

# Mon County Girls Softball 8U Rules

## Revision History

Revision	Date	Description
0.1	10/10/2025	Updated formatting and some verbiage
0.2	3/1/2026	Changed game duration

## Note

USA Softball, the governing body of the MCGSA, does not have formal 8U recreational softball rules. Therefore, the USA Softball 10U rules shall apply to topics not covered in our MCGSA-specific rules.

## 1. General

- a. These division rules come first; then USA Softball rules will prevail.
- b. All activities shall be conducted at the highest possible levels of sportsmanship.
- c. The Granville Town Park closes at 10:00 PM. Games may run past this time, but all efforts should be made to complete late games by 10:00 PM. In all instances, no new inning will start past 9:55 PM.
- d. At no time will a player, coach, or fan be permitted to stand behind the backstop on all fields.
  - i. This is important for both coaches and umpires to enforce.
- e. In between innings, there are no infield warm-ups, and pitchers get two (2) warm-up pitches. If a new pitcher, they are allotted five (5) warm-up pitches. If the start of the inning is delayed due to the catcher suiting up, the pitcher may continue to warm up until the catcher is ready.
- f. Do your best to keep the pace of play.
  - i. Have a plan for where players will be positioned during each inning.
  - ii. Make use of the courtesy runner for your catcher.
  - iii. Suit up catchers when two outs are accrued.
  - iv. Coaches, be ready to pitch when the count gets to three balls.
- g. The home team will keep the official scorebook.

## 2. Players

- a. All batters must wear a NOCSAE-approved helmet with an approved face guard.
  - i. All offensive players must wear their batting helmets when on the field of play.
- b. All fielders (infield and outfield) must wear a NOCSAE-approved fielder's mask.
- c. All pitchers must wear a MCGSA-provided heart guard.

- d. Uniforms will be worn at all games. This includes jerseys provided by the league, as well as shorts or pants, as decided by the coach. Exceptions will be made for inclement weather and other extenuating circumstances.
  - i. If a team wishes to make use of any additional uniform items (socks, visors, etc), all players must dress in the same attire, as long as it is in proper taste and good sportsmanship.
  - ii. If any of the additional items cause conflicts with other teams, association officials, or parents, it will be dealt with at that time by a member of the MCGSA board.
- e. Any player arriving late will be inserted at the bottom of the order. Any player leaving the game early will be removed from the lineup with no penalty.
- f. No more than ten (10) fielders on defense and no fewer than eight (8). NO EXCEPTIONS!
  - i. The infield consists of four (4) infielders, plus a catcher and a pitcher.
  - ii. The outfield consists of no more than four (4) players who shall remain on the outfield grass until the ball crosses the plate.
  - iii. There must be a player in the pitcher and catcher positions.
  - iv. If the maximum of ten (10) players are not present, the coach should request call-up players to reach the roster size of ten (10). A player must meet the following criteria to be considered a call-up player for the 8U age division.
    - 1. The player must be a senior player in the 6U age division.
    - 2. The player must be listed on the official division call-up list.
    - 3. The player's parent(s) or guardian(s) must approve of the player playing in the 8U age division.
    - 4. The player's coach in the 6U age division must approve of them playing in the 8U age division.
  - v. Call-up players can only play in the outfield and must be placed last in the batting order
  - vi. On a case-by-case basis, it may also be approved to use an 8U player from another team to fill the roster. This must be approved by the Player Agent or another board member before play. If approved, this player is considered a call-up player and must abide by Rule 2.d.v.
  - vii. If a team is unable to field a team of at least eight (8) players, the opposing team may lend players to the shorthanded team if that team has over ten (10) players. The shorthanded team will incur a loss, but the game may be played.

### **3. Fields and Grounds**

- a. The home team is responsible for getting the field prepared for play. This includes the following items:
  - i. Removing the base plugs and installing the bases into their posts.

