

BASA Coaches Handbook

This handbook is intended to be a “Coles Notes” for BASA coaches. This will highlight key parts of the game and rules for all divisions from U5 through to U22. This was put together by BASAs senior coaches, executives and umpires.

Official BASA House League rules can be found at [BASA.ca](https://www.basa.ca) for U5, U7, U9 and U11.

Official Halton Girls Softball League rules can be found at [HGSL.ca](https://www.hgsl.ca) for divisions U13, U15, U17 and U22.

If a specific rule is not found in the above rule books, the Softball Canada rules shall prevail. Visit <https://softball.ca/resources/2024rulebook/?section=242> for softball canada rules

This handbook covers all ages and divisions in the BASA program including insight into different parts of the programs and division rules.

Our Mission:

To provide a safe and inclusive environment for residents of Burlington and the surrounding areas to learn and play softball regardless of prior experience and skill level.

The following principles are expected of all participants (players, coaches, umpires, volunteers, spectators):

- To show respect and act in a respectful manner at all times to all participants including opposing teams and the community.
- To allow all players an equal opportunity to participate.
- To create a positive environment.
- To promote teamwork and an attitude of enthusiasm and effort.
- To ensure that softball is fun for all players, regardless of age, race, orientation or ability.

Weather

Coaches should make every effort to NOT cancel games.

Rain: The City of Burlington typically closes diamonds prior to 4 pm and BASA will send out an email notification. If BASA has not cancelled the game by 5:30pm, teams and umpires are expected to go to the diamond and it will be the umpires' decision at game time.. Sign up at <https://subscribe.burlington.ca/subscribe> to receive park closure emails from the city.

U5/U7/U9 coaches make game time decisions as there are no umpires.

There are no make-up games for divisions U5, U7, U9 or U11.

Games are not cancelled due to heat or poor air quality. Parents should ensure players come prepared for the weather.

Forfeit games must be called in ahead of time to let umpires know - U11 and older. Opposing teams and umpires must be notified by 4pm at the latest.

Make up games

Divisions U5-U11 will not have make up games

For the U13-U22 divisions. To make up a home game please arrange through the BASA scheduler. The home team will provide the away team with 2 dates. Make up games should be played sooner than later. Make up games are usually made up on a practice night.

Divisions

U5 to U11- these divisions are all run within BASA. They only play other BASA teams.

U5- this is our t-ball division. This is the youngest division we have. This division is an introduction to the game. Entirely for fun, non-competitive and to start developing skills. Will focus mainly on throwing and catching. Each inning all players will bat, there is no 3 out rule. This division will be a 30 min practice to start, followed by a 60 min game each day.

U7- this is our soft toss division. This division continues the fun, non-competitive aspect as well as continued skills development. This division continues to work on throwing and catching along with working on hitting skills. In this division, all players will bat each inning. No 3 out rule, coaches will lob pitches to batters until they hit the ball. This division will be a 30 min practice to start, followed by a 60 min game each day.

U9- this is our Coach pitch division. This division introduces the competitive side of the game. This division continues to work on hitting, throwing and catching skills. While introducing the 3 out rule, scores and standings will be kept. Coaches will pitch up to 5 pitches from 30 feet. This division will be a 30 min practice to start, followed by a 60 min game each day.

U11- this division is the first year for player pitch. Players will continue to develop skills and add the pitching and catching aspects to the game now. The first half of the season, coaches will step in to pitch if there are 4 balls- see rules below. The second half of the season is player pitch only. The season will start with some practices mixed with games and move to games only near the end of the season

U13- U22- these divisions all continue to improve their skills. These teams are part of the HGSL loop. These divisions travel to other cities within Halton and the surrounding area to play games. Practices are in Burlington. 1 game and 1 practice per week.

Mercy Rule – The ‘mercy’ rules are as follows:

U9

- a) Innings 1-4: Four (4) run mercy.
- b) Innings 5-7: Six (6) run mercy.
- c) Inning 7 or Last Inning of play: Eight (8) run mercy.

U11

- a) Innings 1-4: Four (4) run mercy.
- b) Innings 5-7: Six (6) run mercy.
- c) Inning 7 or Last Inning of play: Ten (10) run mercy.

