

Gallatin Valley Softball Association

League Rules

Updated 05/20/2026

These rules are in effect during regular season games only (both summer and fall leagues). For District tournaments, end of season tournaments, and invitational tournaments, all official USA Softball rules will be followed and will not be overruled by this document. Any tournament may have their own set of rules as well. All official USA Softball rules will be followed, unless noted below.

1. Scheduling of Games
 - a. The games schedule will be posted to the GVSA webpage.
 - b. Schedule is subject to change – teams are responsible for checking their schedule online.
 - i. If change is for a game less than 2 weeks away, team managers will be contacted directly regarding the change.
 - ii. Schedule changes over 2 weeks away – teams are responsible for checking their schedule.
 - iii. GVSA will make all efforts to not change the schedule and minimize impact of changes.
2. Make-up Games/Reschedule Procedure
 - a. When games are canceled due to inclement weather, then the following procedure will occur:
 - i. All make-up games will be scheduled by GVSA and posted to the website.
 - ii. Make-up games will occur on a night which the teams normally play IF POSSIBLE. If needed, the games will occur on a different night.
 - b. If a team fails to show up for a make-up game, they will forfeit that game. No further make-up of these games will be scheduled.
 - c. Teams are responsible for checking the schedule online www.gvsoftball.org.
 - d. If you have questions or problems with make-ups, contact GVSA Board Members.
 - e. A team can request a reschedule with at least 48 hour's notice. The game will be rescheduled at a date/time that works for both teams. If a timeslot is not able to be found, the team initiating the change will have to incur a forfeit. Games rescheduled within the 2-week window may not have umpire coverage.
 - f. Forfeits:
 - i. If a team forfeits a game for various reasons, some of which are outlined below, the game will not be rescheduled.
 - ii. Note: home 7 visitors 0
3. Smoking / Alcohol
 - a. No smoking in the dugout or on the field of play at any time.
 - b. No drinking of alcohol in the dugout or on the field of play at any time. c. This rule applies to coaches, managers, and players. Players not in the starting line-up are still considered in the game for the purpose of the rule.
 - c. Effect: A player discovered breaking this rule will be disqualified for the remainder of the game. A coach or manager discovered breaking this rule will be ejected from the game.
 - d. Intoxicated player:

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- e. If in the umpire's judgment, a player is deemed to be too intoxicated whereas to be a risk to themselves or another player, the player will be disqualified from the game.
4. Team requirements:
- a. The required number of players to play a game in all divisions of play is nine. If at game time, a team has 6 or more, but less than the required number of players to start the game (9), they will take visitors and start batting, with the missing players being outs. If by the third out they do not have the required number of players, the game is forfeited.
5. Shorthanded rule:
- a. If a team begins play with more than the required number of players, that team may continue the game with one less player than is currently in the line-up whenever a player leaves the game for any reason other than an ejection. Under no circumstances shall a team be permitted to bat less than 9 players in slow pitch.
 - b. If playing shorthanded and a substitute arrives, he must be inserted immediately into the vacant spot. If he/she refuses for any reason that player becomes ineligible for the remainder of the game.
 - c. If the player leaving the game is the base runner or batter, the runner or the batter shall be declared out.
 - d. When the player who has left the game is scheduled to bat an out shall be declared for each turn at bat. An inning or game can end on an automatic out. e. The player who has left the game cannot return to the line-up.
 - e. Exception: A player who has left the game due to an injury may return even after missing a turn at bat.
 - f. Effect: Failure to have the required number of players to start or continue a game will result in a forfeit.
6. Pick up players:
- a. A team may pick up players to meet the required number to play a game. Pick up players, may be from one division of play above their own.
 - b. A team may pick up no more than 2 players from a division above their own.
 - c. If a team, after starting the game with pick-up players, has a team member(s) arrive late they must be inserted into the line-up for either a) the pick-up player or b) added to the bottom of the lineup. If adding to the bottom of the lineup, you are required to inform the umpire and the scorekeeper of the change.
 - d. Effect: Violation of the pick-up player rule is handled as a protest by the offended team.
7. Open substitution:
- a. The coach or manager may place all available players at game time into the batting order
 - b. Players arriving late may be placed at the end of the batting order at any point during the game.
 - c. Coed: Must bat an even number of players (10, 12, 14, etc) with an even number of male and female players. If not, will take an out in the missing spot. Coed may also bat 9 players and take an out in the 10th spot.

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- d. There is no limit, during league play, for the number of people in the batting lineup for any division.
 - e. Men's, Women's and Masters Divisions may start the game with nine players without taking an out for the missing players spot in the batting order
 - f. Once a batter has subbed in the batting order, they cannot sub back in later to a different spot. For example, if you sub at position 3, you cannot come back in at position 8 in order to get more at-bats. You are committed to position 3. During league play, there is no limit to how many times you can sub in and out.
8. Game start times and ending procedures:
- a. Games will start at the scheduled time.
 - b. Managers shall have their batting order in place and exchange it with the other manager before the scheduled start time.
 - c. No new inning will start after 60 minutes. A game can end in a tie.
 - i. NOTE: If after 1 hour and 10 minutes the home team is at bat and has scored more runs than the visiting team, the game will be stopped.
9. Run Rule:
- a. Run Rule will be decided at the pregame home plate meeting. If both managers cannot agree, the default will be the run rule is in effect.
 - b. The run rule is as follows: 20 after 3 innings, 15 after 4 innings, 10 after 5 innings
10. Home run rule:
- a. The following home run rules will be used in league play.
 - b. Note: When 2 divisions play each other, the lower division has the choice of home run rules. The lower division must make the decision at the plate meeting. Masters is considered the lower division when playing Men's E/D/C teams.
 - i. For example: Masters vs. Men's E – Masters home run rule will be followed.
 - c. Home Runs allowed:

