

LEAGUE RULES: Official rules enforced will be those in the USSSA Official Rule Book and the Minnesota Recreation and Park Association State Tournament Rules and Guide Book. The following are Hopkins-Minnetonka rule exceptions:

1. A minimum of eight players are required to play a league game. During the regular season a team may start a game with 5 men and 4 women. However, during the playoffs a team must play with an even number of men and women (5 men and 4 women is not allowed in the playoffs). 5 men and 3 women is never allowed. A team is never allowed to play with more than 5 men.
2. A player arriving late may immediately enter the game. The player is to be immediately slotted at the end of the gender batting sequence regardless of order status at the time the player arrive.
3. Games will start as scheduled when a team has eight players. A 5-minute grace period will be granted to teams who do not have enough players to start. After the 5-minute grace period the game will be forfeited and the option of a scrimmage will be provided. The scheduled umpire will be the game official. An umpire will not officiate a game forfeited due to the ejection of a player.
4. Games are limited to 1 hour in length. If a game is tied after 7-innings with time left, play will continue using international rules (excludes championship game in playoffs). Tie games will stand as a tie with each team receiving $\frac{1}{2}$ a win and $\frac{1}{2}$ a loss. **With the exception of playoff games,** a minimum of 4 innings or 40 minutes is required for a regulation game. Games not of regulation length due to interruptions by rain, darkness or protest, will be rescheduled and most often played as a new game, but may be continued from the point of interruption should the program director deem the situation appropriate. Teams must make their best effort to field the same team as the original game.
5. Run Rules:
 - a. Games will be automatically terminated when a team is 10 or more runs ahead after 5 innings, 15 or more runs ahead after 4 innings, and 20 or more runs ahead after 3 innings.
 - b. Flip-Flop rule - When the visiting team is five or more runs ahead entering the final inning of play or when the visiting team is ahead and the run differential meets or exceeds the designated run-rule entering a run-rule inning, a flip flop situation exists. The home team will then remain at bat and automatically become the visiting team. Should the new visiting team not score sufficiently to either take the lead in the final inning, or reduce the run differential below the designated run-rule, the game is over. Should the new visiting team score sufficiently, the game proceeds as normal. The flip-flop situation can reverse should the game-score so dictate.
6. Men and women must alternate in the batting order.
 - a. A team having an equal number of men and women players, or more men than women players, must alternate genders in the batting order.
 - b. A team having more women than men players may either alternate genders in the batting order or bat "extra" women consecutively at the end of the batting order.
 - c. A Round Robin batting order is assumed. If a team elects to use an alternatively approved batting order, they must inform the other team and the umpire prior to the start of the game.
 - d. A team is assumed to slot all players in its batting order unless said team informs the umpire prior to the game of an alternate lineup.
7. When a female is at bat, all four outfielders (no short-fielders allowed) must be in a position behind an imaginary or marked line, which is 70 feet behind each base, until the ball is hit. All infielders must line up behind the baseline until the ball is hit. If there is a violation of this rule and an out is made, the batter will be given credit for a single or may choose to hit again.
 - a. Excluding the pitcher and catcher. At no time may a co-rec team position more than four defensive infielders.
8. All leagues will use a three-ball/two-strike count with one courtesy foul for league games. If the courtesy strike is hit foul, the ball is dead and runners may not advance.
 - a. Fall Co-Rec Softball does NOT have a courtesy foul.
9. When a male batter is walked with two outs, he will be awarded first and second base. The female batter who follows has the option to bat or receive an automatic walk. If a male batter is walked with less than 2 outs, he is awarded second base, but the female batter who follows must bat.
10. **If batting 10,** teams will be allowed to use limited free substitutions. Any player substituted for may re-enter the game, but only at a defensive position, and only for the person who replaced them. Removed players must remain out of the game for at least one inning (6 outs). A player may also re-enter the game if, due to an injury, a team would otherwise have fewer than 10 players.
11. If a team is forced to play with less than 10 players as a result of the ejection of a player for unsportsmanlike conduct, the ejected player will be considered an out when it becomes their turn in the

