



CATHOLIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

2026 CAA Softball Rules

Girl's 8th and 7th fast-pitch is played according to Minnesota State High School League rules without modification.

Girl's 6th and 5th fast-pitch is played with the same rules but is subject to the modifications described in rule number ten below.

1. Base and Pitching Length

The bases are sixty feet apart at all levels.

Eighth and seventh grade teams pitch from forty-three feet.

Sixth pitch from forty feet.

Fifth will pitch from thirty-five feet.

2. Game Length:

All games will be six innings.

The ten-run rule is in effect at every level after five innings (or four and a half innings when the home team is winning).

All levels shall be played with a 90-minute time limit. No new inning will start after 90 minutes.

3. Softball Size

5th & 6th grade softball use an 11-inch ball.

7th-8th grade softball uses the 12-inch ball.

4. Each team will provide one new ball for each game. Additional balls will be provided as necessary by the home team.

5. The home team will supply bases.

6. Players must be students at the school they represent. Co-op teams are allowed.

Rosters must be confirmed in the CAA Athletic Director portal by **May 1st**. Players must only play on one team. For example, a player on a 6th grade team would not be eligible to also play on a 7th or 8th grade team. Anyone that plays on a ninth grade, tenth grade, junior varsity or varsity high school team shall be ineligible for CAA play.

7. Rainouts or any weather cancellations are the responsibility of the home team. The home coach and/or Athletic Director should check on field condition then inform the CAA and the visiting team of the game status. Both schools should agree to a makeup date and time and inform the CAA so that an umpire can be provided.



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- 8. Girl's 6th and 5th fast-pitch** is played according to State High School League Rules with three modifications:
- Should a catcher drop a third strike, the batter is out. They are not afforded the opportunity to run to first. Third strikes that are dropped are dead balls, so base runners already on base are stuck at their present base without an opportunity to steal.
 - Base runners are not allowed to steal bases unless the pitch is missed or dropped by the catcher and it travels behind the catcher towards the backstop. A dropped pitch that remains in front of the catcher or below the catcher shall restrict base runners from stealing a base on that pitch.
 - Base runners who steal a base shall stop at one stolen base per play. In fifth and sixth grade softball, there is a five-run rule per inning until the sixth inning when teams may score seven runs.
- 9.** The **infield fly rule** is in effect at every level.
- 10. Substitution Rule**
NEW: At all levels, a player can be taken out of the game and replaced by a substitute player. If the original player comes back into the game later, the player must return to the same spot in the batting order they originally had. The player cannot enter in a different batting position. At all grade levels, defensive substitutions are unlimited. Courtesy runners for the pitcher and catcher are allowed at any time and must be the last recorded out.
- 11. Batting Lineup**
NEW: Seventh, sixth, and fifth grade, teams must bat their entire roster. If a player arrives late, they must be added to the bottom of the batting order. If a player leaves the game early, their spot in the batting order is skipped (no out is recorded), unless the batting roster falls fewer than 8 players (automatic out each time that spot in the order comes up). At 8th grade teams may bat their entire roster but are not required to. However, the batting lineup used at the start of the game must remain the same for the entire game.
- 12.** NEW: A team must have at least 8 players for the game to be official. Fewer than 8 players at the start of the game results in a forfeit. If a team starts with 8 players, the 9th spot in the batting order is an automatic out each time it comes up. This rule does not apply if a 9th player joins the lineup after the game has started.
- 13.** Metal cleats are approved for all softball games and grade levels.
- 14.** The decisions of the umpire on judgement calls are final and not subject to unreasonable judgement. The CAA will only accept protests pertaining to misinterpretations of the rules. The judgment of an official shall not be grounds for protests or appeals.