



Nova Scotia Monarchs Baseball - Women's Division

2026 LEAGUE RULES, GUIDELINES, & RECOMMENDATIONS

Official baseball rules can be found here:

[OFFICIAL BASEBALL RULES 2025 Edition](#)

NSMBWD will follow these official rules, with the exception, variation, or addition of the following:

1. Equipment

- a. Wooden bats only, except for BBCOR-certified bats, which must be approved by the league commissioner. No softball or aluminium bats.
- b. Players must wear **white baseball/softball pants or knickers** with long socks to match their team's jerseys, and a **yellow belt**. No bare legs, tights, or leggings. Players in the field **must wear the baseball cap provided**.
- c. Players must wear protective batting helmets while on deck, at bat, and on base.
- d. Catchers must wear a face mask/helmet, chest protector, and leg guards.
- e. Other protective equipment(s) that are permitted (but not required) include pelvic protectors (Jills), fielding face masks, sliding mitts, arm/leg guards, and pads.
- f. Cleats are strongly recommended for use, as they can prevent injuries caused by slipping and falling. **Metal cleats are not permitted**.

2. Rules of play

- a. All regular-season games consist of **6 innings**. The time limit is **2 hours and 20 minutes** based on field bookings of 2.5 hours. If there is a booking after the game, the field and dugouts must be cleared by the end of the booked time (10 minutes is allotted for this).
 - i. Warmups should be done off-field if there is a game in progress before yours.
 - ii. If there's no booking following the game (i.e. no one is waiting for the field), the inning may be completed even if it exceeds the time limit.
 - iii. If an inning cannot be completed in the allowable time, the final score will revert to the last completed inning. Coaches should use discretion and try not to start a new inning if there isn't enough time to finish it.

- b. **Weather conditions** may play a role, even if fields are open for play. It is up to the coach and umpire's discretion to make decisions whether to continue playing or not.
 - i. Play may continue in light rain, but if a downpour or **thunder/lightning occurs, gameplay must stop immediately** (for a 15-minute delay if it's expected to pass).
 - ii. If the fields are marked open for the weekend, but unexpected rain has made the grounds too wet to play safely or without **damaging the fields**, the decision can be made by the coaches to cancel the game and reschedule.
 - iii. If coaches decide to call a game in progress due to rain, field conditions, or darkness, the **final score will be taken if 4 innings are complete**, or 3 and a half if the home team is ahead.
 - iv. If the temperature/humidity is high enough to affect player health due to heat stroke, games may be cancelled. Safety takes priority, and no one should play if they don't feel safe doing so. This will not result in a rescheduled game.
- c. There is a **3-run rule** for innings 1-4. The **5th and 6th innings will be open**.
- d. There is a **10-run mercy rule after 5 innings** (or 4.5 if the home team is winning). If the home team is winning, the bottom of the last inning does not need to be played.
- e. At fields where the **backstop distance** is deemed far, coaches may decide at the plate meeting if they want to limit stealing to one base per play. (i.e. Weir Field)
 - i. Replacement balls from the umpire cannot be used to throw on a stolen base. If the catcher accepts a replacement ball from the umpire on a passed ball, they're conceding to the stolen base, including home.
 - ii. In this instance, baserunners may only steal one base at a time (one base per pitch or overthrow). Once the ball is returned to the pitcher, stealing is fair game, even if another pitch has not been delivered.
- f. For the first offence of a **batter throwing a bat** (umpire's judgment call), the batter will be called out and given a warning. If the batter does it a second time during the game, they will be called out and ejected from the game.
 - i. If a bat, helmet, or any piece of equipment is **thrown in anger**, it will be an automatic ejection for the player.
- g. Lead-offs and stealing are allowed. Consequently, balks will be called at the discretion of the umpire(s). Balks will result in all baserunners advancing one base.
- h. Coaches will only be permitted to ask an umpire for a **ruling clarification**, not to address an umpire to debate/question a judgment call. Umpires are not required to entertain questions or objections; this may result in an ejection from the game.

