



SMYRNA FASTPITCH LEAGUE

LEAGUE RULES & PLAYING GUIDELINES

A clear guide for safe, fair, and consistent play.

PLAY HARD. GET DIRTY. KNOW THE RULES

We strongly encourage that all coaches, parents/family, and invested fans read and know the rules. Knowing the rules makes for a smooth game, where everyone understands the calls on the field!

QUICK REMINDER

Only head coaches should address our umpires with anything other than a "Great job!" or a "Thank you!"

RULES UPDATED: FALL 2026

www.smyrnafastpitchleague.org



RULEBOOK AT A GLANCE

Use this guide to quickly find league-wide policies, conduct expectations, tournament procedures, and age-division rules.

Section 1. Playing Equipment

Section 2. Player Age and Player Assignment

Section 3. Team Duties

Section 4. Scorekeeping

Section 5. Conduct

Section 6. Playing Rules (All Divisions)

Section 7. End of Season Tournament

Section 8. Divisions Specific Rules

6U (Training Division)

Age Group 8U (Rookie Division)

Age Group 10U (Junior Varsity Division)

Age Groups 13U (Varsity) & 17U (Collegiate)

RULES REMINDER: Official NSA rules apply unless amended or modified by the Smyrna Fastpitch League rules in this handbook.



SECTION 1. PLAYING EQUIPMENT

1. All equipment shall comply with NSA Rules unless modified below.
2. Softball T-Ball bats will be allowed in the Training Division (6U). The board reserves the right to ban any T-Ball bats that deem dangerous.
3. Players shall wear the official uniform designated for their team, including numbers.
4. Under adverse weather conditions long sleeves (and long pants in those Leagues where the official uniform pants are shorts) may be worn; however, the shirt must be worn in such a manner that the uniform numbers are visible during play. (some exceptions---umpires' discretion)
5. No award patches will be allowed on uniforms.
6. Catchers must always wear the following protective equipment while catching, during games and practices:
 - A facemask with either a throat protector or an extended wire throat protector
 - An approved helmet with earflaps
 - Shin guards that provide kneecap protection
 - A chest protectorAny player warming up a pitcher while in the squatting position must also wear:
 - A facemask with either a throat protector or an extended wire throat protector
 - An approved helmet with earflap
7. Shoes with metal or pointed cleats shall not be worn; offenders will be ejected. Any shoe approved for NSA youth play may be worn. All age divisions except Peewees must wear cleats.
8. All batters and base runners, both in games and in practice, shall wear protective headgear with face guards, they may not be removed until completely in dugout
9. Basic team equipment shall be provided by the league and distributed to each head coach, who shall sign for the equipment and turn it back in at the completion of each season. The head coach shall be responsible for the replacement cost of any equipment not turned back into the league.



10. All PLAYERS must wear a face mask in every age division.

SECTION 2. PLAYER AGE AND PLAYER ASSIGNMENT

A. Player Age

1. Spring - Player age for the spring season is determined by the girl's age as of December 31 of the previous year.
2. Fall - Player age for the fall is determined by the player age as of July 31st of the current year.
3. Players are allowed to play up an age division by 1 season (spring or fall).
 - a. A player may play up to 2 seasons if they are protected by a coach and with the approval of the executive board.
 - b. Or, can request an assessment from the executive board to show the ability to play up to the requested division.
 - c. Once a player is approved to move up an age division, that player must stay in the age division going forward. Players will not be allowed to go back to the previous age division. (Spring UC and LC are considered separate seasons so players can play both UC and LC in the spring if age allows it.)

B. Player Assignments

1. Spring Season
 - a. All girls returning to the same age division that they played in the previous spring season will return to that team. Player may opt off to go back into the draft but will be part of the blind draft.
 - b. Girls that did not play the previous spring season in SFL or are moving up in age division may be protected by a coach or can be placed in the draft.

Note: Players must attend assessments. If not they will be placed in the blind draft (random pick by coaches).
2. Fall Season



- a. All girls returning to the same age division as they played the previous spring season in SFL may return to that team or opt off to go back into the blind draft.
- b. For girls that did not play the previous spring season in SFL or are moving up in age division are eligible to be protected by a coach or will be placed in the draft.

Note: There are no player assessments in the fall.