U13

- a) Innings 1-4: Four (4) run mercy.
- b) Innings 5-7: Eight (8) run mercy.

U15-U17

- a) Innings 1-4: Five (5) run mercy.
- b) Innings 5-7: Ten (10) run mercy.

U22

- a) Innings 1-4: Five (5) run mercy.
- b) Innings 5-7: no limit

Uniforms, Equipment and Awards

Uniforms are provided and all team members are to wear the provided uniforms to each game. U5-U11 uniforms consist of a jersey, hat and award at the end of the season

U13-U22 uniforms consist of jersey, pants, visor, belt, socks and an award at the end of the season.

Each team's coach will be provided with bats, balls, catchers gear and a score book (if needed).

Each diamond BASA uses in Burlington has an equipment box with bases, hammer, tape measure and a rake. It will also have a tee if it's a U5 diamond.

Equipment boxes will be identifiable by the BASA bees logo.

Each coach will receive a key for the boxes at equipment pick up. The key must be returned at the end of the season with the rest of the equipment.

Players cannot wear metal cleats in any division, including Select.

No loose jewelry is allowed during games.

No phones or devices shall be used by players on the bench or field.

All House League team players ages 10 and older and ALL Select players must wear a batters helmet with a cage / chin strap and all infielders must wear a fielders face mask.

Balls

House League teams;

U5, U7 and U9 use the 11 inch training ball (i.e. soft rubber)

U11 and U13 use the 11 inch Red Dot

U15, U17 and U22 use the 12 inch Red Dot

Select teams;

U9, U11 and U13 use the 11 inch red dot

U15, U17 and U21 use the 12 inch red dot

Diamond Set Up

The Home Team sets up the bases and puts away the bases at the end of the game.

Best way to set up bases;

Foul poles will be in the outfield, usually they are shorter poles if there is a fence, or could have some fencing on the top part. Sometimes painted white. They look like they don't have a purpose for anything out there.

If the diamond has foul poles, run the tape measure from the back point of home plate to the distance needed for 1st base. Have a second person eyeball the tape measure so it's in line with the foul pole. Repeat this for 3rd base.

Then take the tape measure to 3rd base and have someone hold it on the mark for 3rd base. The second person makes a line in the dirt at the proper distance at 2nd base. Repeat this from 1st base and where the 2 lines drawn in the dirt intersect should be where 2nd base goes.

Then measure out the pitching rubber and have a second person eyeball the rubber so it's in line with 2nd base.

Note - if the home plate is 'crooked', it will be hard to make everything perfect. You may have to play with a 'crooked' plate.

If the diamond has no foul poles. Follow the same procedure as with foul poles but run the tape measure so it's straight with the back V of the plate.

