

# Rhein Main Liga - Mixed Softball



## Official rules

- valid from the season 2011 -

league coordinator:  
Knut Mayer & Jeff Stanford

<https://rml-softball.de/>

## League overview

The Rhein-Main-Liga (RML) was founded in 2001 to offer an organized game operation for men and women in the surrounding communities and federal states as pure sporting leisure activities. Here, priority was given to the older age groups, but also to players who have said goodbye to the official leagues. The following rules have been put together to ensure a relatively safe (**fair play**) gaming operation.

But with all sporting ambition, common sense must always be in the foreground!

## Teams

All participating teams or their players should belong to an association for insurance reasons.

## Material and accessories

First Aid Supplies (Hometeam)

Standard Bases, Pitchers plate, 1B Safety-Base, Scoringplate

Official Softball Bats (Label: ASA – NSA – SSUSA - ISF approved)

Senior Slowpitch Softball Bat are allowed for players older than 40 years

Non approved bats:

<https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Softball/Certified-Equipment/Equipment-Bats>

Homerun limit (mobile fence, line, plastic hat, etc.) Green mat for strike zone (currently valid size: 80 x 60cm) Documentation: rules, field measurements, list of players

Softballs (11“ and 12“) 52/300 Compression

## First aid principles

### **Nationwide emergency number: 112**

Accident report: **Where** - **What** - **How** many - **What** kind of injuries - **Waiting** for questions

In case of recognizable serious injuries (broken bones etc.) do not move the person unnecessarily. Store the casualty as comfortable as possible and inform the ambulance.

Injuries caused by collisions with another player or contact with a thrown or beaten ball (dizziness, nausea, etc.). Make sure that the person(s) can or can breathe freely. If necessary, call a doctor or take the person to the hospital.

In the case of bleeding in the mouth or nose area, the person concerned must be brought to the stable side position. Make sure that the airways are free. Contact a doctor.

On respiratory failure and non-sensible pulse, immediately begin resuscitation. Notify the emergency doctor.

In case of recognizable shock situation (cold skin, sweaty, freezing) - set down emergency call - eliminate causes of shock - rescue blanket - store person flat and raise legs.

## Softball Rules

In the Rhein-Main-Liga is played after the Official Senior Softball - USA Rulebook:

<https://seniorsoftball.com/wc/wc2017/SSUSA-Rulebook-2017-Web.pdf>

The changes and exceptions described later in this document have been adopted in part by Senior Softball Ass. (SSUSA) and have been refined over the years by the founders and participants of RML. In the foreground is always the safety of the players.

This policy is valid within the playing of the Rhein-Main-Liga and in tournaments organized by RML teams.

Deviations from this require prior agreement and must be supplemented with invitations to tournaments in the appendix.

## Fair Play

All players of all teams are required to show fair play behavior. It means respect, fairness, courtesy, honesty, accountability and good behavior. Complaints regarding bad sportiness against any team must be omitted. Should any problems arise, will these be clarified by the coach with the help of Umpires on reasonable and factual level.

## Stimulant

During the game operation, alcoholic beverages, cigarettes, etc., both on the field, as well as in the Dugouts are prohibited. The team leaders carry the duty of care here.

## Playing field and equipment

**Softball Field** - On each matchday the hometeam is responsible for the preparation of the field. This involves stripping the field and applying all the lines. All bases must be present, including the security base (1B) and the homerun fence/limit. The guest team (s) may of course help here.

**Balls** - Hit your own ball; each team uses its own balls. It is played with 11" (women only!) and 12" (men) softballs in yellow, Compression 52/300.

**Bats** - Played with standard softball bats (not wood or baseball bats) that are ASA / NSA / SSUSA / ISF certified. A list of unauthorized bats is here: <https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Softball/Certified-Equipment/Equipment-Bats>

**Safety First Base** - There must be 2 bases on 1B. The traditional white base (inside) as a focal point for the 1B player and a second base (outside, orange) for the batter / runner. This is the only person who uses the orange base in a base hit. If the batter / runner can continue running, he must walk over the traditional white base.



**Dimensions** - The dimensions according to the Senior Softball Rules are used. If a playing field does not correspond to the dimensions, the Groundrules are to be agreed between the teams before the matchday. The goal is that you can play on any field of the Rhein-Main-Liga. The base distance of 18.29m (fast pitch) is sufficient.

**Homerunbegrenzung** - The HR limitation should be clearly visible and can be made by means of fence, marker cap, etc. The distance is 250 ft. = 76.20m

**Pitching Rubber** – The minimum distance is at 14.02m. Pitchers may pitch behind it without touching the rubber. If there is a rubber in front of the 14.02m, cover it and place another one behind it or mark it.