SECTION 3. TEAM DUTIES

- A. Each team shall be responsible for cleaning dugouts and stands after each game played.
- B. Each team shall furnish the opposing team and scorekeeper with a copy of the batting order. The batting order shall include and list with reference to both name and uniform number of all team players present, 10 minutes before the first ball is pitched.

SECTION 4. SCOREKEEPING

1. The official score book shall be furnished by the league and returned to the league after the last scheduled game is played.
 - A. When a Team is designated as the Home Team, it shall provide an Official Scorebook keeper of at least 16 years of age for the game.
 - B. The Visiting Team shall provide an Official Scoreboard Keeper of at least 16 years of age for the game.
 - C. Both official scorekeepers must sign the scorebook once the game is finished.
 - D. Scorebook Keeper will be responsible for recording Game start time.
2. Any protest based on the Official Scorebook regarding substitution and eligibility shall be verbally made to the home plate Umpire prior to the 1st pitch of the next batter.

SECTION 5. CONDUCT



1. If, in the opinion of the Head Umpire, the conduct of a coach, player, or spectator is detrimental to the game, the offender may be removed from the game or the facility.

If the offender is ejected, they will be suspended for the next scheduled game. Any additional ejections during the season will be handled in accordance with the progressive discipline.

If removing the offender does not resolve the situation, the offender's team may be required to forfeit the game.

All forfeitures are subject to review by the Executive Board, which may take any action it deems appropriate in the best interest of the SFL Program and the City of Smyrna

2. Any girl showing unsportsmanlike conduct such as the throwing of a bat, glove, helmet, aggressive behavior, etc. may be subject to, but not limited to, removal from the game with discretion of the umpire or SFL Board member after one warning.
3. Only the Head Coach, approved Assistant Coaches, and Team Parent (or their approved substitutes in their absence) are permitted inside the playing field, including the dugout.

The maximum number of adults allowed on the field at one time is:

Lower Conference: 4 adults

Upper Conference: 3 adults

Team Parents are approved for dugout duties only. If a Team Parent wishes to assist on the field during practices or games, they must submit a coach's application and be approved by the league before participating in an on-field coaching role.

4. The Head Coach is responsible for making sure that all assistant coaches have the appropriate paperwork turned into the league before he/she is allowed on the playing field. Failure to get appropriate paperwork submitted for assistant coaches will result in ejection from games until paperwork is turned in.
5. Only the Head Coach or an acting Head Coach (when the designated Head Coach is absent) may address the umpire regarding game-related matters.

Coaches may respectfully request clarification of a ruling; however, arguing or disputing an umpire's judgment is prohibited.



Assistant Coaches may not approach or argue with an umpire. An Assistant Coach who does so will receive one warning. Continued arguing or a second offense during the same game will result in ejection.

Umpires have full authority over the conduct of the game, and their decisions are final. Unsportsmanlike or argumentative behavior toward an umpire, including actions that interfere with the orderly administration of the game, may result in ejection and suspension.

6. Heckling of players, the use of offensive or abusive language, and the use or possession of alcoholic beverages or other intoxicating substances are prohibited during league games, practices, and on all league property.

- a. Offensive Conduct

Individuals who engage in heckling or use offensive language will receive one warning:

If the individual is a parent or relative of a player, the warning will be issued by the Head Coach. In all other cases, the warning will be issued by the League Commissioner or a member of the Executive Board.

Any additional violation after a warning will result in the individual being removed from the premises.

- b. Alcohol and Intoxicating Substances

Any person found using or in possession of alcoholic beverages or other intoxicating substances on league property will be required to leave the premises immediately.

7. NO cell phone use is allowed on the field during game times by any coaching staff, including videoing or photography.
8. No Artificial noise makers such as, drumsticks, blow horns, cow bells, etc are allowed. Music is allowed but not during game play, may be played before and after the game and between innings if the volume isn't excessive (umpires discretion). The music must not contain profanity or obscene remarks.

Failure to comply with this rule will result in ejection from game and will follow ejection guidelines)

9. NO Buckets on field during games



10. Complaint Resolution Process

Parents, players, and Assistant Coaches are encouraged to follow the established chain of command when addressing concerns or complaints.

