate, which prevents the runner from having a clear path to home plate, then the runner is deemed automatically safe.
4. **Lady Line:** As of 2024, the Lady Line shall be 100 feet beyond each base. This will be the mandatory starting point for all outfielders regardless of the outfielder's sex.
 - The outfielders **cannot** play shallower than 100 feet beyond first, second and third base.
 - Outfielders cannot cross the Lady Line until the batter makes contact with the ball.
 - There must be 4 outfielders when a woman is at the plate. All 4 outfielders must be behind the Lady Line and cannot begin forward of the Line or in the infield.
 - All infielders must be on the infield and NOT in the outfield.
5. **Lady Zone:** The area between the bases and the Lady Line is designated as the Lady Line Zone.
 - Outfielders cannot creep past (or charge) the Lady Line and enter the Lady Line Zone when the ball is pitched. They must wait until the woman has hit the ball.
 - Infielders must start in the infield and cannot run backwards into the Woman Zone when the ball is pitched. They must wait until the woman has hit the ball.
6. **Enforcement of the Lady Line:** If outfielders are too close, or infielders are too deep, the umpire must order the fielders to play further back (or in) to comply with the rule. Opposing managers have the right to request umpires move outfielders back. The umpire may warn the fielders and the managers after the first violation. After multiple warnings, it is at the umpire's discretion to award the woman first base regardless of the outcome of her at bat.

7. **Infield Fly Rule:** An infield fly is a fair fly ball (not including a line drive) hit in the infield or in the shallow outfield. The rule is in effect when first and second, or first, second and third bases are occupied and there are less than two outs. The batted ball must be one that can be caught with ordinary effort.
 - Once “infield fly” is called (loudly & clearly) by the umpire, the batter is automatically out.
 - Runners may advance or tag up at their own risk.
8. **Intentional Drop:** When an infielder (or outfielder playing close to the infield) intentionally drops a line drive to set up a double play, the umpire should call “intentional drop!” The batter is out, the ball is dead, and runners return to their original bases.
9. **Fake Tags:** Fake or “phantom” tags, are strictly prohibited. If a fielder makes a fake tag, he/she is immediately given a warning. On the second offense, the runner is awarded the next base. On the third offense, the runner is awarded the next base, and the fielder is out of the game.
10. **Distracting/Yelling at Fielders:** Any behavior by any member of the hitting team, intended to serve as a distraction to a fielder(s) attempting to field a ball, including but not limited to shouting, making noise, or yelling, “I got it” is strictly prohibited. Any player who engages in this type of behavior will be immediately ejected and the game will not count toward his/her playoff eligibility. Additionally, the play will be deemed dead, the batter will be called out and runners will return to their base of origin.
11. **Calling Timeout:** Fielders can only be granted timeout when a fielder is in the infield and has control of the ball.
 - Timeout should only be granted when runners are safely on their bases.
 - If runners are moving forward, in a run-down or advancing, timeout should not be granted until all runners are on their respective bases.
 - A player in the outfield with or without the ball cannot be granted timeout.
 - **Please note:** Asking/calling for timeout does not mean it has been granted. Timeout is not in effect until declared by the umpire.
12. **Umpire Timeout:** An Umpire can declare “timeout” even if the fielding team has not asked for it, such as when the umpire is returning to the area behind home plate and their back is to the field.