**Footwear** - Shoes with metal cleats are not allowed.

**Face / Chest Protector** - A face shield for pitchers is required. For Infielder, this decision remains optional for the time being.

## Game Play

**First pitch** - The games start (first pitch) at the times set in the schedule. Generally, a deadline of +15 minutes is set. If a team is not there or not ready to start the game, the team coach whose team is ready may decide whether the game is still taking place or is registered as lost for the opposing team.

**Playing time** - The playing time is set to 7 innings. Depending on the number of participating teams and the resulting schedule, deviations may occur here. The round robin limits play time to 40 minutes. No new inning is started after 35 minutes. Every batter starts with 1: 1 count and there is no open inning.

**Tie Break** - In case of a tie after the seventh inning, each team starts with a runner at second base. This runner is the one who was on strike when the last out was made. There is no draw.

**Rainouts** - If the field is a safety hazard due to previous or incipient rain and is no longer fully playable, the game will be aborted. If both teams have played 5 innings completely, this result counts. All games less than 5 innings will be rescheduled and repeated.

**Scorer / Scoring** - The play-free team will provide a scorer. Only the Runs and Home Runs are counted, and the league score sheets must be used for this. Otherwise, the respective teams and coaches are free to keep a statistic about their own players. All scores will be sent promptly to the league coordinator via WhatsApp. A group is created only for results.

**Tie Breaker** - In case of a tie in the table (wins-losses) the following rules are applied: The teams with the same rankings are in the order 1) win / loss, 2) direct comparison, 3) Runs against, 4) Run difference scored.

**Game Cancellation** - The relocation of match days, also due to the inaccessibility of the field due to rain, is regulated between the opposing teams. The league management will be informed! Each of the three participating teams can make a request to relocate a match day; if the other teams do not agree, there will be no postponement.

There is no deadline until when the request can be made. If a field cannot be used due to rain, the teams arriving must be informed as soon as possible. In this case, a solution should be found collectively.

**Cancellation of game due to non-appearance** - The non-appearance of a team leads to a score of 5: 0 runs per scheduled inning. That means in a 7 inning game 35:0, in a 5 inning game 25:0 against the non-competing team.

**Offence / Defense** - The innings change should be as quick as possible and the pitcher will max. 3 warmup pitches allowed.

**League division** - 2025 will be played in one league: Büchenbeuren Braves, Wiesbaden Flyers, Aschaffenburg Mohawks, Darmstadt Whippets, Dreieich Vultures, Japan Eagles Frankfurt, L.A.nix, Schriesheim Raubritter

**Playoffs** - The six first-placed teams are qualified for the playoffs. The playoffs should take place in Wiesbaden (28.09.2025) if possible.

The teams of the league provide for the playoffs the umpire.

Also applies to the playoffs "Hit your own balls".

There is no entry fee.

## Player rules

**Player Lists** – From the 2024 season, each player on the player list must be given a fixed number. This does not have to match the jersey number. The player number is noted together with the player's name on the lineup card for each game. No player may be listed on the roster of two different teams. All changes to the roster must be submitted to Jeff Stanford in 2025.

[j.g.stanford@hotmail.com](mailto:j.g.stanford@hotmail.com)

Team rosters are also available on the RML website.

**Lineup cards** - From the 2024 season, both teams will give a lineup card to the umpire for each game. The starting lineup (batting order) with player name and player number corresponding to the roster and the substitutes present are entered on this card.

Defensive positions do not have to be entered only the extra hitter must be marked.

Substitutions are noted by the scorer.

A player arriving late can be added to the lineup card before the last inning. To qualify for the playoffs, it is sufficient to be on the lineup card, a substitution is not necessary.

The umpire team will post a picture of both lineup cards and the scoresheet in the RML WhatsApp group after the game.

Seriously injured players may be reported to the league management separately and will be noted as such in order to qualify for the playoffs. The league management will make the final decision on admissibility in the week before the playoffs. In the event of an objection to the decision of the league management, this will be submitted to the coaches for a vote.

Toby McKenna of the Braves will keep track of the lineup cards and playoff qualification.

**Pick-Up Player** - If a team is not complete, it can request up to two players from the team of the umpiring team. The opposing coach selects the players for the requesting team. The gender regulation remains intact. This process is performed at the Plate Conference.

**Plate Conference** – A Plate Conference must be held before the start of the game. Special features of the playing field or the application of special rules are to be discussed here jointly by Umpire and team managers.

**Playoffs** - To qualify for the playoffs, a player must be on the lineup card for at least 50% of the games.

**Mixed Team** - It is played with mixed-gender teams. At least three (3) players of each gender must be on the field from start to finish. The quota is binding.