Chain of Command

Parent, Player, or Assistant Coach	→	Head Coach
Head Coach	→	Conference Commissioner
Conference Commissioner	→	League Commissioner
League Commissioner	→	Executive Board

Exception: If a parent has a concern involving their child's Head Coach, they may bring the matter directly to the **Conference Commissioner** for their age division.

11. Ejection Penalties:

FIRST EJECTION	Automatic suspension for the next scheduled game. The ejected individual may not be present at the park during that game.
SECOND EJECTION	Automatic suspension under Rule 1, plus review by the SFL Executive Board to determine the individual's coaching status for the remainder of the season.
THIRD EJECTION	Automatic, indefinite suspension from coaching in the SFL. Rule 1 also applies, and the individual may not be present at the park during the next scheduled game.

SECTION 6. PLAYING RULES (ALL DIVISIONS)

1. Official NSA Rules shall apply unless amended or modified by these rules.



2. All protests shall be made in accordance with NSA protest procedures prior to the next pitch being issued and a \$50 fee (cash) (refer to NSA rule book for procedure to protest)
3. Games shall start at the scheduled time. If a team does not have enough players to start the game, there shall be a 10-minute grace period from the official game time before deemed a forfeit. This applies to the first game of the day/night only.
4. The time limit of all regular season and league tournament games shall be one (1) hour and ten (10) minutes (70 minutes) or 7 completed innings (6 innings for 6u and 8u) (the Head Umpire has the official time not the scoreboard). A new inning begins as soon as the third out of the previous inning has been recorded.
5. Any game in the regular season resulting in a tie score at the end of the final innings shall go to a one inning tie breaker for Upper Conference (13U & 16U). The last recorded out from the previous inning will start as a runner on second base and the offensive team will start with one out. If the score is tied after one extra inning, the game will be considered a tie.

Lower Conference (6U , 8U and 10U) will not have a tie breaker inning, they will end in a tie once the last inning is finished.

6 Rain Delays and Rainouts

The League Commissioner is responsible for rescheduling rain-out games. Once a game has started, the Home Plate Umpire has the authority to determine whether play is delayed, or the game is declared a rain-out.

a. Official Game

A rain-shortened game will be considered an official game if three (3) or more innings have been completed or 55 minutes of playing time have elapsed.

1. If the visiting team is leading when the game is called, the final score will revert to the last completed inning.
2. If the home team is leading when the game is called, the score at the time play is stopped will be the final score.

b. Suspended Game



If a rain-out does not meet the requirements of an official game, the game will be resumed at a later date from the point at which it was suspended.

- The batting order and lineup must remain the same as when the game was suspended.
- If a borrowed (pick-up) player participated in the original game but is unavailable for the resumed game, the team may either:
 - Use the rostered player who was originally absent, if now available; or
 - Use another eligible borrowed (pick-up) player in accordance with league rules.

c. Delayed game

If a game is temporarily rain delayed, the game clock shall be stopped during the rain delay and restarted when play resumes.

7. All offensive players, except the batter, base runners, and the on-deck batter must stay in the dugout or behind screens during play.
8. All players must have at least one at bat and play a minimum of six (6) defensive outs per game. If a player does not satisfy the requirements, she must start the next game and complete remaining play plus her new game requirements.
9. Team Minimum & Borrowed Player Rules

A team must have at least eight (8) rostered players to begin an official game. A team that cannot field eight (8) rostered players at game time will forfeit the game.

Teams are encouraged to field a minimum of nine (9) players. To reach nine players, a team may use eligible borrowed players under the following conditions:

- A team must have at least six (6) rostered players present before using any borrowed players.
- Borrowed players may come from the same age division or one age division below, provided they are age-eligible to play in the borrowing division.
- All borrowed players must be approved by the player's Head Coach, parent/guardian, and the SFL Executive Board.
- The first borrowed player must play right field.
- If a second borrowed player is used, they must play left field.



- All borrowed players must be placed at the end of the batting order.

