

FBSA Softball Quick-Reference Guide (8U–15U)



1. Equipment & Safety

- All batters/runners must wear helmets with facemasks.
- Catchers must wear full gear: helmet w/ facemask, chest protector, shin guards.
- Pitcher's facemask is mandatory in all divisions.
- Bats must be marked "official softball"; baseball bats prohibited.
- Game balls: 11-inch yellow optic, red stitch, .47 core / 375 compression.
- No metal cleats in 8U–12U; allowed in 15U.
- No training equipment on field during games.

2. Conduct & Game Environment

- Coaches responsible for players and spectators.
- Ejections = mandatory one-game suspension.
- No artificial noisemakers.
- Walk-up music allowed; offense controls music during their half-inning.
- No chants during live play; no taunting or derogatory remarks.
- Only batter, on-deck hitter, and active runners may be outside dugout.

3. Administrative Rules

- Home team provides scorekeeper; GameChanger required.
- Visiting team provides scoreboard operator.
- Final score must be reported within 24 hours.
- Minimum **8 players** required to start: dropping to 7 = forfeit.
- Teams may add **up to 2 pickup players** (must play outfield, bat last).
- Continuous batting order: late players added to end.

4. Game Structure

Time & Inning Limits

Division	Time Limit	Innings
8U	70 min	6
10U	75 min	6
12U	75 min	6
15U	75 min	7

- No new inning after time expires.
- Mid-inning expiration: finish inning unless trailing team cannot tie/take lead.
- **Inning Run Limit:** 5/inning
- **Mercy Rule:** 12 after 4, 8 after 5
- Tie games remain ties.

5. Base-Running Rules

- Obstruction = next base awarded.
- Fake tags prohibited.
- Courtesy runner allowed for catcher of record (last batted out).
- **Division differences:**
- **8U:** Tight bases; no stealing; no stealing home; restricted advancement.
- **10U:** May leave when ball leaves pitcher's hand; steal one base per pitch; no stealing home.
- **12U/15U:** Full USA Softball rules; stealing home allowed; free advancement on overthrows.

6. Look-Back Rule (10U–15U)

- When pitcher has ball in circle:
 - Runner must immediately advance or return.
 - Hesitation or reversing direction = out.
 - Pitcher may not fake a throw.

7. Pitching Rules

Division	Format	Distance
8U	Coach pitch	30 ft
10U	Modified player pitch	35 ft
12U-15U	Fast pitch	40 ft

Key Rules

- **8U:** 6 pitches or 3 strikes; no walks; NO PITCH if ball hits coach or coach interferes.
- **10U:** Player pitcher starts; after 4 balls → coach pitch; batter must hit to advance; no walks from coach pitch.
- **Pitching limits:** Max 3 innings/game; no 3 consecutive innings; 1 legal pitch = full inning.
- **Hit-by-pitch limits:** 3 HBP in inning → removed; 2 HBP innings → removed for game.
- **Warm-ups:** Max 1 minute or 5 pitches.

8. Batting Rules

- Continuous batting order.
- Incorrect batting order:
- Before at-bat ends → correct batter assumes count.
- After at-bat ends → batter is out.
- **Division differences:**
- **8U:** No bunting/slapping; no dropped 3rd strike; no IFR.
- **10U:** Bunting/slapping allowed vs player pitcher only.
- **12U/15U:** Full USA Softball rules (bunting, slapping, dropped 3rd strike, IFR).

9. Field Specifications

- Bases: **60 ft.**
- Pitching distances: 30 ft (8U), 35 ft (10U), 40 ft (12U), 43 ft (15U).
- Outfielders must be on grass.
- 8U infielders may not play more than 10 ft inside baseline.

10. Coach Participation

- **8U:** Max 5 coaches.
- **10U–15U:** Max 4 coaches.
- Only head coach may discuss calls with umpire