3. Players, Coaches, and Spares

- a. Teams must field a minimum of **8 players** (including spares) to avoid forfeit. Players arriving late must go at the bottom of the batting order.
 - i. Teams must use a **minimum of 5 rostered players** and are limited to a **maximum of 3 spares** from the approved spare list to avoid forfeiting a game. In this instance, teams would have to play shorthanded with 8 players.
 - ii. Spares cannot bring the total number of players over 10 per team.

- iii. Spare players must be placed at the bottom of the batting order and must play an outfield position, unless playing shorthanded, in which case 1 spare can play a base or shortstop (not pitch or catch). *Coaches may negotiate at game time.*
 - iv. Coaches must use players off the spare list before using rostered players to involve more women in the league.
 - b. Coaches should plan to play with **10 players on the roster** if possible, including the use of spares. This allows for no-shows, injuries, and rest innings.
 - i. Teams with only 9 players who do not wish to seek a spare may proceed knowing they may be shorthanded if they lose a player at any point.
 - c. Once a team's coach recognizes the need for spare players, they should post in the spares group chat and not reach out directly to players. The first player(s) to offer should get the chance to play in that game.
 - i. Spares will be given a jersey to wear for the game, which must be returned at the end of the game. Spares must pay \$10 to play.
 - d. All players present will be in the batting lineup.
 - e. Pinch runners may **only** be used for an injured player once they reach 1st base. **Pinch runners must be the last player to get out.** If there have not been any outs yet in the game, the last player scheduled to bat should pinch run.
 - f. **Pitchers will be limited to a maximum of 3 innings per game.**
 - g. Once a pitcher comes out of the game, they may play other defensive positions, but they **cannot return as a pitcher** in that same game.
 - h. When a team's head coach is absent from a game, the assistant coach will assume the role and make decisions in that capacity for that game. It is their responsibility to inform the team's head coach of any information deemed pertinent.
 - i. Coaches/scorekeepers should **compare scorebooks** at the end of each inning and the end of the game to agree on the final score. The home team's coach must send the final score to the coach group chat to be recorded, along with the **Player of the Game** chosen for the other team, a photo, and a short explanation of why they were chosen.

4. Safety

- a. A baserunner must vacate any space needed by a fielder to make a play on a batted ball unless the runner is on a base. Runners can be called out on **interference** if they impede a fielder's attempt to make a play, or if they are hit by a batted ball.
 - i. For clarification, if you are a baserunner, and there is a fielder in your basepath catching or fielding a ball, it is YOUR responsibility to avoid the fielder, not the fielder's responsibility to get out of your way.
 - ii. If the fielder is not catching or fielding a ball, it is THEIR responsibility to vacate the basepath to avoid contact, or the baserunner may be called safe due to **obstruction.**
 - iii. Baserunners do not have the right to collide with or shove a fielder, even if they are obstructing the basepath. Baserunners or fielders causing unnecessary

contact with another player may be ejected from the game. This is a recreational league, and **injuries should be avoided at all costs.**

- b. Players must make every effort to avoid collisions. On **accidental contact** (interference), the runner MAY BE ruled out. On contact ruled as intentional, the runner is ruled out and is ejected from the game. Contact ruled **intentional and malicious** may lead to a multiple-game suspension. These are judgment calls made by the umpire(s) and cannot be argued. Malicious intent by any player will not be tolerated and may lead to a league suspension, at the discretion of the commissioner and/or a committee.
- c. If the fielder does not have the ball, they should not be blocking the runner's path, and it is the umpire's judgment to call the runner safe, by obstruction.
- d. There's never an acceptable time for a runner to intentionally hit, push, or knock over another player, even if they are blocking a base without the ball. If the fielder has the ball, they are **permitted to block the base and/or basepath to tag the runner.**
 - i. Ways for base runners to avoid contact with fielders on a tag play are to go back to the previous base, slide/dive under, jump over, go to the side of (within the 3-foot lane), or stop in front of the fielder with the ball.