Borrowed Player Eligibility

Rostered Players Present	Borrowed Players Allowed	Total Players
6	Up to 2	8
7	Up to 2	9
8	1	9
9 or more	None	9+

10. If a player is missing from the batting lineup or hurt for any reason, an out shall be assessed on the first at bat only. On subsequent at bats, the player may return to the lineup or she may be skipped without an out being assessed.
11. Courtesy runner may be used for the pitcher and the catcher at any time, must be the last recorded out. Should the player that made the last recorded out be on base for any reason or is the pitcher or catcher, or batting or has already been a courtesy runner in that inning, the new courtesy runner would be determined by going back previous outs to the next allowable courtesy runner or to any player not currently in the game. If in the first inning a courtesy runner is used for either the pitcher or the catcher (who are listed in the line – up when the line ups are turned in) and there are no outs recorded, the courtesy runner will be the player furthest removed from the pitcher or catcher needing the courtesy runner. **Except the Training Division (6U) and Rookie Division (8U) this rule does not apply in those divisions.**
12. Players arriving after a game begins, may be added to the bottom of the batting lineup only if their team has not batted through their batting line up once. Player may be used as a substitute if not able to add to the batting lineup.
13. When an injury occurs while the ball is in play, at the umpire's discretion, the play will be stopped and the base runner(s) will be situated according to their position(s) on the base path at the time the play was stopped.
14. Each team will be allowed to warm up on the half of the infield closest to their dugout, if time permits prior to a game beginning.
15. NSA Run Rule shall apply



12 RUNS after 3 Innings played / 10 RUNS after 4 Innings played / 8 RUNS after 5 Innings played

When the game ends due to The run rule the following shall apply:

IF there is more than 10 min left on the clock, the game shall continue until the time runs out. Additional runs do not count toward game score.

16. Any Players ejected from a game shall be counted as an out at each at bat.

SECTION 7. END OF SEASON TOURNAMENT

1. Double Elimination to be played per age division at the end of the regular season.
2. Seeding for tournament will be as follows: Best Record (wins), Head to Head, strength of schedule, then, if necessary, a coin toss.
3. Winners Bracket-Higher seed will remain home team throughout the bracket until the IF game then the home team will be determined by coin flip
4. Loser's bracket- Home team will be the team coming out of the winner's bracket throughout the bracket. If two teams drop at the same time, the home team will be determined by the regular season seeding, higher seed will be the home team.
5. Any game, in the tournament, including Lower Conference resulting in a tie score at the end of the final innings will play tie breaker innings until a winner is determined. The last recorded out from the previous inning will start as a runner on second base, and the offensive team will start with one out.

SECTION 8. DIVISIONS SPECIFIC RULES

6U (TRAINING DIVISION)

A. Player Participation

1. All players must be included in the batting order.



2. All players are required to play defense.
3. Defensive substitutions are unrestricted.

B. Equipment & Field Dimensions

1. An 11-inch softball will be used.
2. Bases shall be 60 feet apart.
3. The distance from the back point of home plate to the front of the coach's pitching line shall be 25 feet.

C. Innings & Run Limit

1. Each half-inning ends when:
 - o Three (3) outs are recorded; or
 - o Five (5) runs have scored.

D. Batting Rules

1. Each batter is allowed a maximum of five (5) pitches/swings.
2. The batter will receive:
 - o Three (3) coach pitches.
 - o Up to two (2) additional attempts using either coach pitches or the batting tee, at the coach discretion.
3. If the batter does not put the ball in play after five (5) total attempts, the batter is out.

Tee Rules

a. Accidentally knocking the ball off the tee while preparing to swing does not count as an attempt. The batter must show intent to swing for it to count.

b. If the fifth attempt results in a foul ball, the batter will continue to receive additional attempts until:

- The ball is hit into fair territory, or
- The batter swings and misses.

If a subsequent attempt strikes the coach pitcher, Rule F applies.

E. Fair Ball from the Tee

1. A ball hit from the tee is considered fair only if it travels beyond the six-foot line.



2. The six-foot line extends six feet from the back of home plate between the first- and third-base foul lines.
3. Balls hit from a live coach pitch use the standard foul lines.

F. Ball Striking the Coach Pitcher

1. Any batted ball that strikes the coach pitcher is a dead ball and no play will result.
2. The attempt counts toward the batter's pitch/swing total.
3. If this occurs on the batter's final available attempt, one additional pitch/swing will be awarded.
4. The additional attempt must result in a fair ball or the batter is out.