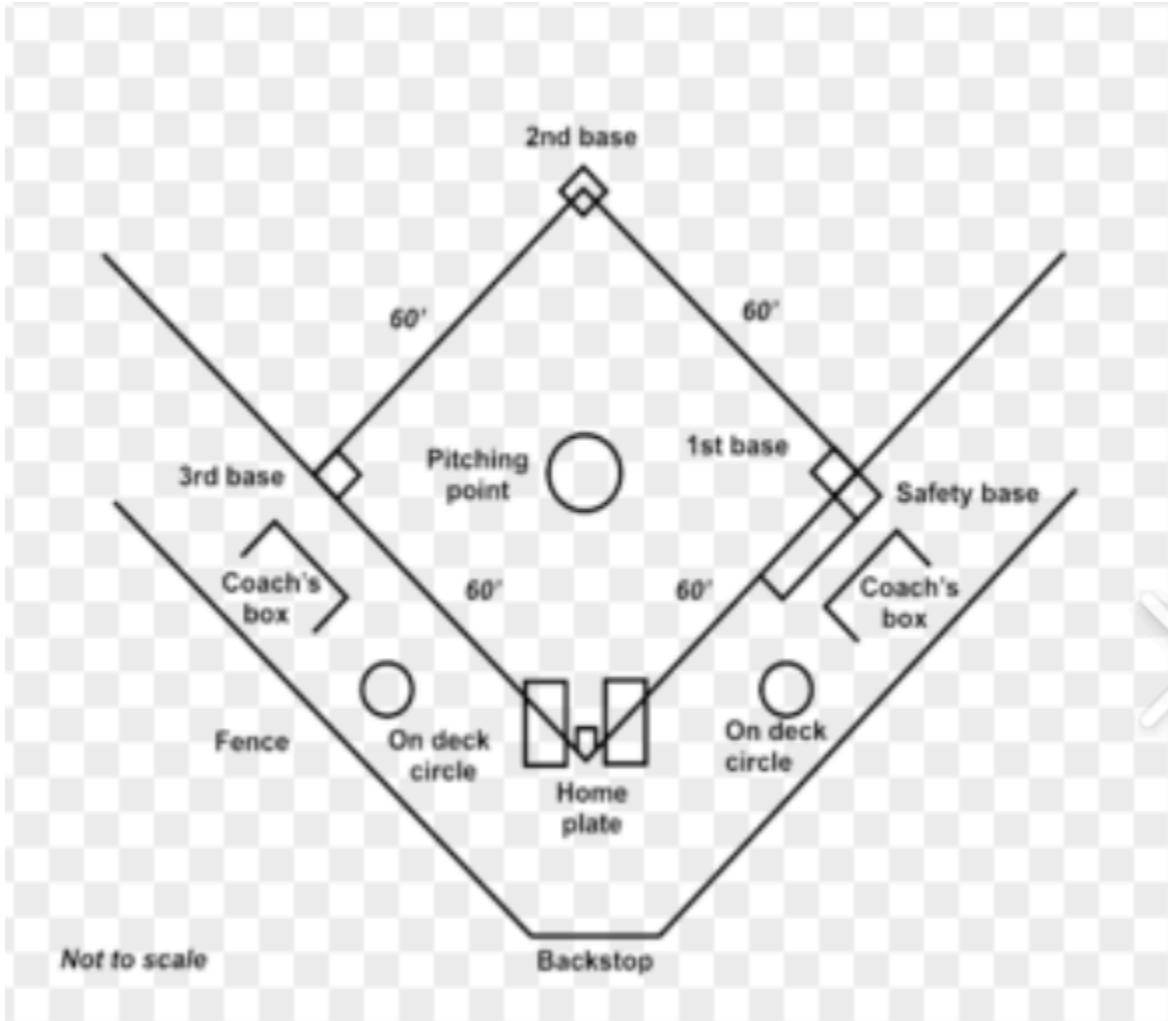
Bases are measured to the backside of the base to the back point of home plate

Division	Distance between Bases (ft)	Home Plate to 2nd base (ft)	Home Plate to Pitching rubber (ft)	Ball Used
U5	45		na	11" soft
U7	45		10-Coach pitch	11" soft

U9	45		30- Coach pitch	11" soft
U11	45		30	11" hard
U13	55	77' -3.25"	38	11" hard
U15	60	84' - 10.25"	40	12" hard
U17	60	84' -10.25"	43	12" hard
U22	60	84' - 10.25"	43	12" hard

Note: U9 Select Team use the 11" hard ball

Diamond Set Up Sample:



Pitching

U7 (Soft toss)

In the U7 division, the coach pitches from approx 10 feet. Coaches pitch until the player hits the ball. All players hit each inning.

U9 (Coach 5 pitch)

In the U9 division, the coach pitches from 30 ft. and there are no walks. Each batter gets up to 5 pitches to hit the ball fair or there out. Playing the 3 out rule and scores and standings will be kept using the Sports Engine app

