

2026 Softball

Classification — based on grades 9-12

| | | | |
|----|----------------|----|---------------|
| 6A | 1,400 and over | 3A | 349-175 |
| 5A | 1,399-700 | 2A | 174 and under |
| 4A | 699-350 | | |

2026 Softball Season

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| First day of practice | February 27 |
| First game | March 11 |
| District completion date | May 9 |
| State Play-ins | May 9 |
| State Tournament | May 14-16 |

*All teams will be required to enter rosters, schedules and scores on MaxPreps.

Game Limitations for Each Team

A team is limited to 22 games or 20 games plus one tournament, not to exceed 24 games. If a school loses a scheduled tournament game or a school is unable to attend a tournament due to reasons beyond their control, the school can reschedule lost games.

Game Limitations for Individuals

During the regular season, athletes are permitted to play in no more than 154 innings in a 22 game schedule, or 168 in a 24 game schedule. For a game in which the score is tied at the end of seven innings, the extra innings shall be considered as an extension of the seventh inning. A contestant who exceeds the limitations of regular season participation will become ineligible for district, state or any other additional IHSAA sponsored competition of that sport.

Rules

All Idaho contests will be played under National Federation (NFHS) Softball Rules. Rules books and case books will be distributed to school representatives at the district rules clinics.

Idaho Rules Modifications

NFHS rules shall be followed, except as modified by the IHSAA Board of Directors. IHSAA modifications:

1. **Length of game:** All varsity games shall be seven innings with the exception of the 10-run rule. A game shall end any time after the fifth inning when a team is 10 or more runs behind and has completed its turn at bat. This rule is in effect for all games at the state tournament. During the regular season, games may also be terminated by mutual agreement of both coaches prior to the start of the contest and acknowledged by the umpire-in-chief under the following conditions:
 - a. When a team is ahead by 15 runs after three innings of play.
 - b. When a game exceeds the time limit of 1 ½ hours.
2. **Called game:** If weather or darkness causes a tied game to be called, such game shall be considered a suspended game and shall be continued from the point of suspension at a later time.
 - a. If a game is called before five full innings have been played and the score is not tied, such game shall also be considered a suspended game, unless the home team has scored a greater number of runs in four or four-and-a-fraction turns at bat than the visiting team has scored in five turns at bat, in which case it is a regulation game.
3. **Baseline:** The baseline shall be 60 feet.
4. **Ball:** A 12" ball shall be used. The yellow optic ball may be used for league play and district tournaments, and the official

ball – **Baden 2BSFPY Perfection** – will be used at all play-in and state tournament competition.

5. **Tie-Break procedure:** Each half-inning begins by placing a runner on second base. That runner is the player in the batting order who precedes the lead-off batter in the inning. The game then proceeds a full inning or until a winner is determined in that inning. This procedure shall start at the beginning of the eighth inning or at the game time limit previously agreed upon by both coaches.
6. **Double First Base:** Idaho permits the use of a double first base in all levels of play and when in use, will be governed by NFHS rules.

Umpires

IHSAA certified umpires must be used for all interscholastic contests. Two umpires should be used at all games.

2026 State Tournament

| | | |
|--------|-----|---|
| Dates: | May | 14-16 |
| Sites: | 6A | Coeur d'Alene HS/Lake City HS |
| | 5A | Post Falls HS |
| | 4A | Filer HS |
| | 3A | Timberlake HS/Lakeland HS (Kellogg HS host) |
| | 2A | Genesee HS |

Number of Participants

At play-in and state tournament games, a maximum of seventeen players may be in uniform at the start of the contest. Violation of this rule will result in the school being assessed a maximum fine for dressing more than the approved number of players at a state play-in or tournament game with forfeiture of the game if excess numbers play. All classifications will be allowed four coaches and three support personnel to be admitted without an IHSAA card or tournament pass. Any coaches or support personnel exceeding that number must have either an IHSAA card or purchase a tournament pass.

Determining Home Team

At state play-in games, the home team shall be determined by the flip of a coin. At the state tournament, the highest seeded team shall be the home team (with exceptions for Game #15 if necessary). The home team dugout shall be determined by the site manager.

Home Run Fence

When state fast pitch tournaments are held at fields that do not meet NFHS standard distance for the home run fence, a fence shall be installed at 210', if possible.

Inclement Weather Procedure for State

In the event the state tournament cannot take place in its scheduled format, the following procedure will be used:

1. All modifications will be handled in accordance with IHSAA Rule 20.
2. All games will use Idaho Rules Modifications 1a and 1b.
3. Alternate sites, if available, must be within reasonable distance to the original site so as not to incur additional travel/lodging costs for teams that have traveled.
4. Games will be shortened to 5 innings until the original game schedule can be resumed.
5. All games on the consolation side of the bracket will be cancelled. Championship semifinal games will be 5 innings.
6. The length of championship games will be determined by the host site manager and the IHSAA.
7. If more than 4 teams remain in the tournament, and it is not possible to get the games in, the tournament may be cancelled.

NOTE: It is very possible that not all classifications will make the same decisions at each step of the protocol above.

2026 Softball Representation

| 6A | | 5A | | 4A | | | |
|------|-----|--------|----|------------------------------------|-----|--|--|
| I | 1.5 | I-II | 1 | I | .5 | | |
| III | 4.5 | III | 2 | III | 2.5 | | |
| V-VI | 2 | IV | 2 | IV | 1.5 | | |
| | | V | 1 | V | 2 | | |
| | | VI | 2 | VI | 1.5 | | |
| 3A | | 2A | | | | | |
| I-II | 2 | II | 2* | | | | |
| III | 2 | III-IV | 2* | *plus next two best MaxPreps seeds | | | |
| IV-V | 1.5 | | | | | | |
| VI | 2.5 | | | | | | |

State Play-ins

6A Play-in

| | |
|----|-------------------------------|
| 1B | Grangeville HS |
| 3E | 1:00 p.m. (PT) Sat., May 9 |

4A Play-in

| | |
|----|----------------------------------|
| 1A | Grangeville HS |
| 3C | 1:00 p.m. Pacific Sat., May 9 |

4A Play-in

| | |
|----|--------------------------|
| 4B | Blackfoot HS |
| 6B | 1:00 p.m. Sat., May 9 |

3A Play-in

| | |
|------|--------------------------|
| 4-5B | Blackfoot HS |
| 6C | 1:00 p.m. Sat., May 9 |

2026 Bracketing

Qualifying teams will be seeded into the state bracket according to the final rankings through and including all regular season and district tournament games. The high seed is considered the home team for all games in the tournament (with exceptions for Game #15 if necessary).

6A-3A:

| |
|---------|
| #1 Seed |
| #8 Seed |
| #4 Seed |
| #5 Seed |
| #3 Seed |
| #6 Seed |
| #2 Seed |
| #7 Seed |

2A:

| | |
|------------------------------|---------|
| #1 Seed (first round bye) | #4 Seed |
| | #5 Seed |
| #2 Seed (first round bye) | #3 Seed |
| | #6 Seed |