Exceptions:

- a. If the ball strikes the coach pitcher on the third coach pitch, the batter receives one additional coach pitch and still has the option to use the tee for two attempts.
- b. If it occurs on the fifth attempt, one additional attempt is awarded and must be hit into fair territory or the batter is out.

G. Live Ball

After a fair ball is hit, play remains live until one of the following occurs:

- a. The pitcher has possession of the ball inside the pitching circle and is not attempting another play (see Rule M).
- b. The lead runner has stopped advancing to the next base and the defensive team has possession of the ball in the infield.

H. Runner Advancement

If play is declared dead while a runner is advancing:

- A runner who has passed the designated hash mark toward the next base may continue to that base.
- A runner who has not reached the hash mark must return to the previous base.

The umpire's judgment is final and is not subject to protest.

I. Coach Rules



1. If a coach touches a runner during a live play, the runner is out.
2. Defensive coaches may not intentionally walk a batter.
3. A team is allowed three (3) defensive conferences per game, with no more than one (1) conference per inning.
4. Following the third conference, the player serving as pitcher must be moved to another defensive position for the remainder of the game.
5. Up to two (2) coaches may be on the playing field in the outfield and must remain behind the defensive players.
6. One (1) coach may stand on the dirt near the dugout but may not interfere with play.
7. One (1) coach or approved Team Parent may remain in the dugout.

J. Coach Pitcher Rules

1. After a fair ball is hit, the coach pitcher must immediately:
 - a. Leave the playing area by moving toward home plate.
 - b. Remove the bat and batting tee.
 - c. Avoid interfering with play.
2. The coach pitcher may not coach base runners.
3. Coach pitches must be thrown with a firm, flat trajectory and maintain a consistent speed.
4. A pitch with excessive arc or one that is too slow will be ruled a no pitch at the umpire's discretion.
5. A no pitch ruling is a judgment call and may not be protested.
6. If the batter's final coach pitch is ruled a no pitch, the batter is out, even if the ball is hit fair.

K. Specific Rules Governing Defensive Players and Play

A. Defensive Alignment

1. There must be six (6) recognizable defensive players in the infield.
2. All outfield players must begin each play in the outfield grass.
3. Every player must play at least one (1) inning in the infield during each game, except during the End-of-Season Tournament. This means the players that play in the outfield the 1st inning must play infield the 2nd Inning. If this rule is not followed 5 runs will be awarded to the opposing team. If an outfield player is a pickup she must remain in the outfield.

B. Infield Positioning



1. Before the ball is hit, the first baseman and third baseman may not position themselves in front of the designated hash marks on their respective foul lines.
2. The shortstop and second baseman may not cross the imaginary line running through the middle of the infield connecting first and third base until the ball has been hit.

C. Outfield Plays

Outfield players may not record an out at first base or third base by tagging the base or the runner, outfielders must make a throw to an infielder for the out to be recorded. They can make a play at 2nd base.

D. Throwing Requirements

1. Defensive players must attempt to throw the ball through the air to the base when making a play.
2. At the umpire's discretion, the throw must travel at least halfway to the intended base while airborne.
3. Intentionally throwing the ball into the ground so it rolls to the base will result in the runner being ruled safe. The ball remains live until time is called in accordance with the normal dead-ball rules.

E. Tagging Plays

Infielders may only make a tagging play on a runner advancing to or returning from the base where the initial play originated.

If a defensive player chases a runner beyond those limits, the runner may continue advancing until play is stopped under the normal dead-ball rules.

Examples:

- Runner on third base: Ball hit to the third baseman. The third baseman may tag the runner returning to third or advancing home.
- Runner on second base: Ball hit to the third baseman. The third baseman may tag the runner advancing to third or retreating to second.

F. Defensive Responsibility

Each defensive player must be given the first opportunity to make a play at their assigned position before another player may assist.



Example: On a play at home plate, the catcher must have the first opportunity to receive the throw and attempt the out. If the catcher is unable to make the play, another defensive player may then attempt to record the out.

G. Specific Rules Governing the Player Pitcher

A. Pitcher's Position

The player occupying the pitcher position must have both feet inside the pitching circle until the ball is hit.

B. Fielding Inside the Circle

If the pitcher fields a batted ball while inside the pitching circle, she must make a throwing attempt to record an out.