U11

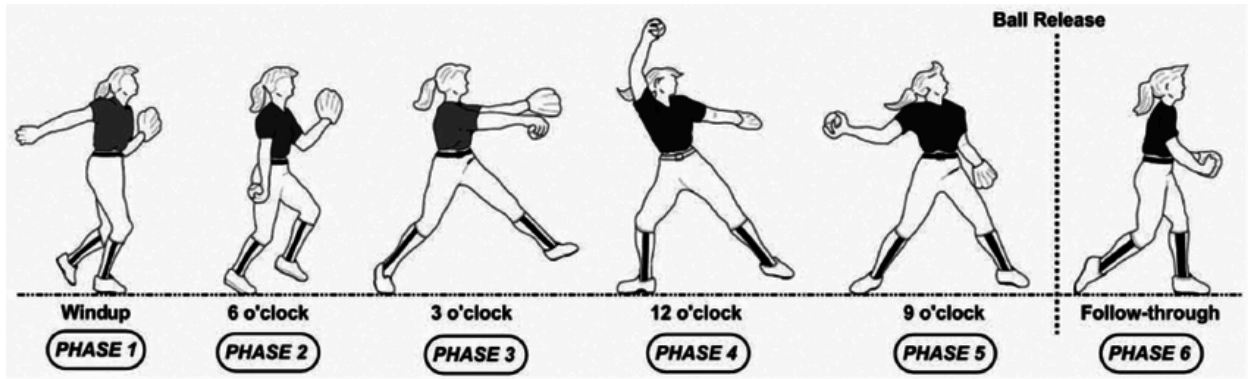
This division is player pitch. For the first 6 weeks, if a batter's count reaches 4 balls, the offensive coach comes in to pitch up to 3 more pitches from the proper distance. If the player doesn't hit one of the coaches' pitches they are out. No walks. **See rules under batting.** After week 6, games will switch to player pitch only. If a batter gets 4 balls they get a walk

Pitching stance

Whichever is the throwing hand, that same side foot stays in contact with the pitching rubber. This is called the pivot foot. The pivot foot may drag off the rubber at the end of the pitch.

All pitchers are to windmill pitch

A windmill pitch is an underhand motion that moves in a circular motion above the head and back down under the belt and is released around the 6 o'clock position.



Pitchers Maximum Number of Innings

U11: Pitchers can pitch max 2 innings per game and not consecutively.

U13 to U17: No pitcher may exceed 3 consecutive and 4 total innings pitched per game. A pitcher may only pitch a fourth inning if it is the seventh inning of the game.

U22: No maximum.

End of a Play

U9 and U11: The play is over/stopped after a ball has been hit and fielded and is in the possession of an infielder (i.e. Pitcher, Catcher, 1st / 2nd / 3rd basemen or Short Stop) has possession and control of the ball. If the runner stops on the base then the play is over, regardless of where the ball is.

U13 to U22: The play is over/stopped when the pitcher has the ball and is on the mound or in the circle- if there is a circle.

Field of Play

If the ball is thrown to any player and that player misses the ball, the ball is still in play until it is picked up. (refer to End of a Play above)

If the ball rolls into the dug out / bench area or past the fence line in the outfield, then the ball is considered out of play and the play is stopped. Refer to Overthrow rules below.

Batter

If the batter gets 3 strikes they are out.

If the batter gets 4 balls they are walked. A walk means the batter gets to go to first base. (see division rules)

Once the batter hits the ball fair, they must run to first base. The batter can and is encouraged to run through first base, touching the orange base as they go by and be safe. Best to turn/veer to the right before returning to the 1st base bag.

Runners can not run through 2nd and 3rd base unless they are attempting to go to the next base or home. Runners never have to stop at home plate, always run right through touching the plate as you pass.

Base Runners set up on the base

Best practice is to have the base runners set up like the picture below. The 'track start' set up.



Hit by Pitch

If the player is hit by a pitch they get to go to first base. Even if the ball bounces off the ground first.

Exception: The batter must make an attempt to move. If no attempt is made, the batter does not get to go to first and a "ball" is added to the count.

If the batter swings and the ball hits their hands, the ball is dead and is a strike.

Base Runners and Stealing Bases

U5-U9: Base runners can leave the base when the ball is hit. No stealing is permitted.

U11: Base runners can leave the base (Lead off) once the pitched ball crosses home plate. No stealing

U13: Base runners can leave the base once the ball has crossed the plate. Runners may steal one base at a time at their discretion but may NOT steal home plate.

U15 to U22: Base runners may leave the base as soon as the ball is completely out of the pitcher's hand. Runners can steal bases at their discretion including home plate. Note: Once the ball is in the pitcher's hand/glove and in the pitcher's circle (i.e. within 4 feet of the rubber), any base runner that is not touching a base has 3 seconds to decide which way to go - steal the next base or return to the previous base. If the runner does not make a clear decision within 3 seconds, the runner will be called OUT.

