

2023 Western Kansas 4th-7th Grade Softball League Rules

1. Players must be in 4th-7th Grade to play Softball. A player's grade is determined by (2022-2023) school year.
2. The Coach is responsible for the sportsmanship of the team.
3. League game times will be 6:30 p.m. unless a change is agreed on by the league or Coach. Games will be played on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Game night will consist of two games with the first counting for league record.
4. Game night will consist of 2 games with only the first game counting toward the team record. Game format is as follows:
 - Games will be a maximum of 5 innings
 - When game time reaches 50 minutes, the current inning will be completed and only 1 additional inning will be played. A new inning begins as soon as the final out of the inning is made. **Game clock starts with first pitch of the game.**
 - Teams are limited to 5 runs per inning, except the last inning which will allow 10 runs (whether it's the 5th inning or not).
 - If the home team is down by 11 runs at any time in the final inning, the game is complete.
 - At least 3 innings must be played to be considered an official game.
 - **First game only: Will allow one extra inning to break tie. The last scheduled batter in the current rotation on the lineup card begins inning at 2nd base with 1 out. Each batter starts with a 2-1 count and there is a 10-run limit. Tie stands if not broken in one inning.**

In case of rain or any act of God, scores will revert to the last full inning after 3 innings have been played. A decision must be made within 30 minutes by the head umpire, in case of an act of God, whether the game is to continue or not.

5. Equipment. No steel spikes or metal tipped cleats will be allowed in any league or tournament game. Batter's helmets must be used by all batters and base runners. Helmets must be a kind that protects the ears, temples, and top of the head. Ball caps, visors, or headbands are optional but highly recommended. If one or a combination of these headwear items are worn by a team, they must be worn properly and be of the same color. Shirt tails must be kept in while playing a game. All balls must be approved NFHSU balls. The catcher shall wear a catcher's helmet during warm-ups and game play. Each player must wear a uniform identical in color and style. Uniform numbers are required and must be a contrasting color to the uniform color.
6. **Re-entry rule:** Any of the starting or substitute players may be withdrawn and re-entered once during a game, providing that they occupy the same position in the batting order. The original player and the substitute(s) cannot be in the lineup at the same time. **EXCEPTION: Injury re-entry rule** - In case of an injury, if no substitute is left on the bench, a replaced player may again enter the game for the injured player.
7. If less than 9 players are used after the contest has started, the open spot in the batting order will be an automatic out. No team will be allowed to play more than the 9 players in a defense set, but a team can use a EH (10 batters), If the team uses the EH they can enter the game as a position player at any time, but the batting order does not change. If a team starts the game with a EH, they must end the game with an EH. In case of an injury with no substitute the team may drop the EH in the game without taking an out.
8. Pitching distance is to be 40 ft. Bases are to be 60 ft. apart.
9. A 12" NFHS/KSHSAA approved softball will be used.
10. The head coach may verbally request an intentional walk to the batter upon notifying the home plate umpire.
11. Crash Rule: If in the judgment of the umpire, the crash is intentional, Runner is declared out, if not play will continue. Rules concerning obstruction are covered in the official rule books.
12. Use of any form of tobacco by a player, coach, manager or umpire while on the playing field is prohibited. Any violation of the rule causes the individual to be removed from the game. For this rule, dugouts, player bench and bullpens will be considered part of the playing field.

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13. The 2022 NFHS/KSHSAA Official baseball rule book will apply if there is no league rule covering the play or situation.
14. A timer showing the elapsed time of the game must be displayed for each game so that it is visible to both teams and all umpires at all times.