If the pitcher tags a runner instead of throwing the ball:

- The play becomes dead immediately.
- All runners will be awarded one base from the base occupied at the start of the play.

H. Fielding Outside the Circle

If the pitcher fields the ball outside the pitching circle, she may make either a tag or a throw.

However, the pitcher may only make a tagging play:

- On the first-base line, before the runner reaches the halfway mark.
- On the third-base line after the runner has passed the halfway mark.
- When a normal softball play reasonably requires a tag instead of a throw.

The umpire's judgment is final.

Example: A runner is advancing home from third, and the pitcher fields a ball near the third-base foul line. The pitcher may tag the advancing runner.

I. Subsequent Defensive Plays

After the initial defensive play, the ball may be thrown to the pitcher to stop advancing runners.

If the pitcher fields the throw outside the pitching circle, she may continue to make legal throws or tags, provided she does not chase advancing runners beyond the limits established in the Rule.



Example: After recording an out at first base, the first baseman throws to the pitcher to prevent a runner from advancing home. If the pitcher fields the throw outside the circle near the third-base line, she may:

- Tag the runner advancing toward her.
- Tag a runner retreating to third base.

The pitcher may not chase a runner who has already passed her toward home plate.

J. Infield Fly Rule

The Infield Fly Rule does not apply.

K. Stealing

Stealing bases is not permitted.

L. Bunting

Bunting is not permitted.

AGE GROUP 8U (ROOKIE DIVISION)

A. Player Participation

1. All players must be included in the batting lineup.
2. Up to ten (10) players may play defense at one time.
3. Defensive substitutions are unrestricted.

B. Equipment & Field Dimensions

1. An 11-inch softball will be used.
2. Bases shall be 60 feet apart.
3. The pitching rubber shall be 35 feet from home plate.

C. Innings & Run Limit

Each half-inning ends when:



- Three (3) outs are recorded; or
- Five (5) runs have scored.

D. Batting Rules

1. Each batter will receive a maximum of five (5) coach pitches.
2. Walks are not permitted.
3. A batter is out after:
 - a. Three (3) swinging strikes, or
 - b. Five (5) pitches that are not put into play.
4. If the fifth pitch is fouled, the batter will continue to receive additional pitches until:
 - a. The ball is put into fair play, or
 - b. The batter swings and misses.

E. Ball Striking the Coach Pitcher

1. Any batted ball that strikes the coach pitcher may be ruled a dead ball at the umpire's discretion.
2. The pitch counts toward the batter's pitch total.
3. If this occurs on the fifth pitch, the batter will be awarded one additional pitch, which will be treated as the fifth pitch.

F. Live Ball

After a fair ball is hit, play remains live until:

- The lead runner has stopped advancing to the next base; and
- The defensive team has possession of the ball in the infield.

G. Runner Advancement

When play is declared dead:

- A runner who has passed the designated hash mark toward the next base may continue to that base.
- A runner who has not reached the hash mark must return to the previous base.

The umpire's judgment is final and not subject to protest.

H. Coach Rules



1. If a coach touches a runner during a live play, the runner is out.
2. Defensive coaches may not intentionally walk a batter.
3. Each team is allowed three (3) defensive conferences per game, 1 per inning.
 - a. On the third conference, the player serving as pitcher must be moved to another defensive position for the remainder of the game.
4. Up to three (3) coaches may be on the field:
 - a. Two (2) coaches may be positioned in the outfield or along the foul lines.
 - b. One (1) coach may stand near the dugout.
 - c. Coaches may not interfere with play.

I. Coach Pitcher Rules

1. After a fair ball is hit, the coach pitcher must:
 - a. Leave the playing area toward home plate.
 - b. Remove the bat.
 - c. Avoid interfering with play.
2. The coach pitcher may not coach base runners during a live play.
3. The first violation will result in a warning.
4. Any subsequent violation will prohibit that coach from pitching for the remainder of the game.
5. Coach pitches must be thrown with a firm, flat trajectory and maintain a consistent speed.
6. Pitches with excessive arc or that are too slow will be ruled no pitches at the umpire's discretion.
7. A no pitch is a judgment call and may not be protested.
8. If the batter's final pitch is ruled a no pitch, the batter is out, even if the ball is hit fair.