FAIR/FOUL

1. **In Play:** Everything within the foul lines on each field is in play: rocks, park benches, garbage cans, players from other games, empanada purveyors and hipsters. If a batted ball hits any of these objects in play and remains playable, fielders must play the ball accordingly.
2. **Interference:** Play ceases and bases are awarded to the batter if a ball hit into fair territory is picked up, thrown, or otherwise intentionally deflected by a bystander, a player in another game, or if a ball becomes completely impossible to play as a result of some impediment or obstruction such as a hole in the ground, fence, rabid animal etc.
 - If a ball hits a fan, spectator, or a player on the other field, the ball is live. Only if a fan or other player picks up the ball, kicks the ball, purposely deflects the ball, throws the ball away, keeps it, etc. will the runner be awarded bases.
 - The number of bases awarded is at the discretion of the umpire. This will be determined by how far the ball was hit and how far the batter had run at the time of interference. Other runners on the base paths advance from their starting points based upon the number of bases awarded to the batter.
 - Please note that a ball hit out of the park and into the street is not considered unplayable. In most cases, this is a live ball, is not to be considered a ground rule double, and will likely result in a HR.
3. **Tree Balls:** If a ball hits a tree (including a branch, twig, or leaf) and is caught by a fielder the batter is out. It does not matter if the ball's trajectory was altered.
 - If a ball hits the tree **in fair territory** and goes into foul territory, it is still considered a fair ball.
 - If a ball hits the tree **in foul territory** and goes into fair territory, the ball is still considered a foul ball.
 - If a FAIR ball gets stuck in a tree and does not come out, it is a dead ball and a ground rule double.
 - If the ball is deemed stuck in the tree, the fielders cannot shake the tree, the trunk, the branches, etc. to dislodge the ball from the tree. The umpire must deem the ball dead and it is ruled a ground rule double.
 - If a FOUL ball gets STUCK in a tree and does not come out, it is a dead ball. Even if the fielder reaches up into the tree to get the ball, the ball is dead and it's a foul ball.
 - If the ball is deemed stuck in the tree, the fielders cannot shake the tree, the trunk, the branches, etc. to dislodge the ball from the tree. The umpire must deem the ball dead.

4. **Foul Ball Caught by Catcher:** A ball that has been hit by a batter **MUST** go **OVER** the **batter's head** and caught by the catcher before it lands on the ground to be considered a foul ball out.
 - If the batted ball hits the backstop, the dugout fence, a light pole, etc. it is considered dead.
 - Only a ball hitting a tree is considered **LIVE** and catchable. Please refer to the **Tree Ball** rule for a more detailed explanation.
5. **Overthrows/Out of Play:** This rule relates to any ball thrown beyond the first or third base dugout that cannot be immediately picked up by a defensive player.
 - Runners advance at their own risk as the ball is still live and the base is not awarded automatically.
 - Bases awarded are determined by the location of the runners when the ball was **released** by the fielder. The rule is the same regardless of whether the throw came from the outfield or the infield.
 - Example 1: If a runner is running to first and an errant throw goes out of bounds, the runner may attempt to advance to second base only.
 - Example 2: If a runner is headed toward third and an errant throw goes out of bounds, that runner may attempt to score, while other runners on the bases may attempt to advance one base beyond the base toward which they were running.
 - Example 3: If a runner on first is not running towards the next base, or if they are retreating to first base, they can only gain the next base.
6. **Safely Retrieved Ball:** A safely retrieved ball is any ball a defensive player can pick up without intentional interference by a bystander or player who is not playing defense. This includes a ball that hits a tree, pole or garbage can and bounces back. If a fielder safely retrieves the out of play ball while the runner(s) is advancing, the runner(s) may be put out as a result of a throw or tag.
7. **Illegally Retrieved Ball:** If a fielder retrieves a ball that is tossed or handed to them by a bystander, spectator, the hotdog lady, or anyone else, the ball is dead, and the fielder cannot get the runner(s) out. The runner(s) will be awarded bases at the umpire's discretion.
8. **First and Third Base Coaches:** There should be just one first base coach and one third base coach. Managers must make sure their players are not gathering in foul territory near the bases. Not only can this interfere with an attempt to field a ball but with running the bases as well. Umpires can ask players to relocate. Should an umpire determine that a coach/player on the hitting team affected the outcome of a play, they can factor that in when making a call on the field.

- The umpire can issue a warning when there are too many players gathered down the first base or third base line. On the 2nd warning, the umpire can call an immediate out.