- ii. Moving the pitching rubber to the proper distance if needed (and after being trained on how to do so).
- iii. Removing any practice equipment from the field of play.
- iv. Lining the fields, which includes:
  - 1. Batter's boxes.
  - 2. Pitcher's circle.
  - 3. Foul lines extending from the batter's box to each foul pole.
  - 4. Hash marks halfway between first base and second base, halfway between second base and third base, and halfway between third base and home plate.
- v. At the conclusion of the game, the bases are to be removed and placed into their storage space in the correct field shed (the middle of the floor is not the appropriate place). Replace the plugs when removing the bases.
- b. Both teams are responsible for cleaning all trash and debris from their respective dugouts and spectator areas. Please encourage parents and fans to clean their areas after the game.

#### 4. Game Play

- a. An 11-inch training softball (provided by MCGSA) will be the official game ball.
- b. Game balls will be provided by the MCGSA office to umpires only.
- c. A complete game will consist of four (4) innings or a drop-dead time of 1.25 hours (1 hour and 15 minutes), whichever comes first.
  - i. The umpire will keep the official time.
- d. A regular-season game can end in a tie.
- e. A game is considered complete after either 45 minutes of play or after two (2) innings.
- f. The time limit will be enforced from the scheduled start time, regardless of when the first pitch occurs.**
  - i. Playoff and Championship games will play the full four (4) innings.
    - 1. If the game is tied after four (4) innings, the USA Tie-Breaker Rule will be in effect for subsequent innings.
      - a. The last batted out will be placed on second base at the start of the inning.
- g. Each team is allotted one (1) timeout per half inning, one (1) offensive and one (1) defensive, but you must wait until you are awarded time by the umpire before approaching your player(s). This does not include timeouts to switch pitchers.
  - i. If it becomes apparent that a coach or player is purposely using time-outs as a way to delay play, they may be relegated to the dugout for the remainder of the game and face additional disciplinary action as deemed necessary by the MCGSA board.
- h. There is free substitution on defense.

- i. An inning will consist of ten (10) batters, three (3) outs, or five (5) runs, whichever occurs first. If a team is playing with fewer than ten (10) players, they continue to bat until they reach the ten (10) batter limit (i.e., it is possible for a batter to bat twice in the same inning).
  - i. The ten (10) batter and (5) run limits do not apply in the fourth and final inning. The fourth and final inning may only end after three (3) outs or at the agreement of the head coaches.
- j. The Run Ahead Rule (Rule 5, Section 9 of the USA Softball rules) is modified as follows:
  - i. After two (2) or more innings, if a team is ahead by ten (10) or more runs, their players receive only one (1) coach pitch regardless of the count on the batter. A foul ball does not count towards the one (1) coach pitch.

## **5. Batter-Runner and Runners**

- a. Batter-runners and runners are entitled to advance, with liability to be put out, until the umpire calls time, except on an errant throw (see Rule 5.f). The umpire will call time when:
  - i. The pitcher has control of the ball in the pitching circle; or
  - ii. The ball has crossed the plane of the pitching circle.
- b. Runners who have passed halfway to the next base when time is called will be allowed to proceed without liability to be put out.
- c. Base Running
  - i. First five (5) games:
    1. Runners may leave the base when the batter has made contact with the pitch.
  - ii. Remaining games and playoffs:
    1. Coaches should begin working with the girls on how to lead off the base. The player cannot leave the base until the pitch leaves the pitcher's hand and will only be allowed to go approximately three (3) to five (5) steps off the base.
    2. The player can lead off, but may not advance unless the batter has made contact with the ball.
  - iii. Players leaving early will result in one (1) warning per team. Subsequent runners who leave early will be called out.
- d. There is no stealing.
- e. Runners may NOT advance on a passed ball.
- f. Runners are entitled to a maximum of one (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. This applies to all batter-runners and runners, not just the runner at the base on which the errant throw was made.

