

Spring 2018 8U Softball League

Rules & Amendments

Since USA Softball does not have formal rules for 8U recreational softball, the USA Softball 10U rules shall be used. However, the following local rules will have precedence over the USA Softball 10U rules. Also keep in mind that there are a set of separate league rules that apply to all age divisions.

1) GENERAL

1. These division rules come first then USA Softball rules will prevail.
2. All activities shall be conducted at the highest possible levels of sportsmanship.
3. At no time will a player, coach, or fan be permitted to stand behind the backstop.
 - a. This is important for the coaches and the umpires to enforce.
 - b. This applies to those people hanging on the backstop or coaching from the behind the back stop.
4. Games shall start at the scheduled time.
 - a. See the MCGSA-wide rules for guidance with respect to time limits and warm-ups
5. An 11 inch training softball (provided by the MCGSA) will be the official game ball.
 - a. The umpires will get the game balls from the official's office and return them after the game.
 - b. There are generally 3 balls provided for an 8U game.
6. The baselines shall have marks indicating the half-ways points between the bases (1st and 2nd, 2nd and 3rd, 3rd and home).
7. All batters must wear an approved NOCSAE approved helmet with approved face guard.
8. All players must wear a NOCSAE approved face guard.
9. All pitchers must wear a heart guard. MCGSA will provide heart guards.

2) PLAYERS

1. No more than 10 players on the field at a time.
 - a. The infield consists of 4 infielders, a catcher and a pitcher.
 - b. The outfield consists of no more than 4 players and shall remain on the grass until the ball crosses the plate.
 - c. There must be a player in the pitcher and catcher positions
 - d. If the maximum 10 players are not present, the coach should request call up players to reach the roster size of 10. It is important to give players moving into an age groups an opportunity to play up and gain experience. The focus is on providing play time for the players.

2. All players who are not participating in the game on the field must remain in the dugout.
 - a. Sometimes a difficult feat, but please try to instill in the girls that they need to remain in the dugout area
3. Any players that are playing up (that is, players filling in from the 6U division), may only play in the outfield position.

3) COACHES

1. The head coach is responsible for the actions of his or her team and assistant coaches.
2. Head coaches and assistant coaches may be base coaches.
3. Any number of defensive coaches may be positioned behind the outfielders though we have found 2 coaches in the outfield works best.
4. Only coaches, score keepers, and team players are allowed in the dugout.
 - a. The adults in the dugout should have completed the ACE certification course and **MUST** have completed the background check process. **The requirement is to have completed a background check.**
 - b. Go to www.registerusasoftball.com to get your certification
 - c. This will be enforced by verifying that registered coaches have completed the certification on the web site
 - d. There may also be on field checks to make sure only the registered coaches are in the dug outs.
 - e. Try to keep the number of adults in the dugouts to no more than three (head coach, assistant coach and scorekeeper. Note the scorekeeper can be outside if your need a child wrangler in the dug out)
5. Only the head coach can approach an umpire to question or appeal a play.
 - a. You cannot question a judgment call, but you can question misapplication of the rules.
 - b. You need to discuss it with the umpire making the call. Call for a time and ask to speak with the umpire.
6. If a coach is hit by a ball in fair territory the ball is considered in play. It is umpire's discretion if it is believed that a coach intentionally interfered with the ball. This would result in the runner nearest the plate being called out and a warning to the coach. A repeat would result in the runner closest to the plate being called out and ejection of the coach from the game.

4) GAME RULES

1. A complete game will consist of 6 innings. The umpire will instruct the home team to record the actual starting time in the home score book.
 - a. Time limit rules are in the general MCGSA rule set
2. Time outs may be called at any time on offense or defense.

3. There is free substitution on defense.
4. An inning will consist of ten batters, three outs, or 5 runs, whichever occurs first. If the team is playing with eight or nine players they still bat ten batters (i.e. it is possible for a batter to bat twice in the same inning). During the last inning the 5 run and 10 batter rules will not apply. The last inning may only end with 3 outs or at the agreement of the head coaches.
 - a. The last inning may be the 6th inning if a full game is played, otherwise it may be the last inning before time expires.
5. The Run Ahead Rule (Rule 5, Section 9 of the USA Softball rules) is modified as follows: After 3 innings, if a team is ahead by 15 or more runs, their players receive 1 coach pitches as opposed to the usual 2. The batter cannot foul out on the last pitch. After 4 innings, if a team is ahead by 10 or more runs, their players receive 1 pitch as opposed to the usual 4. Each batter will also get 3 pitches from a player pitcher.

5) Batter/Runner and Runners

1. Batter/runners and runners are entitled to advance with liability to be put out until the umpire calls time. The umpire will call time when:
 - a. The pitcher has control of the ball in the pitching circle; or
 - b. When an attempt to get the ball into the circle is made
2. Runners who have passed halfway to the next base when time is called will be allowed to proceed without liability to be put out.
3. Runners may leave the base when the batter has made contact with the pitch.
4. Stealing is not allowed
5. Runners MAY NOT advance on a passed ball.
6. Runners are entitled to a maximum of 1 base on an errant throw with liability to be put out. Runners cannot advance more than one base even if additional defensive plays are attempted.
7. No bunting
8. No dropped 3rd strike
9. No infield fly rule
10. No look back rule
11. Round robin batting will be used. All rostered players present at the game shall bat in the order. (All players will stay in batting order even if they are not on the field).
12. When batting round robin, if a runner becomes injured while running the bases she may be temporarily replaced by the offensive player who made the last out in the current inning, or if this is the first batter, then the last out from the previous inning. However, if the injured runner cannot bat at her next at-bat, she will be removed from the game and cannot re-enter that game.

6) Pitching

1. There will be no walks
2. Umpires will call strikes and balls for player pitches.
3. After 4 player pitches an offensive coach pitches if the batter does not have 3 strikes. Strikes carry over.
4. After 2 pitches by the offensive coach or if the batter reaches 3 swinging strikes, the batter is out unless the ball is fouled off. The pitches will continue until the batter does not foul off the pitch or another pitch is thrown and the batter does not swing.
5. Coaches MUST pitch from the designated pitching plate.
6. The offensive coach only enters the field when it is time to pitch.
7. While the offensive coach is pitching the player at the pitcher position must have one foot in the pitchers circle
8. The pitching distance will be 32 feet
9. The goal is to have the pitchers follow USA Softball rules with respect to pitching.
10. All pitchers are required to wear fielding masks and heart guards while pitching
11. Players may pitch no more than 2 innings???
12. If the pitcher returns in the same inning it will be considered another inning.
13. Catcher assist. A coach/parent with a completed background check will be permitted to closely assist their catcher in retrieving wild pitches. This designated assistant must remain behind the fence until the ball crosses the plate.