- batting order. A team will not be penalized if they have a legal substitute for this player, or if the player is forced to leave a game due to injury or other circumstance.
12. Courtesy runners will be allowed (men for men, women for women), but only in the event of an injury. This must be the person of the same gender who has made the team's last out.
 13. Teams are limited to two home runs per game. Home runs over the limit are considered an out.
 14. Following the initial touch at first base, a runner may then use the white and orange portions of the bag interchangeably.
 15. Teams that hit homeruns or foul balls over the fence must send a player to retrieve the ball and return it to play.
 16. Defensive players may not switch positions during an inning unless there is a pitching change or injury resulting in a player substitution. Players may not physically overlap one another before the ball is hit. Fielding positions can only be changed between innings or whenever the lineup is altered for a pitching substitution.
 17. No player is allowed to disrupt the solid materials within the confines of the batter's box. Loose material may be spread with the foot, but no digging will be permitted. On the first offense, the umpire will warn the batter and the team. On each subsequent offense by any member of the team, the batter will be declared out.
 18. A Four-Base Error, or a ball that touches any part of the player's equipment or body and then ricochets over the fence in fair territory prior to touching the ground, is a hit-and-sit play and does not need to be run out by the batter or any baserunner(s).
 19. Pitchers will be allowed to deliver the ball from a distance of 50' (pitching rubber) and up to 56' provided they stay within the dimensions of the rubber. The pitcher still must present the ball and pause before making their delivery.
 20. Only rostered players and managers, as well as one scorekeeper, are allowed on a team's bench during the game. Non-rostered individuals are restricted from the field of play at all times. No pets allowed.
 21. Rosters are frozen at the start of the seventh league game. No additions can be made after that time. If an unrostered player competes in a playoff game for a team, the team will be disqualified from the playoffs immediately.
 22. It is the responsibility of the home team to supply a new ball and keep the official score. The visiting team must supply a good used ball for each game.
 23. If a player develops bleeding during a game, the player must be removed from play until bleeding is controlled and dressed. In this case, the player may leave the game and return without penalty. Game time will not be stopped for injuries. It is the responsibility of the teams to bring first aid supplies to the field.
 24. Umpires will determine if a player's physical condition and attire will enable them to be allowed to participate in a league game.
 25. Should an umpire not show up for a game, teams should appoint a volunteer umpire, if possible. The volunteer umpire will be paid and the game will count. In this case, the game results must be phoned into the Program Manager at 952-939-8351 along with the name and phone number of the volunteer.
 26. Batting practice is not permitted at Big Willow #5 or #6 or on the soccer field.
 27. Big Willow Park closes at 10:30 p.m. Games will end and field lights will be shut off by this time.
 28. Smoking is allowed on city property, however it is not allowed on the playing field or in the dugouts.
 29. If a team withdraws from the league prior to May 12, their past record will be canceled and will not count toward their opponent's record.
 30. Teams finishing in 1st place in each league will receive a gift card to a local restaurant.
 31. In the case of ties in the standings at the end of the season, the tie breakers are as follows: 1) Win/Loss Record; 2) Head to Head; 3) Run differential (of season); 4) Total runs for the season.
In the instance that one team has played more games than another, final standings will be determined by overall winning percentage.
 32. Teams forfeiting a game are assessed a \$20 forfeit fee if the forfeit is not reported to the Program Manager by 3 p.m. on the day of the game. If a fee is assessed to a team, the team's manager will be notified and payment must be made to the Recreation Services office by 12 p.m. on the team's next game day. Failure to pay by this time results in another forfeit. Any team with three forfeits will be dropped from the league.
 33. League scores and standings will be updated and posted weekly on the city of Minnetonka website – www.minnetonkamn.gov/softball.

EQUIPMENT:

1. A list of legal bats can be found at www.ussa.com. The listed bats are legal to use in the Hopkins-Minnetonka leagues. Bats need to have the old or new USSSA watermark on them. Any bats not listed are not legal in any USSSA program. Players attempting to use illegal bats may be suspended from the league.
2. Gloves & Mitts: Players at all positions may wear either a glove or a mitt while playing defense.

PLAYER CONDUCT:

1. **Alcohol/Beer:** There shall be no alcoholic beverages, including beer, at any City of Minnetonka parks, Hopkins School District facilities, Minnetonka School District facilities or City of Edina park. This includes the playing field, bleachers, and parking lot area. Do not bring alcohol to these locations.

Beer and wine is permitted in Hopkins Central Park, but only to teams having first obtained an approved Alcohol Permit. In these cases, alcohol is restricted to the picnic area only. No glass bottles are allowed in Hopkins parks and no alcohol is permitted in the parking lot or in the park after 10 p.m. Alcohol permits can be obtained through the Recreation Services office by calling 952-939-8203. The permit fee is \$25 and applicants must provide a copy of a form of state issued government identification with their application.

2. The conduct of teams playing in Hopkins-Minnetonka Recreation Services leagues must be above satisfactory. Managers must set examples of fair play and sportsmanship for their players. The Hopkins-Minnetonka Player Code of Conduct is as follows: *“At no time shall any person lay a hand on, shove, strike, use abusive language, or threaten an official of the Hopkins-Minnetonka Recreation Department on park or school property.”* Such incidents will require persons to be suspended until the Program Manager considers the case. Maximum penalty shall be suspension from local league play for one season or up to suspension for life. The umpire’s authority at a game shall not be questioned. They have been instructed to enforce the league rules. The umpire has the authority to remove a player, coach, or manager from the game for violation of the rules. Players removed from the game for unsportsmanlike conduct will not be allowed to compete in the following game and a \$20 conduct violation fee will be assessed. A second ejection from a game by any one player will result in suspension for the remainder of the season.
3. Profanity on or around the playing field, even casual profanity, is not permitted. It is sufficient grounds for expulsion from the premises. Casual profanity pertains to expletives not necessarily directed towards an umpire or player, but made out of frustration for a bad play. In these cases, if the offending team is at bat and the player uttering the profanity has made an out, the following player will also be declared out. If the profanity is made by a defensive player, the first player to bat in their half of the inning will be declared out.
4. Please be respectful of the game facilities and remove all litter from your team’s bench and the surrounding area before leaving the game site.

PROTESTS:

1. Notification of intent to protest must be made to the umpire immediately before the next pitch or the protest will be invalid.
2. Protests on rules of the game will not be considered unless they in some way affect the outcome.
3. Legitimate protests must be made in writing within 24 hours after the scheduled time of contest. A \$20 deposit is required for each protest filed. If the protest is won, the protesting team will be refunded the deposit.

If you have any questions, please contact Jesse Izquierdo: jjizquierdo@minnetonkamn.gov, or call (952) 939-8351.