



## K-W Masters Slo-pitch 2026 League Rules.

Beginning with 2026, there is one slo-pitch rulebook – it is the SPN rulebook. SPN rules apply if not overridden by a league rule.

(<https://slo-pitch.com/content/rulebook>)

1. All players must be 40 years of age as of Dec 31, 2026, to be eligible to play in our league (players between the ages of 35-39 are eligible if they are family (son, stepson or son inlaw). Any new players under the age of 40 must-have approval from the league to play.
2. All players must be registered with the league (TEAMLINKT) and team league fees must be paid in full to be eligible to play. **This includes playslopitch.com registration.** Team rosters may be made up of full-time and team spare players, with a minimum of 14 full-time players and a maximum at the discretion of each team and the league.
3. **The maximum number of players from other teams or the general pool will be 4 per game.** No substitute will be used to bring the lineup to more than 12 players. **Non-roster players must bat at the bottom of the order.**
4. If a team has less than nine players, they will have a 10-minute grace period and then will have to forfeit the game.
5. If the fielding team only has **9** players there are **2** choices.
  - 1) To get to 10 defensive players, the fielding team uses a player from the offensive team – in the catcher’s position. If this choice is taken then there will be an out recorded in the 10<sup>th</sup> position in the batting order. If a 10<sup>th</sup> player for this team shows up during play then he will occupy the 10<sup>th</sup> spot as a regular batter, no out will be recorded.
  - 2) The team can choose to play with 9 players and the offensive team does not supply a catcher. There will be no outs recorded in the 10<sup>th</sup> spot. If a 10<sup>th</sup> player for this team shows up during play then he will occupy the 10<sup>th</sup> spot as a regular player, no out will be recorded.
6. All players at the game will be in the lineup and must bat, playing defense is an option.

7. A lead-off will be called if a runner leaves a base before contact is made with the ball and that runner will be called out.  
Clarification: No anticipation step is allowed.
8. Any foul tip caught by the catcher is an out.
9. A batted ball striking the plate and rolling fair is considered in play.
10. Sliding or diving will be permitted at all bases. Sliding is not permitted at home. A runner who slides at home will be called out. If any player uses a slide for aggressive purposes, he will be called out and referred to the disciplinary committee.
11. A bunt is an automatic out.
12. A legal pitch has to be a minimum height of 6 feet and a maximum of 12 feet.
13. Courtesy runners are allowed at any base for **injured players**. The courtesy runner is any available batter (not necessarily the last out) based on the batting order. Once a courtesy runner is used, that player must use a courtesy runner for the rest of the game.
14. Courtesy runners from home plate must be fully behind a line parallel to the 3rd baseline. There will be a mark on the fences to show where the line starts. If the trailing foot leaves the ground with the lead foot in front of the line the batter will be called out. There is **NO** requirement for the runner to hold the fence with their hand.
15. No player may act as a courtesy runner more than once per inning.
16. **New in 2026** Home run rule. A team may hit up to 5 home runs, but every home run after that shall be considered an out until the other team has hit 5 home runs. When an out is recorded on an excess home run, the ball is dead and no runners advance. Once both teams have hit 5 home runs, each team is then eligible to hit 5 more.  
A deflected ball that goes over the fence, defined as a “4 base award” **WILL count** as a home run in the league.

17. **New in 2026** As a trial, each game will be 7 innings for the 2026 regular season. This rule will be evaluated and either extended or revoked for the 2026 playoff season.
18. **Modified in 2026** To avoid lopsided scores, a maximum of 5 runs may be scored by any team in each of the first eight **(6)** innings at which time the half-inning is over regardless of the number of outs. The **seventh** inning is open.
19. **New in 2026** If a game is tied after 7 innings and time remains, 1 extra inning will be played according the Tiebreaker Rule (runner on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 0 out). If the game remains tied after the extra inning, the result will be recorded as a tie. If time runs out during the extra inning, the game will revert to the score from the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> inning.
20. **Modified in 2026** *The mercy rule:* No mercy rule will be used for 7 inning games.
21. **Modified in 2026** *Flip-flop rule:* No flip-flop rule will be used for 7 inning games.
22. No abusive language or alcoholic beverages are allowed.
23. There will be no infield warm-up balls allowed after the first inning. The team at bat must supply an umpire.
24. **Modified in 2026** A game will be considered a complete game if 4 ½ innings are completed and the home team is ahead or the game is tied. For seven inning games, 3 ½ innings will be considered a complete game.
25. **Modified in 2026** If 5 innings are completed, the team with the highest score will be declared the winner or if the teams are tied, the game will end in a tie. For 7 inning games, use 4 innings.
26. **Modified in 2026** In the event more than 5 innings have been completed and the home team did not get their full opportunity to bat in the bottom of the inning to achieve a tie or the lead before play was stopped due to weather conditions, the game will revert to the last completed inning and the highest score will be declared the winner. For 7 inning games, use 4 innings.
27. Pitchers must wear the league provided pitching helmet or one of similar design. A face mask is not acceptable when pitching.

