

Wayne County Rural League

2026 Fast Pitch Rules

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Wayne County Rural League follows the IHSAA rules for softball with the following modifications/additions. Any other rules are not valid or enforceable.

Rule 1 – Field & Equipment

Section 1 - Field

- Base lines will be 60'
- Pitching Rubber or chalk line will be 35' with 16' circle
- 15' Arc from home plate arching from 1st base foul line to 3rd base foul line

Section 2 – Softballs

- Size = 11"
- Cor = .47
- Compression = 375 lbs
- Home team will provide 2-ball for every game (1 new & 1 used)

Section 3 – Bats

- Bear either the 2000, 2004 or the USA Softball All Games certification mark
- Must not appear on USA Softball's Non-Approved Bats with Certification Marks list. (www.usasoftball.com)
- Wood bats do not need to bear mark but cannot exceed 2 ¼" in diameter

Section 4 – Helmets

- Must include attached face mask
- If chinstraps are worn, they must be worn securely under the chin.
- Mandatory when at bat, on base paths, or in on-deck circle

Section 5 – Catcher's Equipment

- Catcher's helmet with face mask
- Body (Chest) protector
- Protective shin guards

Section 6 – Other Equipment

- Heart guard and face mask for pitcher is required
- Face Mask optional for all infielders (WCRL waiver must be signed for every player)

Rule 2 – Players, Substitutes and Coaches

Section 1 – Players, Positions

- Age of player is determined by age on September 1st.
- Minimum of 7 players to start game
- 10 Players on the field - 4 outfielders – no rover
- All rostered players will bat
- All rostered players must play a minimum of 2 innings in the field
- Benched player due to disciplinary reasons, opposing coach must be notified prior to start of game
- Maximum number of players present – all must play
- Remain in dugouts during game
- Team must have a catcher (rostered player)
- Pitcher position must start with two feet inside the 16' circle and behind the pitching rubber while the ball is pitched
- NO cell phones
- Coaches encourage players to not wear dangling earrings.

Section 2 – Substituting

- Player(s) may be brought up from a lower division to bring a team to 10 players
 - Lower division commitment comes 1st – if game scheduled, player is not eligible to play up
 - Must be a registered player on a league team and on a roster in the community
 - Opposing coach must be notified at the start of game of move up player(s)
 - Permanent move up – league commissioner must be notified – player cannot return to lower division
- Late Arrival
 - Team starts with less than 10 players, players can play
 - Team starts with 10 players, arrives before 3rd inning and is on lineup card, eligible as a sub. Arrives after the start of 3rd inning, ineligible to play.
CLARIFICATION- if late arrival is a starter, they can't be put in the field in the middle of an inning, only when substitutions are made.
 - Player brought up will remain in the game, even if late players enter.
- No Offensive Substitutions
- No automatic out if team is playing with less than 9 players

Section 3 – Injured/Ejected Player

- Ejected player will be an out when they come up in the batting order
- If a player is injured, they may re-enter the game
 - If injured player needs to seek medical attention and leaves the game, the injured player will be removed from the lineup and the team will not take an out.
 - If injured player does not need to seek medical attention, and they elect not to return to their next at bat, that will result in an out.
- Bleeding
 - Injured player must be removed from game and cleaned up
 - Open wounds must be covered
 - Clothing with blood on it must be changed
 - Once bleeding has stopped, player may re-enter the game, at umpire's discretion
 - Game should be stopped for player to get ready

Section 4 – Coaching

- No swearing or obscene gestures at practice or games
- No smoking or chewing tobacco products on the field or in the dugout
 - Penalties
 - 1st offense – Warning
 - 2nd Offense - Automatic ejection from game and suspended from following game
 - 3rd offense – Banned from participation in any game function (i.e. scorekeeper)
 - No Walks
 - Strike out – 3 swings or 6 pitches, except on foul ball
 - 6th pitch foul – batter receives another pitch
 - 6th pitch hits pitcher - dead ball and batter receives another pitch
 - Pitcher must have both feet in the circle
 - Picks up bat after contact has been made
 - Cannot coach base runners
 - 2-minute time limit between innings for team to take the field
 - 1st offense- Warning
 - 2nd offense- Runner(Last out) is placed on second
 - 3rd offense- Coach removed from game
 - **Rule 3 – Starting and**

Ending Game Section 1 – Games

- 6 inning game

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- 6 run limit per inning/per team
- 90-minute time limit
 - Championship game in tournament has no time limit
 - Run/Mercy rule applies until the 6th inning - unlimited

Section 2 – Starting a Game

- 15-minute grace period is allowed before game is called a forfeit.
- Umpire is to announce official start time

Section 3 – Ending a Game

- Game is tied at end of 6 innings – umpire’s discretion to continue or call due to darkness
 - If called due to darkness – reschedule at earliest convenient time to complete
- 15-minute warning is to be given prior to time limit expiring
- Upon reaching time limit – inning is to be completed

Rule 4 – Suspension of Play

- When thunder is heard or lightning in any form (cloud-to-cloud, cloud-to-ground, etc.) is seen, which means that the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning, play will be suspended.
- Once play has been suspended, resumption of play, if warranted, should not occur until at least 30 minutes has passed since the last thunder was heard or last flash of lightning was witnessed.
- 30-minute clock restarts when thunder is heard, or lightning witnessed again.
- Games cancelled due to rain or the above conditions
 - Less than 4 innings completed – game starts over
 - 4 or more completed innings (top of the 5th or more) will be considered a complete game

