

2024 HWCL Softball League Rules

- Balls to be used are Worth 12" ASA Hot Dot Slow-pitch Softballs. League will give each coach 6 game balls. Each team supplies 1 ball to umpire each game.
- **For MALE PLAYERS the only approved bats in HWCL are wood or wood-composite with ASA/USA/USSSA stamps and for FEMALE PLAYERS they may use ASA/USA/USSA single wall metal bats.** Any questions regarding illegal bats must be brought up immediately. League will supply each team with one bat. Teams may purchase any legal bat for use in games.
- Players participating must be residents of Hamilton or Wenham and 35 year of age or older by the end of 2024 (exceptions to this rule may be approved by the HW Rec Department on a case-by-case basis).
- Players must play a minimum of 3 regular season games to participate in playoffs.
- Maximum of ten players in the field. One female player must be positioned in the field each inning. If there are no female players in line-up, then that team may only play 9 fielders and must take
- All players will bat with free substitutions in the field.
- A minimum of eight players needed to begin a game. A player from the opposing team will need to play catcher to return balls to the pitcher but is not required to cover home plate to make a play.
- Seven innings will be played in each game, in the event of a tied score after 7 innings in the regular season the game ends in a tie. In playoffs extra innings will be played until the winner is determined.
- In Playoffs, the 8th inning will be played as normal. All extra innings after the 8th will begin with runner on second base (previous final out).
- No new inning (including extras) shall begin after 1 hour 15 minutes, except in playoffs.
- **Pitching rule: Pitch must be thrown palm up with no spin.**
- Batter starts with 1-1 count
- **After two strikes, batter is allowed two foul balls, a third foul ball after two strikes is an out.**
- Pitch must be 6-10 feet in height, pitches that are too short or too high are to be called illegal by the umpire. The batter may still swing at the pitch, but the result then is final. If batter doesn't swing at illegal pitch, it is a ball.
- Pitcher must pitch from the rubber which will be 41' from home plate.
- A ball hit into the street on the first base side in the air in fair territory is a home run.
- Any ball hit into playground or picnic tables in the air is a home run and on the ground/hop is a ground rule double.
- **A ball hit into the basketball courts is a live ball in play.**
- If a player is ejected for arguing with umpire, they must leave the field immediately and are suspended for the for the following game, including playoffs.
- No bunting, stealing or leading. Runner may leave base as soon as the ball crosses the plate. If runner leaves bag early and advances on a batted ball than the umpire may determine that the runner is out.
- Regular season mercy rule- 15 runs by the end of the 5th or 10 runs after the 6th
- Home team is responsible for texting the score to the league commissioners.
- If you are unable to field a team, notify the other team and commissioner no later than the night before.
- Games will only be moved due by a cause determined acceptable by the HW Rec department i.e. weather. If a team cannot field 8 players for a game then that game is forfeited.