28. When a pitcher uses the pitching screen, the pitcher must remain behind the pitching screen after the ball is pitched, but can defend from that position. A pitcher who does not remain will result in a one base awarded to the batter
29. **Modified in 2026** Pitching Screens - use is optional. Exception: if the pitcher is 70+ years old, pitching screen will be mandatory. There will be a pitching screen available at each diamond for use to protect the pitcher, at their discretion. If used, these rules will be observed:
- a. The screen must be used for the entire 1/2 inning if it was selected at the start of the inning.
  - b. A batted ball striking the screen is a strike, and the ball is dead.
  - c. If the ball striking the screen is the third strike, the batter shall be called out.
  - d. The pitcher must fully move behind the screen after pitching the ball.
  - e. After the ball is hit, the pitcher may still move out from behind the screen and field a batted ball.
  - f. Any throws striking the screen the ball is live and in play.

### **Tie Breakers:**

1. In the case of a 2-way tie, the head-to-head games in that round of the playoffs will be used to decide the winner. If there is still a tie, then the team with the overall season head-to-head game advantage would advance, and if there is still a tie then the overall season standings will be used to break the tie.
2. In the case of a 3 or more-way tie, the overall season standings will be used to break the tie.

### **Physical altercations both on the field and in the park area will not be tolerated.**

The team captains are to notify the league Commissioner as soon as possible of any incident and the player or players involved will be suspended indefinitely until the Disciplinary Committee can meet and review the matter.

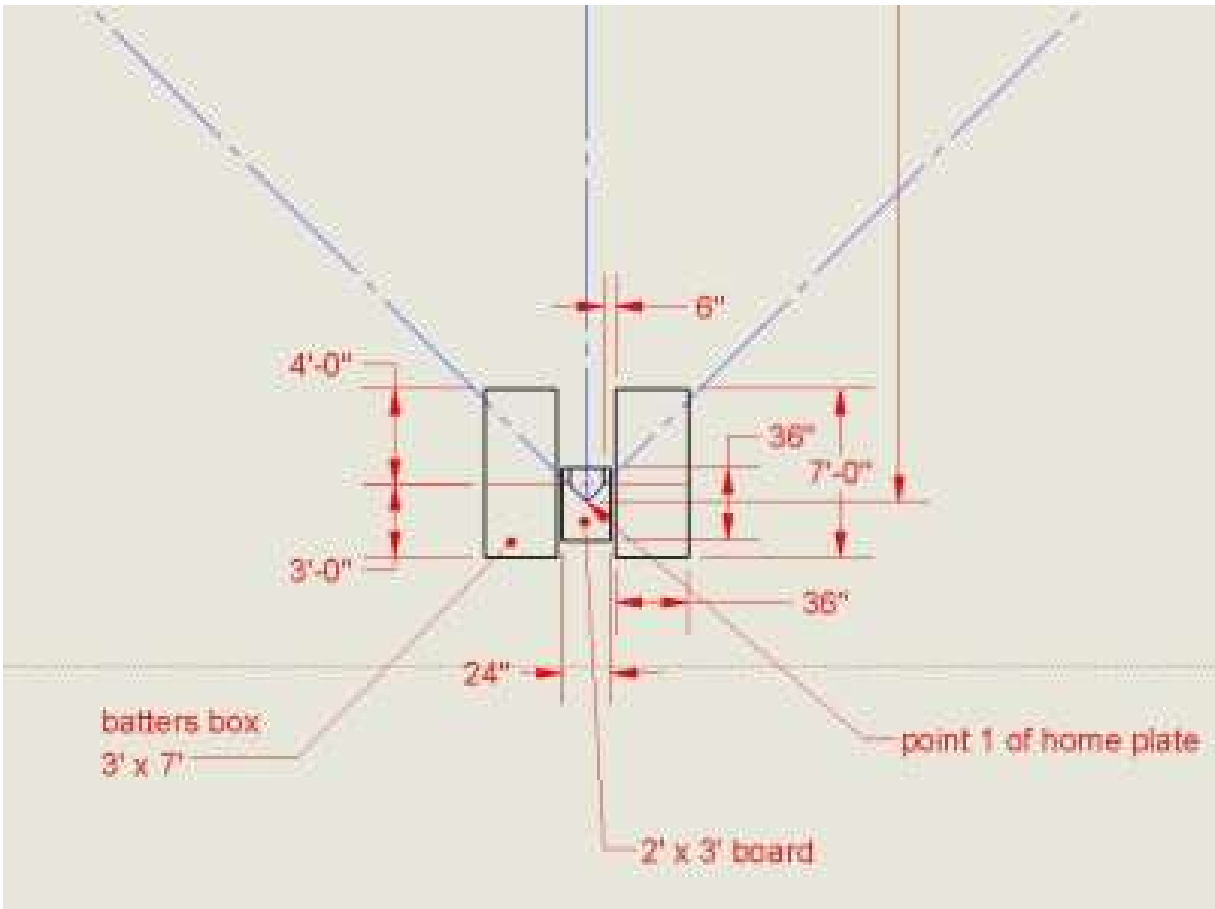
Abusive behavior towards an umpire, official, or opponent will not be tolerated.