Rule 5 – Batter & Defense

Section 1 – Fair vs Foul

- Ball inside the 15’ arc – Foul
 - Ball touched by fielder and then lands in 15’ arc – Fair
 - Ball hits beyond 15’ arc then rolls back inside 15’ arc – Foul
- Ball stops on 15’ arc line – Fair

Section 2 – Defense

- No infield fly rule
- Must have possession of ball in order to block runner’s access to base
- Blocking without possession – runner will be awarded the base

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- Player in possession of the ball must try to make a play (if one is available)
- Player in possession of the ball must try to make a play prior to passing ball onto player/pitcher
- Play is over
 - lead runner must have stopped, and infield has possession of the ball

Section 3 – Other

- No bunting, slapping, or any variations of the “short game” is permitted

Rule 6 – Batter- Runner and Runner

- Base runner that comes into contact with a batted ball is out
- If batted ball is touched by a defensive player first (other than the pitcher) or defensive player makes a reasonable attempt at the ball, runner is safe and may advance at their own risk
- Batter is hit by batted ball outside the batter’s box and in fair territory, is out
- Base runners CANNOT steal
- Base runners are allowed to leave the base upon contact of ball by the batter
- Base runner leaving prior to contact by batter is out

- Thrown Bat
 - 1st Offense – batter is warned and play stands
 - 2nd Offense – batter is out. All runners return to original base
 - Warning is per batter not per team
 - Umpire determines bat was thrown in anger, player may be ejected without warning
- Courtesy Runner- cannot be used prior to two outs
 - Used for pitcher, catcher, or injured player
 - Enter after pitcher/catcher/injured player is safe and play has stopped.
 - Player who made the last out is to be used
- Sliding at home is not required
- Overthrow
 - Base runner may only advance 1 base (per batted ball)
 - Advancement is at own risk
 - Additional overthrows DOES NOT result in an additional base

Rule 7 – Scoring and Record Keeping

- Home team scorebook is the official book, unless there is evidence of tampering
- All teams must keep score
- All ties for 1st and 2nd place in the league will be determined by the following tie breakers:
 - Head to Head
 - Runs Allowed
 - Runs Scored
- Games not played/made up prior to tournament will be a forfeit for both teams
- All regular season games must be played prior to the tournament

- Tie Game
 - Each team will start the inning with runner on 2nd base and 1 out
 - The last out from the previous inning will be the runner starting on 2nd base

Rule 8 – Umpiring

- A commissioner cannot umpire tourney
- Umpires DO NOT need to be patched
- Umpires control games
 - If a coach argues a call in a disrespectful manner – warning will be given, and coach is restricted to the bench
 - If a 2nd warning is given, the coach will be ejected
 - Upon 2nd warning, commissioners will be notified, and a verbal warning will be given
 - If conduct is repeated after above verbal warning, commissioners will determine if the coach may return in the future.

Rule 9 – Others specific to WCRL

- Games need rescheduled, but not necessarily played, within 7 days
- Games will not be postponed if a team is short players
- Games scheduled that conflict with school affiliated events can be rescheduled.
- All other reschedules must be approved by the commissioners of that community.
- End of season tournament
 - List of approved subs must be submitted to WCRL Board by noon, 2 days prior to the tournament start date.
 - If an illegal player (not on approved list) is playing, team will be disqualified.
 - If there are more than 4 players on a team registered with an organization such as USSSA(travel ball), or equivalent organization they will not be eligible for tourney/trophies.
 - A team playing outside of the WCRL season (March 17th - November 1st) will not be eligible for tourney/trophies
 - If a coach is thrown out of a tourney game (not championship game) the coach is removed from that game, and suspended from the next game.
 - If removed from the tourney championship game, they must pay \$300 fine (\$150 will go to the hosting community, \$150 will go to WCRL funds).
 - All tournament games will be played to completion (ie. Time limit or run rule)

Rule 10 – Zero Tolerance

No tolerance is defined as any action including but not limited to swearing, arguing, fighting, heckling, threatening, acting out or not following the rules in any way.

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Coaches may discuss a call within a controlled and respectful manner only. Prior to the start of every game the umpire will notify the coaches of this rule and the coach is responsible for his/her team and their fans. An announcement will also be made by the umpire to the crowd before the start of the game.

The umpire or commissioner has the authority to remove the violator

Commissioner can over-rule the umpire decision on a case by case basis

Consequences of violation:

- Coach or Player – 1 game suspension (next scheduled game)
- Spectator(s) – Anyone causing a disturbance with umpires or coaches will be asked to leave the property of the ball diamond. If they refuse to leave, their team will forfeit the game. If offending spectator is a parent/guardian, they will be ejected from that game and the commissioners will be notified. The player will not be ejected from the game and will be the responsibility of the head coach until the game is complete. If the same parent repeatedly causes issues, they will be banned from all WCRL properties for one year.
- An ejected person has the right to dispute the suspension by contacting their league's commissioner

Revised 2026 Season

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