Overthrows

When the ball is overthrown beyond the playing area boundaries (see End of Play above), all runners are awarded;

U9 to U11: the base they are going to at the time of the throw.

U13: one base from their last legally held base at the time the ball was thrown.

U15 to U22: two bases from their last legally held base at the time the ball was thrown.

Drop Third Strike

U11 to U13: Drop Third Strike rule is NOT in effect.

U17 to U22: Drop Third Strike rule is in effect.

Note: If the 3rd strike is dropped or missed by the catcher the batter can run to first. If they make it to first before the ball they are safe. During a dropped third strike play the first base player may decide to use the orange base if the ball rolls to that side of the foul line. The first baseman can choose what side of the first base to use for a clear throw but must commit.

The Dropped Third Strike rule applies only when:

- First base is unoccupied at the time of the pitch, OR
- There are two outs, regardless of whether first base is occupied.

For clarity, if first base is occupied with fewer than two outs, the batter is out and may not attempt to run, even if the catcher drops the third strike.

Game end times - no new inning / Drop dead

No new innings can start after 8:05 or 10:05, (1 hour, 35 minutes). All games end with a “drop dead” deadline of 8:20 and 10:20 (1 hour, 50 minutes). If the inning is not yet completed; and the home team has tied the game, then the game is recorded as a tie; if the home team is leading, the game is scored as a home win; if the home team is trailing and has not yet started/completed their at- bats, the game score will revert back to the last completed inning.

Tie games

Tie games are allowed in all regular season games.

Ties during playoffs. If there is a tie at the official end of a playoffs game. The game will play the next inning using the International Tie Breaker rule.

International Tie Breaker Rule: Each team will start their half inning with a 'runner' on 2nd base. The 'runner' is to be the farthest away to bat (not necessarily the last out). Game will resume as normal. This will continue until there is a winner.

Team App

BASA uses the Sports Engine app. This app has the schedule, location and opponent on it. The app also lets the player tell you if they're attending the game/practice or not. This is a great tool as it lets you know how many players you have attending each game.

Game set up

For each game, Coaches must create a batting order or line up. In house League, the batting order is changed every game. This is the order that each player goes up to bat.

Secondly, Coaches will need to set up positions for all players each inning. No player is to sit 2 innings in a row. All players sit the same amount of times

- U5 and U7: All players are on the field.
- U9 to U13: 10 players on the field (4 outfielders).
- U15 to U22: 9 players on the field.

It's important to rotate/move players among different positions helping them develop their softball skills. Players are to rotate infield and outfield each inning. No set positions for house league. Select can have set positions.

Umpires

BASA has Zero Tolerance for Umpire abuse. There is absolutely no arguing or yelling at any umpire at any time. You may calmly question the Umpire in a respectful manner - but no yelling or angry conversations with them. Many umpires are students and are learning as well. The best practice is to have a discussion with the umpire between innings or after the game. If absolutely necessary, Coaches may ask the Umpire for 'Time' so that they can have a discussion about the particular call on the field before the game continues. Coaches may ask Umpires to explain the rule or call made. Most will double check a rule when they get home. Never intimidate an Umpire.

Coaches may NOT argue strike/ball calls made at any time.

All BASA Umpires have been instructed to not tolerate any abuse from Coaches, players or spectators/parents. They have also been instructed to eject any coaches or players from the game if they are abused. Anyone ejected must immediately leave the diamond if this should occur.

Coaches are responsible for their team and the team's parents / spectators actions. If anyone associated with your team (player, parent, sibling or spectator) is abusing the Umpire, it is your responsibility to interject and protect the Umpire. This is just a game.

If a coach, player, parent or spectator is thrown out of a game by the umpire and they refuse to leave, then it comes down to the Coach or Assistant Coach to enforce/support the Umpires decision. If the Coaches can't make them leave, then that team will forfeit the game regardless of the score.

If anyone is ejected from a game, the BASA Umpires have been instructed to notify the BASA Umpire in Chief and the BASA President.

If a Coach is ejected, they will receive an automatic additional game suspension and remain suspended until they meet with the BASA President and disciplinary team to discuss what happened and assess if the Coach is fit to return to their position.

Awards

At the last game of the season each player will receive an award. A representative from the BASA Board will bring the trophies to the diamond

May 15 2026