J. Specific Rules Governing Defensive Players and Play

a. Defensive Alignment

1. There must be six (6) recognizable defensive players in the infield.
2. All outfield players must begin each play in the outfield grass.

b. Infield Positioning

Before the ball is hit:



- First and third basemen may not position themselves in front of the designated hash marks.
- The shortstop and second baseman may not cross the imaginary line through the middle of the infield connecting first and third base.

c. Outfield Plays

1. Left and right fielders may not record an out by tagging a base or a runner.
2. An outfielder must make a throw for the out to count.
3. The center fielders may record an out by:
 - o Tagging second base, or
 - o Tagging a runner when permitted under the chase rule.

d. Throwing Requirements

1. Defensive players must make an attempt to throw the ball through the air to the intended base.
2. At the umpire's discretion, the throw must travel at least halfway to the base while airborne.
3. Intentionally throwing the ball into the ground so it rolls to the base will result in the runner being ruled safe. The ball remains live until time is called.

e. Defensive Responsibility

Each defensive player must have the first opportunity to make a play at their assigned position before another player may assist.

Example: On a play at home plate, the catcher must have the first opportunity to receive the throw. If the catcher is unable to make the play, another defensive player may then attempt the out.

f. Tagging Plays

Infielders may only make a tagging play when a normal softball play warrants a tag instead of a throw.

A defensive player may not chase a runner beyond what is considered a normal softball play. If a defender improperly chases a runner, the runner may continue advancing until play is stopped under the normal dead-ball rules.

Example of Legal Tagging Plays:



Runner on 1st Base: The ball is hit to the 2nd baseman, who fields the ball a few feet from 1st base. The runner from first advances toward second, and the 2nd baseman tags the runner before she reaches the base.

Example of an Illegal Tagging Play (Chasing):

Runner on 3rd Base: The ball is hit to the third baseman. The 3rd base runner attempts to score, and the third baseman chases and tags the runner when the runner is a step or two away from home plate instead of making a throw.

Exception: A defensive player may pursue and tag a runner during a natural rundown situation.

For example: the ball is hit to the third baseman. The 3rd base runner attempts to score, and the third baseman throws it to the catcher; the runner stops and begins to go back to 3rd, at that point both the catcher and the 3rd baseman may make a tag.

The umpire's judgment is final.

K. Specific Rules Governing the Player Pitcher

1. Pitcher's Position

The player pitcher must have both feet inside the pitching circle until the coach pitcher releases the ball.

2. Fielding Inside the Circle

If the pitcher fields the ball inside the circle, she must make a throwing attempt.

If the pitcher records an out by tagging a runner:

- The play becomes dead.
- All runners will be awarded one base from their starting position.

3. Fielding Outside the Circle

If the pitcher fields the ball outside the circle, she may make either a tag or a throw.

However, she may only make a tagging play on the first-base or third-base line when a normal softball play warrants a tag instead of a throw. Typically before halfway mark of 1st and after halfway mark of home.



The umpire's judgment is final.

Example: A runner is advancing home from third base. The pitcher fields the ball near the third-base foul line and may legally tag the runner.

L. Infield Fly Rule

The Infield Fly Rule does not apply.

M. Stealing

Stealing is not permitted. Runners may leave their base only when the batter contacts the ball.

Runners must return to and be in contact with their base before the next pitch is thrown. Failure to do so will result in the runner being declared out.

N. Bunting

Bunting is not permitted.

AGE GROUP 10 & UNDER (JUNIOR VARSITY DIVISION)

A. Player Participation

1. All players must be included in the batting lineup.
2. Up to ten (10) players may play defense at one time.
3. Defensive substitutions are unrestricted.

B. Equipment & Field Dimensions

1. An 11-inch softball will be used.
2. Bases shall be 60 feet apart.
3. The pitching rubber shall be 35 feet from home plate.

C. Run Limit

A five (5) run limit shall apply to each half-inning.