5. Rules to Remember

- a. Baseball's strangest rule: on a **dropped third strike** (if the catcher misses or drops the ball on strike 3), whether it's a called strike or a missed swing, the batter is permitted to steal 1st base, provided it is unoccupied. The catcher must tag the batter/runner or throw the ball to first base, where it is treated as a forced play (the fielder only needs to tag the base).
 - i. If the batter returns to their dugout, they will be called out; however, they can **change direction after starting to walk away** once they realise the ball was dropped and attempt to steal first base. This is an umpire's judgment call.
 - ii. If there are **2 outs and a runner on first base**, the batter can attempt to steal first if the runner on first advances to second in a steal.
 - iii. If the bases are loaded, with 2 outs, the catcher needs only to tag home plate with the ball, giving the forced 3rd out to the runner coming from third base.
- b. **Bunting on a 3rd strike:** A foul bunt that's not caught in flight is always a strike, and if it's the third strike, it results in a strikeout. This is different from other foul balls, which are only strikes if not caught and not a third strike, and don't result in a strikeout.

6. Player Conduct

- a. NSMBWD is a member of Baseball Nova Scotia and therefore can hire BNSUD Umpires.
 - i. If no BNSUD umpires are available, unofficial umpires can be hired at a rate of \$30/plate and \$20/base.
- b. There is **zero tolerance for umpire abuse, arguing, or questioning calls.** The NSMBWD umpires are **not required** to be BNSUD-certified. Sometimes, they're people with baseball experience and knowledge who can and will make mistakes, just as players do.

Umpires are there to officiate the games to the best of their abilities and must be treated with respect. Making rude, demeaning, or sarcastic comments to umpires may result in ejection from the game and possible game suspensions.

- c. **Judgment calls made by the umpire cannot be questioned or argued.** Only the umpire can stop the game to make clarifications or consult with another umpire or the rules.
 - i. It is not appropriate for players to use this time to discuss the play, call, or rules either with the umpire(s) or other players, **causing a delay in the game.**
- d. Clarification of rules/calls may be done after the game, or between innings, provided it does not delay the game, and the umpire is willing to entertain the discussion.
- e. **Confrontations/arguments between players are not acceptable** and may result in a warning or ejection from the game.
- f. The physical and emotional safety and well-being of NSMBWD players, umpires, and spectators is the priority. There are varying degrees of experience, ability, and knowledge of baseball rules and comfort levels.
 - i. Players should not feel pressured to do anything they do not feel safe or prepared to do. This league is a recreational level of play, not competitive. The main objective of the league is for women to have fun while being active.
 - ii. The **Code of Conduct** must be followed, along with the rules in this document.
- g. The NSMBWD is not a place for negativity, drama, or personal attacks. Keep it light!

7. Avoiding game delays

- a. The offensive/defensive change is when the most playing time is lost. The following efforts should be employed to keep the change time to a maximum of **3 minutes**.
- b. When a **catcher is on base with 2 outs**, they should be given a pinch runner (last batter out, if possible) so they can get their gear on, to avoid a game delay.
 - i. If a catcher is last at bat, it is expected that there will be a short delay while they gear up. Another player, wearing a mask, may warm up the pitcher to save time.
- c. Players should avoid delaying the game by knowing their assigned fielding position, having their glove/hat on and heading straight there after their team bats.
- d. Base coaches should be players who are later in the batting order, and replaced when they are getting closer to their turn to bat.
- e. Batters “in the hole” are responsible for retrieving passed balls if no one is on base, or a replacement ball is given to the catcher by the umpire. They must give the balls to the plate umpire when they approach the plate before the next at-bat.
- f. Relief pitchers should be identified in advance by coaches so that if needed due to injury, fatigue, or struggle by the pitcher, they can be brought in without too much delay.
 - i. Relief pitchers may throw up to 8 warm-up pitches when entering a game, during which time gameplay is suspended.
 - ii. Returning pitchers have 90 seconds to warm up for the inning.
- g. Players should hustle on and off the field at the change of innings.