- i. Example: There is a runner on first when the ball is hit. That runner advances to second on the hit, and a play is made on the batter-runner at first, resulting in an errant throw. The runner at second can advance to third, and the batter-runner at first can advance to second, but that is all. If a subsequent play is made on the batter-runner attempting to advance to second, the runner at third may still not advance past third base.
- g. No bunting.
- h. No dropped third strike.
- i. No infield fly rule.
- j. No look-back rule.
- k. Round robin batting will be used. All rostered players present at the game shall be placed in the batting lineup.
  - i. All players will remain in the lineup, whether playing defense or not.
  - ii. The lineup order must remain the same for the entire game.
- l. If a runner becomes injured, she may be temporarily replaced by the offensive player who made the last out in the current inning. If there are no outs, then it is the player furthest removed from the at-bat.
  - i. However, if the injured runner cannot bat in her next at-bat, she will be removed from the lineup and cannot re-enter the game.
- m. If a player-pitched pitch hits a player, there are distinct rulings, as follows:
  - i. If the ball hits the batter in the air, before contacting the dirt, the batter must take her base.
  - ii. If the ball hits the ground first, the batter may either take her base OR choose to finish the at-bat.
  - iii. Coaches are encouraged to teach their batters how to move out of the way of a wild pitch.
- n. A courtesy runner can be used for your catcher at any time.
  - i. The courtesy runner must be the last batted out, or if no outs, the player furthest from the current batting position.

## 6. Pitching

- a. The pitching distance, as measured from the apex of home plate to the front of the pitching rubber, is 32 feet.
- b. All pitchers must wear a fielder's mask and an MCGSA-provided heart guard.
- c. Players may pitch no more than two (2) innings.
- d. The goal is to promote rotation of pitchers.
- e. One pitch thrown in an inning is considered an inning pitched.
- f. The goal is to have the pitchers follow USA Softball rules with respect to pitching, but significant leeway is allowed. The goal is to build confidence in the pitchers. No illegal pitches will be called by the umpire.

- g. There are no walks.
- h. Umpires will call balls and strikes for player pitches.
- i. The pitcher can accumulate a maximum of three (3) called balls. After the third called player pitched ball, an offensive coach pitches. The offensive coach will pitch the number of pitches based on the balance of strikes remaining to the batter, unless the batter accumulates three (3) strikes for a strikeout. Strikes earned by the player pitcher carry over.
  - i. Example: Player pitches until ball three is called by the umpire. If no strikes are thrown, the coach will pitch three pitches. If the count was three and one, then the coach will pitch two pitches, and if the count was three and two, then the coach will pitch only one pitch.
  - ii. If a coach's last pitch is deemed unhittable by the umpire, the coach will be permitted to throw one more pitch. The goal is to prevent batters from swinging at bad pitches, while also not significantly delaying play.
  - iii. Only one additional pitch will be permitted.
- j. After the maximum of three (3) pitches by the offensive coach, or if the batter reaches three (3) swinging strikes, the batter is OUT unless the ball is fouled off. The at-bat will continue until the batter does not foul off a pitch, another pitch is thrown and the batter does not swing, or the batter hits the ball in play.
- k. Coaches MUST pitch from the inside the pitching circle. Please be ready to pitch.
- l. The offensive coach may only enter the field of play when it is time to pitch.
- m. During coach pitch, the player in the pitcher position must keep one foot in the pitcher's circle until the ball is hit.
- n. Coach pitchers must make every attempt to avoid batted balls and to leave the field of play.
- o. A coach is permitted to closely assist their catcher in retrieving wild pitches. He or she must remain behind the fence until the ball crosses the plate.

## 7. Coaches

- a. The head coach is responsible for the actions of his or her team, assistant coaches, and fans.
- b. Head coaches and assistant coaches may be base coaches.
- c. Two (2) defensive coaches are permitted to be positioned behind the outfielders.
- d. Only coaches, scorekeepers, and team players are allowed in the dugout.
  - i. The adults in the dugout MUST have completed a background check and the SafeSport training. The head coach must also complete one ACE certification.
  - ii. Keep the number of adults in the dugout to no more than three (3).
- e. Only a head coach may approach an umpire to question or appeal a play.
  - i. A coach cannot question a judgment call, but can question the misapplication of the rules.

- ii. If two umpires are present, you may ask the umpire to appeal to his or her partner.
- iii. In all instances, you must call for time, wait for it to be awarded, then ask to speak with the umpire.
- iv. Abusive language or disrespect towards our umpires will not be tolerated and may result in suspension or expulsion from coaching.
- v. If a ball hits a coach in fair territory, the ball is considered in play. It is the umpire's discretion if it is believed a coach intentionally interfered with the ball. This will result in the runner nearest home plate being called out and a warning to the coach. A repeat occurrence will result in the runner closest to home plate being called out and the ejection of the coach from the game.