If a team is forced to play with fewer than three (3) women or men, the following rules apply:

The coaches may agree that both teams set the lower limit of two (2) players of each gender for the match day.

If it does not come to an agreement, the missing players may not be increased. The team plays with seven (7) and two (2) players. As a result, there is an automatic stop at position 5 in the batting order. At a ratio of seven (7) and one (1) player, there will be an automatic exit at positions 5 and 10 of the batting order. The offense team reports this independently to the umpire.

There must be at least one player of each gender on the field until the end of the game.

**League Players** - All women are allowed to actively play and play RML in each official league.

Men are allowed to actively play and play RML in the two lowest leagues of their respective federation.

Only two male ESSL or community players can be on the field at the same time.

**Age Regulation** - A player under the age of 18 may be used but **should** be at least 16 years old. **For players under the age of 18 there** must be an agreement of the parents and the coach of the team takes the responsibility, **it has to be marked on the lineup card.**

**Courtesy Runner** - A Courtesy Runner of the same sex can be used for a baserunner anytime.

The courtesy runner can come from the bench and is not a substitution, or can come out of the batting lineup, then has to be the last out of the same sex.

**Re-entry** - Any starting player can be substituted and re-entered, provided he rejoins the same position in the batting order.

**Extra Batter** - The batting order can include one extra hitter. He can hit in any position in the lineup but can't play defence in that game. The extra hitter has to be marked on the Lineup card.

## Game Rules

**Umpires** – Within the RML and tournaments, 2 umpires are used. These are provided by the free from play team. In controversial decisions, one Umpire can ask the other if he has seen the previous call as well. Players do not discuss with the umpire but turn to their coach.

**Pitching** - Slowpitch Softball requires the ball to be thrown in a noticeable arc. At the highest point of its trajectory, the pitched ball must be at least 1.83m (6ft.) above the ground and must not exceed 3.66m (12ft.). There is no hit by pitch. The distance from the Pitcher's Rubber to the Homeplate is min. 14 meters.

**Leading/Stealing** – is not allowed in the RML. Runners are only allowed to disengage from the base as soon as the bat has had an audible contact with the ball. If a runner leaves the base earlier, he / she is given 'out'.

**Sliding** – is allowed feet and headfirst. As there is no tag allowed at the scoring plate, it must be crossed running or walking.

**Infield Fly** – An Infield Fly is a Fair Fly Ball that can be captured by an infielder with normal effort when the first and second or first, second and third bases are occupied and before two players are out. The pitcher, catcher and any outfielder who is in the infield during the turn should be considered Infielder for the purposes of this rule. If it appears obvious that the struck ball is an Infield Fly, the Umpire should immediately call for the protection of the Runners - INFIELD FLY, IF FAIR, THE BATTER IS OUT. The ball is live and the runners may continue at their own risk or return to the base and continue after the catch, just like any other flyball. If the hit becomes a foul ball, it will be treated the same as any other foul ball.

If an Infield Fly is declared and the ball lands untouched and jumps into the foul territory before the first or third base, it is a foul ball. If a declared Infield Fly lands untouched outside the baselines and then before the first or third base jump into fair territory, it's an infield fly.

**5 Run Rule** – The 5-Run-Rule is changed to the regular Senior Softball Rules. If a team has scored 5 runs then a change takes place, even if there were not yet three (3) out. Has e.g. a team 4 runs and bases loaded and a homerun is hit, all runs in the last running turn are still counted, therefore max. 8 runs can be scored in an inning. In the RML, the last inning is open, that means the 5-Run-Rule will not be used.

**Overrunning the Bases** – At first base the doublebase (white / orange) is generally used. Only the first base and the scoring plate are overrun. A deliberate blocking of the bases is not permitted.

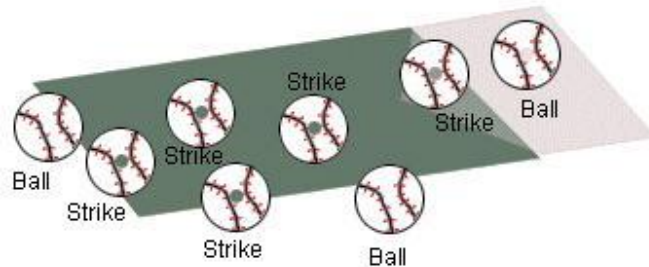
**Homeruns** – There is no limit to the number of home runs.

**Run down Linie** – As soon as the runner starts from the 3rd base to the scoring plate, he can move back and forth between the 3rd base and the run-down line as often as the situation allows. If he exceeds this line, he must try to reach the scoring plate. At the Home- / Scoringplate there is always a force play, if the runner comes from the third base, has crossed the run-down line towards scoring plate. A tag play is not allowed according to SSUSA Rules. The distance from the homeplate to the run-down line is 9 meters.