Men's Upper: 6	Coed: 2	Women's: 6
Men's Middle: 2		Master's 40+: 5
Men's Lower: 1	Coed Rec: 1	Master's 50+: 4+1

 - i. Effect: Home runs over the limit will result in an out on the batter.
11. Inter-Division Play
- a. When two teams from different divisions play each other, any division-specific rules regarding home runs and stealing shall be determined during the pregame plate meeting.
 - i. The lower division team shall have the option to choose either:
the lower division rules, or
the upper division rules.
 - ii. If no selection is made at the plate meeting, the default shall be the lower division rules.

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- b. Masters Division Exception
 - i. When a Masters team plays against a Men's team, the Masters team may elect to use the following run rule modification:
Each team shall be limited to a maximum of five (5) runs per inning during innings 1 through 6. The 7th inning shall be an open inning with no run limit.
 - ii. The Masters team must declare this option during the pregame plate meeting.
- 12. Courtesy runner:
 - a. Any player may have a courtesy runner before the next pitch to the next batter.
 - b. After a pitch to the next batter no courtesy is allowed.
 - c. Exception: If injured while running the bases a courtesy runner may be used at any time.
- 13. NO METAL CLEATS allowed for any division at any time.
 - a. Effect: Players found wearing metal cleats will be disqualified from the game.
 - b. This includes football cleats where the nubs screw on a post attached to the shoe, or nubs where the hard rubber has worn off and metal is showing. c. No warning is necessary when found wearing metal cleats.
 - c. No open toed shoes of any kind are allowed
- 14. Double first base:
 - a. A batter runner being played on at first base must use the colored portion of the double bag.
 - b. Effect: The runner will be called out for using the white portion of the double base.
 - c. Exception: If the throw comes from either the foul side of the bag or if the throw draws the defensive player towards foul territory, both the runner and the defensive player may use either the colored or white portion of the double base.
 - d. On deck batter:
 - i. The on-deck batter may have in his or her possession 1 bat or 1 approved warm up bat, or 1 bat with an approved warm up attachment.
- 15. Stealing:
 - a. In games between Masters and Men's divisions stealing will not be permitted by either team.
 - b. Stealing is allowed in Men's and Women's**
 - c. Stealing is NOT allowed in Coed.
- 16. Arguing balls and strikes:
 - a. Any arguing on the judgment of balls and strikes will constitute a team warning; any repeat offense shall result in the ejection of that team member.
- 17. Disqualified player:
 - a. Any player removed from the game by the umpire for non-flagrant reasons.
 - b. Effect: A disqualified player may participate by remaining in the team area and coaching bases.

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18. Ejected player, coach or manager:
 - a. An ejected player must LEAVE THE SOFTBALL COMPLEX for the remainder of the game.
 - b. The penalties for a player's ejection are as follows:
 - i. First offense: one game suspension (see suspension rules below)
 - ii. Second offense: three game suspension and a \$50 fine. Suspension must be completed and fine paid before the player is allowed to play again.
 - iii. Third offense: the player will not be allowed to play again that season until they meet with a disciplinary board headed by the District Commissioner.
 - c. Suspension rules:
 - i. A suspended player must sit out the game, and also not be present at the softball complex during the game.
 - ii. The suspended player cannot play in ANY softball game as a pickup player, or as a rostered player until they have served their suspension.
 - iii. The suspension must be served for the league that the ejection happened. For example, if a player is on a men's team as well as coed, and is ejected from a coed game; that player cannot play in any game until their suspension is served for their team's next coed game.
 - d. Ejections can occur for a variety of reasons. Some of these are listed below:
 - i. Unsportsmanlike conduct.
 - i. Examples of unsportsmanlike conduct include but not limited to: foul or abusive language, persistent misconduct after receiving a warning, abuse of equipment, continual dissent with umpire's decision.
 - ii. Aggressive or violent behavior directed toward an umpire, teammate, opponent, or spectators.
 - iii. Arguing balls and strikes, as noted in rule XVI
 - e. **All players, coaches, managers, and spectators are all held to these rules.**
19. Umpires
 - a. The umpire is the authority on the field.
 - b. If you have any problems concerning an umpire, reach out to a GVSA Board member or the Umpire in Chief.
 - c. If there is an issue on the field which warrants discussion with the Umpire - only the manager of each team should be contacting the umpire.
20. Casual Profanity – this is identical to the USA Softball of Montana rule and is only included here for information (Article VI 6.01):
 - a. Any team member in a game using casual profanity or unsportsmanlike language (expletives not directed at an umpire(s) or opposing player(s) and loud enough to be heard by spectators) will result in an out being called against the offending team.
 - i. If a team is at bat and unsportsmanlike words are used, the next batter will be declared out.
 - ii. If the act is committed by a player remaining at bat, that player will be called out.

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- iii. If the act is committed by the defensive team, the first batter in the next inning will be declared out.
- iv. The outs will be treated as a delayed dead ball situation.
- v. If the violation occurs in the bottom of the last inning, where the fielding team may not bat again, the ejection rule will apply. If a team has an eligible substitute, the game can continue.
- vi. A game may be ended by a casual profanity/unsportsmanlike language out.
- vii. Any player declared out by this rule because of a team member's action will not be charged with an at-bat for record-keeping purposes.