UMPIRES

1. **Umpire Selection:** Umpires are selected based on knowledge of the rules, temperament, and reliability.
2. **Umpire Compensation:** As of 2024 in the WSL, umpires are to be compensated \$40 by each team, immediately after the game (\$80 total).
3. **Scorebook:** Umpires are responsible for taking photos of each team's scorebook at the end of the game and emailing them to: wslumps@gmail.com.
 - Umpires that continuously forget to do this will no longer be allowed to umpire.
 - Managers need to be on top of umpires to make sure they take photos of the books. Managers must not pay the umpire until the umpire has taken a photo of their book.
4. **Respect the Umpires:** Managers and players should not disrespect, threaten, yell or curse at umpires. Umpires have a difficult job and should be treated with the same fairness and respect that players give their teammates. Managers and players who continuously berate, yell at, scream at or threaten umpires, will be given a warning and their conduct will be communicated to the Commissioner and the Heads of the Umpires. Based on the Commissioner's assessment, these players, and their manager, can be suspended or kicked out of the league.
5. **In the Event of a Conflict:** Managers and umpires need to confer with each other, but the umpire will make the final decision on any given ruling. It is the responsibility of each manager to maintain control of his/her team and convey the umpire's decision.
 - Umpires can consult other non-participating umpires on a call where they had a bad angle or are unsure of the rules.
6. **Umpires Handling Difficult Players:** Umpires have the right to warn and/or eject any player from a game due to poor behavior, dirty play, aggressive actions and/or fighting. Umpires will field complaints and identify players that are causing trouble and will communicate this to the Commissioner and the Heads of the Umpires. These players and their manager will be given warnings by the Commissioner. If the player continues to be difficult, they may be suspended or removed from the league.
7. **Arguing Balls & Strikes:** Continuously arguing balls & strikes is not allowed.
 - It must be noted that a batter, pitcher, or manager may politely ask where a pitch was (High? Low? Outside? Inside?) to determine what the strike zone is as all umps are known to have their own strike zones. Simply asking where the pitch was should NOT be considered a detriment and does not warrant a warning from the umpire.

- Managers may file a complaint after the game with the Commissioner and Head of Umpires if they believe the umpire consistently called pitches incorrectly.
8. **Umpire Behavior:** If you, as a manager or player, feel that an umpire is bad, difficult, or not performing his/her duties, you have every right to email the head of the umpire crew to let them know. The email address is: wslumps@gmail.com. Please write a detailed email explaining what happened so that it can be discussed and resolved with the umpire.
 9. **Drinking/drugs while umpiring:** Umpires are expressly forbidden from consuming any recreational drugs or alcohol while umpiring a game. If an umpire is reported for consuming recreational drugs or alcohol during a game, the umpire will be suspended from umpiring upon their first offense.
 - If an umpire is reported for consuming recreational drugs or alcohol during a game for a second time, that umpire will be banned from umpiring for the remainder of the season.
 - Any umpire that is visibly intoxicated/high during a game should immediately be reported to the Commissioner and Head of Umpires. They will make necessary changes to ensure the game is called appropriately.
 10. **Umpire Assessment:** Umpires will be graded mid-season and at the end of the season by WSL Managers.
 - Umpires who have been graded subpar will be asked to improve either their attitude and/or their knowledge of the rules.
 - The umpire(s) who has been graded the BEST (mid-season & end of season) will be given an \$80 bonus and will have the opportunity to umpire playoff games. This will of course depend upon the availability of the ump.
 11. **Mercy Rule/Blowouts:** As of 2024, there is no such thing as a mercy rule in the WSL. All teams are expected to play a full 9-innings. Technically, all games are played within a 2-hour window. This is the expectation, but it is understood that there are many factors that come into play.
 - If a team is getting blown out it is incumbent upon the umpire to move the game along quickly. This means limiting the number of warm up pitches, not throwing the ball around between outs etc.
 - If a team is getting blown out, the umpire has every right to politely ask both teams if they'd like to give up their at bats to keep the game within the 2-hour window.
 - This DOES NOT allow the umpire to call every pitch a strike, make poor and egregious calls on the basepaths or do things that are clearly wrong just to move the game along. **The integrity of the game still matters.**

12. **Umpire Uniform:** WSL umpires are required to wear their umpire shirt at all times while umping. (An extenuating circumstance is if an umpire is NOT scheduled to ump and they're filling in for someone. Not having a shirt in this instance is acceptable).
- The first time an umpire is scheduled to ump and they do not have/do not wear their shirt, they will be issued a warning.
 - The second time an umpire is scheduled to ump and they do not have their shirt, they will be fined \$10. They will still be allowed to umpire that game. The fine **MUST** be paid before they can umpire again.
 - The third time an umpire is scheduled to ump and they do not have their shirt, they will be replaced by another ump at the field, who either has or does not have their shirt.
 - The fourth time an umpire is scheduled to ump, and they do not have their shirt, they will be dropped from the list.
13. **When to Wear the Umpire Shirt:** If you are an ump and are playing a game, please **DO NOT** wear the umpire shirt while playing. While it may look cool, we don't want to introduce any additional confusion into a game that is already confusing because, you know, it's the WSL.