8. Playoffs

- a. Teams that forfeit more than 25% of their games are not eligible to participate in the playoffs. This does not include rainouts that are unable to be rescheduled.
- b. **Registered players must participate in half (5) of their regular-season** games to be eligible for playoffs with their team, based on a 9-10 game schedule. Exceptions may be made by committee, on a case-by-case basis, in the event of a major injury.
- c. If the weather impacts the total number of games played in a season, see below.
 - i. 7-8 game schedule - 4 games required
 - ii. 4-6 game schedule - 3 games required
 - iii. Less than 4 games - 2 games required
- d. Use of spare players during playoffs:
 - i. **Spare must participate in a minimum of 2 regular-season games** with any team(s) to be eligible for pickup during playoffs.
 - ii. Teams are discouraged from using rostered players from the league as spares during playoffs. All eligible and available spares must be utilised before using rostered players as spares. The rule limiting teams to 3 spares remains.
 - iii. A team using registered players from other teams may not have more than 9 players on their lineup, and all spare rules apply to the players.
 - iv. A team that is not using any registered players may field up to 10 players, with a max of 3 eligible spares, the same as the regular season.

PLEASE NOTE: Many of the above rules can be negotiated between coaches based on individual circumstances as long as this is done before game time, with both coaches in agreement. In cases of non-agreement, the above rules apply.

9. General

- a. This league is a self-contained and self-regulated entity under the Nova Scotia Monarchs Baseball. Our rules and procedures may not align with those of other leagues.
- b. NSMB holds contracts with HRM Parks and Recreation and BMO Soccer Centre, where our insurance has been provided and kept on file. Only coaches are permitted to book facilities under the league name, with permission from the commissioner.
- c. **Coaches must be registered players.** Only members of the league are permitted to act in a coaching capacity and to be on the field, in and around the dugouts.
- d. NSMBWD is welcoming to any **woman/woman-identifying participants**, except for umpires when women-identifying umpires identifying as women cannot be obtained.
- e. Children, family members, and friends are welcome to watch from the bleachers, but it is not appropriate for anyone other than players to be in the dugouts or on the field.

10. Communication

- a. All registered players must download and use the app **GameChanger** to indicate their expected attendance at games and communicate with coaches and teammates.

- i. Players are expected to have their **attendance logged 48 hours before** the next game unless they are unsure and have communicated that to their coach.
- ii. **No setting availability for more than 2 weeks ahead of time.** The reason is that players have been known to set their availability for the season in June, and forget about it, and think they're covered. What happens is that when they can't come to a game, they forget to go back and change the setting. Making it a habit to set your availability only for the week ahead tends to keep it accurate.
- iii. Coaches must know who to expect at each game, and whether they need to call in for spares if there aren't enough rostered players available. The sooner you can let them know you'll miss a game, the better. **Please respect your coaches!**
- b. If a player has proven to be unreliable by missing availability deadlines 2 consecutive game weeks in a row and not communicating with coaches, they will be moved to the spares list and replaced on the team's roster if players are available.
- c. If you must change your availability within 48 hours of the game, **you MUST message your coach and let them know.** There are no app notifications of last-minute changes to coaches, so you must tell them so they can adjust their game plan.
- d. The Facebook private group for registered players is an important group to monitor, as well as the corresponding general group chat. Polls, events, possible cancellations, and other baseball-related posts are often shared in this group. Please follow the notifications.

11. Facility rules applicable to this league

- a. Our fields are owned and operated by HRM Parks and Recreation. Our league holds contracts for the usage, and therefore must follow the rules set out by them. If we are found breaking any of these conditions, HRM may fine and suspend our contracts, ending our league's ability to book fields in the future. Please respect these rules.
- b. Children under the age of 12 must be supervised by an adult at all times.
- c. The possession, consumption, sale or distribution of **alcoholic beverages is prohibited** at all Halifax Regional Municipality facilities, except where approval has been granted and the appropriate liquor licence has been obtained.
- d. In compliance with **Nova Scotia's Smoke-Free Places Act**, smoking and/or the use of chewing tobacco, marijuana, or cannabis or related drugs or narcotics is strictly prohibited in any facility. There shall be no smoking within four (4) metres of any entrances to or exits from the facility.
- e. All participants are asked to **pick up any garbage** in or around their dugout at the end of each game. Spectators are also expected to clean up after themselves.
- f. **No animals**, except for properly documented service animals, are permitted at the facility at any time.
- g. If you are **charging admission** to events that will occur at the facility, or if you are operating concessions or fundraising activities at the facility, you must receive written permission from HRM before the event.
- h. At no time shall any **fires** be lit by any league members, participants, or spectators.