**Out Rule** – according to the slowpitch rules. Furthermore, the batter is out after 3 beaten foulballs and / or 3 strikes. If a runner uses homeplate instead of the scoring plate, the runner will be out. As Outzone 'at Home' applies both the complete carpet, as well as the home plate. The batter is also out if he / she lets go of the bat in a way that could endanger other players. The umpire decides.

**Overthrows** – Overthrows in the infield (dead ball) always result in 2 bases for all runners from the time of the pitch. In the second action from the time of the throw. Overthrows in the outfield make 2 bases for all runners from the time of the throw from the outfielder.

**Homeplate carpet** – The strike zone consists of the complete carpet (60x80 cm), which is positioned so that the back triangle of the home plate is hidden. If the required trajectory height has been maintained and the ball touches the carpet with its lower appearance point, this is a strike. If the softball arrives next to, in front of or behind the rug, it can be considered a 'ball'.



The mat may be placed over or under the plate

## Miscellaneous

**Leisure Softball** – If you are interested in recreational league operation (RML) or have any questions about this, you can get informed on the homepage of the Rhein-Main-Liga ([www.rml-softball.de](http://www.rml-softball.de)). Further information is available from the German Baseball and Softball Association ([www.baseball-softball.de](http://www.baseball-softball.de)) or from the league coordinator (Tel. 0173 – 3272033)

**Homepage** – The site contains everything about the league operation. If you have questions, just contact the administrator.

[www.rml-softball.de](http://www.rml-softball.de)

### Contact

1. league coordinator– Knut Mayer & Jeff Stanford  
(email: mayerknut@yahoo.de or j.g.stanford@hotmail.com)
2. Website administrator – Matthias Letsch (email: letsch2+rml@gmail.com)
3. Scoring – Knut Mayer



## History

In the past (1995-2000) almost every tournament was played according to different rules, with the result that it came in advance to disagreements between the teams. In order to counteract these tensions, the representatives of the teams of Dreieich (H.Grimm), Wiesbaden (D.Kos) and Mainz (J.Weinberg) had assembled in the spring of 2001 and revised and codified the rules for recreational softball. This was decided in the sense and prior agreement with other teams (Darmstadt, Kehl, Kassel). These rules are now binding and apply to all tournaments and in the Rhein-Main-Liga. In friendlies an agreement with each other is possible.

**Homeplate Line** – the Homeplate line was approved for security reasons (avoiding a collision with the catcher) and was used from the 2003 season. This serves as a replacement for the actual Homeplate. If a runner runs towards HPL and does not pass it before the ball is caught by the catcher, the runner is out. Here, the catcher may stand with his foot both on the HP, as well as on the carpet. A tag play by the catcher is also possible depending on the game situation. The lateral distance to the HP is 2 meters above the corner of the Battersbox. The length of the line is 1 meter. (RML)

**Scoring plate** – It was introduced in 2006 as a replacement for the HP line. Instead of the line, a second home plate is used. The distance from the home plate to the scoring plate is 2.25 meters (7.5 feet). Measured from the trailing edge of the HP to the trailing edge of the scoring plate. (JW)

**Girlsline** – was used and tested for the first time in the 2005 season. From 2006 it became an integral part of the rules. (JW)

**Bunting** – Approved from the 2005 season. To upgrade the catcher position on the slowpitch, the bunting was only allowed for the female players. (RML)

**Girlsline and Bunting** were abolished with the introduction of 11" balls for women for the 2014 season.

**HP carpet** – From the 2008 season, a complete (without triangular cutout) carpet is used and placed over the rear triangular piece of HP. The complete carpet is considered a strike zone. The dimensions of the carpet are 80x52 cm (RML)  
since 2010 80x60 cm

**Walks** – the 2009 season was played without Walks. The ball had to be hit. Balls that hit just next to the carpet, the umpire may call as Strike. At the end of the season 2009 this was not approved and the rule was abolished. (RML)

**Pitching Height** – the max. altitude of 3.66m was suspended in 2009. At the end of the season the rule was abolished. (RML)

**Sliden** – is allowed beginning with season 2012 headfirst only (RML) Since 2017 sliding is allowed head- und feetfirst.

**Age regulation** – The minimum age is 18 years. Has been redefined - who has his 18th birthday in the current season, is eligible to play within the RML. (RML)  
since 2019 new regulation

**Face Protection** – Is from season 2014 mandatory for the pitcher (RML)

**Pitcher Box** – was used in 2015 and abolished from 2016

**Player** - no longer have to play for at least three matchdays for his / her team in order to play in the playoffs. Deadline was introduced in