CLEANING UP

To remain in good standing with the Parks Department, we need to keep the fields and surrounding areas clean BEFORE and AFTER each game. This means teams playing at 11am may need to do some cleaning before warm-ups/batting practice. This may mean that at the end of the day, the 5pm games need to do some cleaning after their game. It may not sound fair, but that's the way it is. As permit holders, we are responsible for the entire field once we are there.

CODE OF CONDUCT

1. **Code of Conduct:** Everyone involved in the Williamsburg Softball League is expected to show respect towards fellow players and others in the park. Show good sportsmanship. Disagreements and arguments are bound to happen. Don't let them simmer and don't let them boil over. Act like an adult and get over it. It's softball. Foul, abusive, or threatening language directed at anyone, be they umpires, opponents, teammates, or spectators, is totally unacceptable.
2. **Unacceptable Player Behavior:** Using racial or homophobic slurs, making threats, fighting, threatening physical harm, throwing bats, etc... is cause for immediate ejection.
3. **Ejections for difficult players:** If a player in a game is continuously arguing balls and strikes, umpire calls, etc....essentially anything other than being violent, this player can be ejected from the game. However, this person is not (yet!) in danger of being removed from the league. If this pattern of behavior continues, the player may eventually be suspended as well as removed from the league.
 - This person does not have to leave the field and can remain on the bench as long as they are not being difficult.
 - Difficult is defined as: Disrupting the game, yelling, cursing, complaining, arguing, or shouting at opponents, teammates, spectators etc.
 - If, after being ejected from the game, this player continues to be difficult, causing problems, etc., they must now leave the vicinity of the softball fields (which are covered by the permits).
4. **Ejections for violence:** An umpire can eject from the game a person who violates the code of conduct, threatens violence, tries to fight, instigates a fight, engages in a fight (even if they did not instigate it) or plays in a purposeful manner that is a physical danger to other players and/or spectators.
 - A person ejected from the game must take off his/her jersey and leave the park.
 - Managers who do not make their players leave will be suspended for 1 game.
 - If an ejected player does not leave the park, it is a 10-0 forfeit, the player is banned from the league and the manager gets a 1 game suspension.
 - If the player has 2 ejections (overall) for being violent, this player is banned from the league.
 - Ultimately, the decision to ban/suspend players & managers will rest with the Commissioner. Remember, such childish behavior puts the league's playing permit in jeopardy!
 - Any game from which a player is ejected will not count towards their playoff eligibility.

- Games that a player is suspended for will not count toward their playoff eligibility.
5. **Suspended Player:**
 - A player can be suspended for any number of reasons as listed in the WSL Rules.
 - If a player is suspended, they have the right to appeal the suspension to the Commissioner.
 - In most instances, there is no specific number of games a player is suspended. For example, a player could be suspended for a game, two games, four games, etc....depending upon the severity of the infraction.
 - Once a player has been suspended, they must pay a \$50 fine to return to the league OR they can offer to assist the Commissioner or League to work off the fine, e.g.: set up the fields, donate time for a tournament, etc....
 6. **Multiple Suspensions:** If a player is suspended more than once, they are out of the league permanently.
 7. **Throwing of equipment:** Throwing equipment, especially bats, is strictly prohibited. Putting other players in danger is absolutely against the rules. There is no warning for throwing bats - the player is immediately out of the game.
 8. **Slurs:** Racial/Sexual/Homophobic slurs will not be tolerated.
 9. **Social Media Violation:** Facebook violation rules also apply to playing games. If a player violates the Code of Conduct on Facebook, they are at risk of being suspended from the league.
 10. **Removing a Team from the WSL:** A team can be removed by the Commissioner without having to call a vote from managers. This can be done without warning if it is deemed that the team is detrimental to the league, its permits, the safety of players or the community. No team, or player, is bigger than the league. The Commissioner can decide if he wants to return the team fee or not. Teams that sign up for the WSL do so by choice and are therefore participating under the rules of the league.
 11. **Players of Teams Who Have Been Removed from the League:** In the event a team is removed from the league, all players on their roster will also be suspended from the league for the remainder of the summer and fall seasons - no exceptions.
 - All players will also be removed from the league's Facebook page.
 - If the player wants to return to the league the following year, they will have to petition the Commissioner who will decide whether this person is allowed back in the league or not.
 12. **Managers Veto Rule:** A new rule put in place by the Commissioner can be vetoed if $\frac{2}{3}$ of the league's managers (currently 12 of 16) vote against it.