Please remember this league was started so all players could get some exercise and have some fun and enjoyment.

## Clarification of SPO rules for KW Masters Slo-pitch League:

1. Scoring line: SPO states that any part of the foot must touch or go over the line extended from home plate towards the fence and be in contact with the ground before the ball is caught by the catcher touching home plate (mat).
2. Overthrow rule: When a thrown ball goes out of play (beyond the established boundary lines of the playing field) all runners, including the batter-runner, shall be awarded two bases from the last base legally touched based on their position at the time that the thrown ball left the fielder's hand. If there are two runners between the same bases, the award is based on the position of the lead runner.
3. infield fly: While this rule remains the same (SPO rule - runners on 1st and 2nd or bases loaded with less than 2 out and the batter hits a fly ball that is reasonably catchable by an infielder), team captains can invoke the infield fly rule after the fact if in agreement that it should have been called. In this case, the batter will be out, and the runners will return to their original bases. Infield fly should only be called in this method if it is an obvious oversight and both teams are in agreement. If the umpire did invoke the infield fly rule, that is not reviewable and cannot be overturned.
4. intentional walks: are allowed, and to keep unnecessary delays out of our game, no pitches are required to a batter - just an indication that the batter should advance to 1st base, as per the SPO rule. Remember, this is a sensitive issue for some, and keep sportsmanship in mind when you decide to issue an intentional walk.
5. Home run "trot": SPO rules allow for just returning to the bench if a ball is hit over the outfield fence for a home run (ie. not required to run the bases). In our league, the choice should be the batters: if someone hits a home run and it is not a regular occurrence, they should be able to run the bases (and enjoy it!). Conversely, if you don't want to. SPO rules say you do **NOT** need to touch first base, and all other runners may return directly to the bench.

6. Batter's box: the SPO batter's box is defined as 3 feet wide by 7 feet deep. As long as the player stays within this box, they may move around as desired before/during the swing. All players are encouraged to keep player safety in mind if they intend to "step into" a pitch by moving forward to the front of the box during a swing.



## Bats




All bats must have the USSSA 2012 "thumbprint" stamp

If a player is found using a bat that is not allowed the following will occur:

- i. At the point of discovery, the batter will be ejected for the balance of the game in progress and the bat is removed from play.
- ii. An automatic 1 game suspension will be served by said player. The captain will be accountable to ensure that bat does not enter any more games. A report of this must be made to the executive.

- iii. The current game will continue until the conclusion
- iv. A further review of the incident will be conducted by the disciplinary committee and the league executive and additional discipline may be pending.
- v. Any subsequent incidents will result in a further review by the disciplinary committee and league executive to determine additional discipline.

 **New NTS Stamp:** Beginning with 2021 Models, USSSA is using the new 240lb compression standard with the NTS Stamp, shown below. Moving forward, 240lb compression standard bats are all that can be approved to have a USSSA Stamp on them.



**The use of illegal bats can void our insurance. Please play responsibly!**

## Ground Rules:

At Bloomingdale, bases are to be set up by the home team for the 6:30 game. They will also set up the pitching screen and place it where it is available for each team. The home team from the 8:15 game will put the bases and pitching screen away.

The extended line from the backstop screen determines the out-of-bounds. A fly ball caught in play and carried out of bounds is an out, and all base runners advance one base.

1. **Modified in 2026** A game will be **7** innings (as detailed in rule 17 above) unless the captains agree on fewer innings before or during the game.
2. **Modified in 2026** **Each time slot has hard times set.**
  - a) **The 6:30 game.** No new inning can start after **7:50**. The game has a hard stop at **8:00** regardless of the situation. If the inning is incomplete then the official score will revert to the previous completed inning.
  - b) **The 8:15 game.** No new inning can start after **9:35**. The game has a hard stop at **9:45** regardless of the situation. If the inning is incomplete then the official score will revert to the previous completed inning.

- c) **For this rule, a complete inning will be defined as follows:**
  - 1. The home team having a lead and not needing to bat.
  - 2. The home team having 3 outs.
  - 3. The home team scoring enough runs in their half inning for a victory or tie.
- d) **If the game does not start at the assigned time, take note when the game does start and the game is done 90 minutes from that time.**  
**Example:** game starts at 8:25, no innings can start after 9:45 with a hard stop at 9:55.

### **Bloomingtondale Field Conditions**

- 1. When KWMSPL is not able to utilize the fields due to inclement weather, KWMSPL must notify any executive member before or by the next working day, of the unused field time.
- 2. **Modified in 2026** The Township will post Field Conditions on their website and/or notify the league of the conditions if they are not in “Green” or full go condition. They may advise that the conditions are “Red” which means the fields are closed, or “Yellow” which means grooming may not have been completed and the user group should make a decision at the field if the diamond is playable.