Code of Conduct

1. Purpose

This league is committed to creating a competitive, respectful, and inclusive baseball environment. All participants (players, coaches, umpires, volunteers, and spectators) are expected to uphold the spirit of fair play, sportsmanship, and mutual respect. Winning matters. How we play matters more.

2. Respect for People

All participants must always treat others with dignity and respect. No bullying, harassment, intimidation, or belittling behaviour on or off the field. No personal attacks, name-calling, slurs, or comments meant to embarrass or demean. Respect differences in skill level, experience, background, and identity. Trash talk, chirping, or “getting in someone’s head” is not acceptable.

3. Respect for Umpires

Umpires are essential to the game and must be treated accordingly. Judgment calls are not to be argued. Players and coaches may ask for clarification on a rule or a specific play calmly and respectfully. Conversations must remain brief, professional, and nonconfrontational. Demonstrative reactions (yelling, prolonged arguing, sarcasm, gestures, eyerolling) toward umpires are not permitted. Conversations about plays are allowed. Once a conversation turns into complaining, badgering, or undermining authority, it has crossed the line.

4. Sportsmanship: Winning and Losing Well

Baseball is emotional (there is sometimes crying). How those emotions are handled matters. Winning with class. No taunting, showboating, or gloating at opponents. Celebrate your team, not the other team’s mistakes. Respect opponents regardless of the score. Lose with class. No whining, excuses, or blaming umpires, teammates, or opponents. Disagreements with calls or outcomes must not turn into ongoing complaints. Compete hard, then move on to the next pitch or play. Being a sore loser or a gloating winner undermines the integrity of the game.

5. Fair Play & Safety

Play hard but play fair. Follow the rules as written and as enforced. Do not attempt to gain an advantage through unsporting conduct, deception, or intimidation. Reckless or dangerous play will not be tolerated. Player safety comes first.

6. Accountability

All participants are responsible for their conduct. Players are expected to self-regulate and support a respectful team culture. Coaches and team leaders are expected to model appropriate behaviour and assist in managing conduct. The league may document incidents to identify repeated or escalating behaviour.

7. Progressive Discipline & Enforcement

Breaches of this Code of Conduct will be addressed promptly to protect the integrity of the game, the safety and enjoyment of all participants. Discipline will generally follow a progressive approach, though serious misconduct may result in immediate escalation.

Step 1: Warning

Issued by an umpire or league official for minor or first-time infractions. Behaviour is expected to stop immediately.

Step 2: Removal from a Game

If the behaviour continues after a warning, or if the initial conduct is significant, a player may be removed from the game at the discretion of the umpire and/or league officials.

Step 3: Escalation to League Review

If inappropriate behaviour persists beyond game removal, or if there is a serious breach of this Code of Conduct, the incident will be referred to the league.

Step 4: Committee Review and League Consequences

Ongoing or serious misconduct may result in suspension or removal from the league, subject to discussion and decision at the committee level. When determining outcomes, the league will consider: the nature and severity of the behaviour, its impact on players, officials, and the league (and its reputation), any prior incidents, or patterns of behaviour.

8. Shared Responsibility

This Code of Conduct exists to protect the game and everyone who plays it. A strong league culture is built collectively. Participants are encouraged to address concerns constructively and to use the league channels when behaviour undermines respect or fairness.

By participating in this league, you agree to uphold this Code of Conduct and contribute to a competitive, respectful, and enjoyable baseball environment for all.