D. Pitching Requirements



1. Each team must use at least two (2) pitchers during each game. A pitcher who pitches the 1st inning may return to pitch the 3rd inning, but may not pitch the 2nd inning. If this rule is not followed, 5 runs will be awarded to the opposing team. If this rule is not followed by a coach multiple times in a season, further disciplinary actions may be issued (board discretion). This rule does not apply to the end of season tournament.
2. Each pitcher must pitch at least one (1) complete inning.
3. A complete inning is defined as:
 - a. Three (3) outs recorded; or
 - b. Five (5) runs scored.

E. Dropped Third Strike Rule

The Dropped Third Strike Rule is in effect.

1. First base occupied with fewer than two (2) outs:
 - a. The ball remains live.
 - b. The batter is out.
 - c. Existing runners may advance at their own risk.
2. First base occupied with two (2) outs:
 - a. The ball remains live.
 - b. The batter becomes a batter-runner and may attempt to reach first base.
 - c. All runners may advance at their own risk.
3. First base unoccupied:
 - a. The ball remains live.
 - b. The batter becomes a batter-runner and may attempt to reach first base.
 - c. All runners may advance at their own risk.

F. Warm-Up Pitches

Pitchers are allowed up to five (5) warm-up pitches or one (1) minute, whichever occurs first, between innings.

G. Pitching Motion

Pitchers must use a legal windmill pitching motion.

A slingshot motion, or any pitching style other than a legal windmill delivery, will be ruled a no pitch and count as a ball.

H. Illegal Pitch



The pitcher must deliver the ball with a firm, continuous windmill motion.

A pitch that is consistently too slow or has an obvious downward arc before reaching home plate may be ruled a no pitch at the umpire's discretion and will count as a ball.

The umpire's judgment is final.

I. Catcher Position

1. The catcher must remain behind the batter's boxes until the pitched ball crosses home plate or is contacted by the batter.
2. The catcher may not position themselves beside or in front of either batter's box before the pitch reaches the plate.
3. A violation of this rule shall result in a No Pitch being declared by the umpire. Continued violations may result in additional penalties at the umpire's discretion.

J. Infield Fly Rule

The Infield Fly Rule does not apply.

K. Stealing

1. Stealing is permitted after the pitched ball crosses home plate.
2. All runners are live and may advance at their own risk.

L. Look-Back Rule

The Look-Back Rule is in effect and shall be enforced in accordance with the current NSA Rule Book.

M. Bunting

Bunting is permitted.

AGE GROUPS 13U (VARSITY) & 17U (COLLEGIATE)

A. Player Participation

1. All players may be included in the batting lineup.
2. Up to ten (10) players may play defense at one time.
3. Defensive substitutions are unrestricted.



B. Equipment & Field Dimensions

1. A 12-inch softball shall be used.
2. Bases shall be 60 feet apart.
3. The pitching rubber shall be 43 feet

C. Run Limit

A seven (7) run limit shall apply to each half-inning.

D. Warm-Up Pitches

Pitchers are allowed up to five (5) warm-up pitches or one (1) minute, whichever occurs first, between innings.

E. Dropped Third Strike Rule

The Dropped Third Strike Rule is in effect.

1. First base occupied with fewer than two (2) outs:
 - a. The ball remains live.
 - b. The batter is out.
 - c. Existing runners may advance at their own risk.
2. First base occupied with two (2) outs:
 - a. The ball remains live.
 - b. The batter becomes a batter-runner and may attempt to reach first base.
 - c. All runners may advance at their own risk.
3. First base unoccupied:
 - a. The ball remains live.
 - b. The batter becomes a batter-runner and may attempt to reach first base.
 - c. All runners may advance at their own risk.

F. Pitching Motion

Pitchers must use a legal windmill pitching motion.

A slingshot motion or any pitching style other than a legal windmill delivery will be ruled a No Pitch and count as a ball.

G. Illegal Pitch

The pitcher must deliver the ball with a firm, continuous windmill motion.



A pitch that is consistently too slow or has an obvious arc before reaching home plate may be ruled a No Pitch at the umpire's discretion and will count as a ball.

The umpire's judgment is final.

H. Infield Fly Rule

The Infield Fly Rule is in effect.

I. Stealing

Stealing is permitted upon the release of the pitch.

All runners are live and may advance at their own risk.

J. Look-Back Rule

The Look-Back Rule is in effect and shall be enforced in accordance with the current NSA Rule Book.

K. Bunting

Bunting is permitted.