THE GOLDEN RULE(S)

1. Remember, at its heart, this league was, is and forever will be, laid-back and fun. Rules and regulations notwithstanding, let's remember not to take things too seriously. Be fair. Be mindful. Be nice. As always, teams are encouraged to invite their opponents out for drinks after each game. The main objective is for everyone to have a good time.
2. Play ball!

WSL WEBSITE

1. As stated above, this league was, is and forever will be, laid-back and fun. Therefore, the website will follow the same creed. It's about fun, hanging out, softball, networking, having a good time and competing. At the end of the day, this is beer league softball. Let's remember not to take things too seriously.
2. Once the games are over, please email your scores and a photo of your scorebook to wslstatinfo@gmail.com and we will post them ASAP (Monday evening at the latest). We plan on keeping the site as up-to-date and as accurate as possible in regard to scores, standings etc.
3. Each team has their own profile page. The page needs an image that will serve as your logo. You can email me any .jpeg or .bmp file. Email addresses for each team's manager and co-manager need to be listed on your team's profile page so other managers can reach out if necessary. If you want additional photos posted, send them my way. If you have a motto, team saying, slogan etc.... send them to me and I'll get them up.
4. The website is about interacting, sharing, and having a hub where everyone can go. Let's make it fun!

Any website question, suggestion or complaint can be sent to the Commissioner.

WSL FACEBOOK PAGE

1. The WSL Facebook page is the public face of the WSL. The page is moderated as little as possible so as to encourage everyone to get involved. Whether you're a new player or a gritty veteran, the Facebook page is open to all to post, share ideas, laugh, and have a good time.
2. In order to keep it this way, we are instituting rules to ensure that the Facebook page is a safe place for everyone. Please note that the league, Commissioner, and others associated with the league are not held liable for anything said in the group. We will not punish the entire league due to the actions of a few people (aka: idiots).
3. Please note the following rules:
 - All posts should be fun, smart, creative, or informational in nature. Feel free to post if you are seeking players to fill-in or if you are looking to join a team. If you want to post something funny, non-offensive and good natured, go for it!
 - Soliciting our players by posting on the page without express permission from the Commissioner will result in immediate suspension from the page.
 - Fighting, arguing, etc. on the page is not allowed. If you have a problem with someone and want to fight, feel free. But do not do it at the fields, do not do it at any of the bars who sponsor teams, and do not do it on the Facebook page! Find somewhere else - get their number and take care of your business personally.
 - Instigating fights or arguing is not allowed. Challenging people to physical altercations, whether in jest or not, is prohibited. It can be difficult to decipher whether a challenge is a joke or not, so it's best to leave that off Facebook. Again, get their number and take care of business away from the league.
 - Antagonizing, harassing, demeaning, etc. of people or players on the WSL Facebook page is prohibited.
 - Players who violate the above rules are at risk of getting suspended or removed from the WSL.
4. Sexist, homophobic, or racist comments and pretty much any remark you know shouldn't be said, should not be said. It's quite simple.

APPROVED BATS

1. If a bat appears on this list, it is legal to use in league play. If a bat does not appear on this list, it is not legal to use. If a bat listed has a model number(s) in parentheses, only that specific model number(s) is legal to use. Any bat with composite materials is illegal. All wood softball bats are legal.
2. If you find a non-composite, aluminum bat that is not on this list, please send the manufacturer and model number of the bat to: WSLCommish@gmail.com.

Williamsburg Softball League Approved Bat List - 2024

Akadema

- X919SP

Anderson

- Nanotek
- Flex
- FlexTech
- Ignite
- KSP
- Pyrotech
- RocketTech / 2.0
- Techwrap / Techzilla
- Wraptech

Bombat

- Daddario
- Johnny Ice/J14

Debeer

- Clincher Silver/New York/EST
- Icon
- Shockwave

Demarini

- 375
- B-52
- Black/White/Raw/Steel
- Bruiser
- Corndog Wood
- Defiance
- Demolition
- Distance (All Models)
- Double Wall
- F2/F3/F4/SF 5,6,7
- Fatboy
- Nitro
- Rayzr
- SF5/SF8
- Steel
- Ultimate Weapon
- Uprising
- Venum/Vexxum
- Windy City

Dudley

- Assault/Assault II

Easton

- Black Magic
- C-Core
- ConneXion CCore/Ti-Core/Z-Core
- CV 12
- Cyclone
- Diamond Pro
- Hammer
- Havoc
- Impact
- L7,L8,L9
- Power Core Plus (S90)
- Rebel

- Redline (Sunbelt, SC900)
- Reflex Reflex C-Core / Rival
- Ronin Alloy
- Ronin ATAC Alloy 1 Piece
- Salvo Silver Scandium SP12SVM
- Salvo Silver Scandium SP12SVS • Salvo Silver Scandium SP15SVS • SP14S /SP16S S50, S300, S500
- ST8-ZB ConneXion Z-Core
- ST260 Quantum Sc900
- ST300 ConneXion (Sc888)
- ST-10 ConneXion
- Stealth Sc900 (Non-Composite)
- SV12
- SZ77
- Ti-Core
- Tri-Shell, Tri-Shell ConneXion
- Triple 7
- Triple 8
- V12 SV1
- X-Treme
- Z-Core

Grover

- Gold
- MVP
- Platinum / Platinum II
- Silver

Kelly

- Mach 10
- Wraptech

Louisville Slugger

- 125 Softball
- Advanced Player
- AI
- Air Attack / 3/ II
- Air Inertia (All Models)

- C405 / C405 Plus / C555
- CU31 Alloy
- Double Action / Double Threat
- Dynasty / XXL
- Gamer
- Gen 1x
- Gold
- Grand Slam
- Inertia
- PowerDome / Gen 1x
- Response PowerDome
- Response XXL
- Samurai
- Silver Slugger
- Slash
- TPS PowerDome (All Models)
- Vapor (SBVA15U)
- Warrior PowerDome
- Warrior XXL (All Models)
- XXL

Miken

- Maniac
- Vicious
- MV-1

Mizuo

- Crush (Banzai Aluminum)
- Fury (Banzai Aluminum)

Nike

- Aero Launch
- Air Max Thrust
- Air Storm / Air Storm GPT
- Battaboom
- Black Powder
- Bomber Show
- Hawk

- Ignitor
- Kaos
- Keystone
- Storm
- Surge
- Venom

One Cryo

- Equalizer 1&2

PowerFlite/PowerHouse

- Aerodyne
- JA-7 ERC
- Ozone 1&2
- Troy Brumbalow
- Xtreme

Rawlings

- Ambush SP1AM2
- Caliber SPCLBR
- Fuel
- Paramount
- Powerforged
- Recon
- Steeles
- 7178
- Alien
- Blue
- C555
- Impact 2
- Laserflex / 2 Wall
- Storm
- Triple X
- Turbo Flex
- XLT / XLTG

String King

- Metal Pro

Toledo

- Buzzsaw
- Inferno-BL / EL
- Nitroglycerin

Worth

- Blade EST (W8EST2)
- Blade W8SB
- Clincher
- EST / EST MAX (Metal Models)
- EST Hybrid (All Models)
- Excalibur
- Insanity Blue / Gold
- Insanity W4SB7
- Lithium (SBTST)
- Salvo Silver Scandium SP15SVS • Mayhem Single Wall
- MG46 (SSBTG) / (SSMG)
- Powercell / PowerZone
- Prodigy
- PST (Metal Models)
- Quad EST (All Models)
- Revolver / Revolver TST
- Silencer
- Supercell / VT
- UltraFlex
- Whiplash W3SB Wicked WWS405 X-Caliber (SBE)