

USA Softball of Massachusetts
8U State Championships
Tournament Rules for 8U

This tournament will abide by all rules and regulations as stated under USA SOFTBALL FASTPITCH SOFTBALL with the following exceptions:

1. Team coaches or representatives will report to the tournament director or representative at the snack shack at least 20 min before the game. All players must be registered with USA Softball.
2. All players must wear matching uniforms. Metal spikes are NOT allowed. In case of player injury, (i.e. bleeding) the player will have a reasonable amount of time for uniform repair (umpire's discretion). At this point, unlike uniforms are permitted and proper care should be taken for disposal of the bloodied garment.
3. Home team is determined by a double coin flip for pool games; higher seed is home team on Sunday.
4. This is a Coach pitch tournament. The coach will pitch from the rubber.
The coach is not allowed to encourage or discourage the batter to swing if it is good or bad pitch.
5. Each batter will be pitched a maximum of 6 pitches. If still at the plate after the 6th pitch has been thrown, the batter will be declared out. Balls and strikes are not called, only the amount of pitches thrown will be counted. A batter can strike out swinging. If the batter fouls off the 6th pitch, they are allowed to continue the At-Bat.
6. A safely hit ball to the infield will allow both the batter and all base runners to advance one base with the liability of being put out.
7. A safely hit ball to the outfield, whether in the air, on the ground, or after being touched by a defensive player (ball must reach the outfield grass) allows both the batter and all base runners to advance 2 bases with the liability of being put out.
8. A chalk line will be installed in the outfield, 125-feet from home plate. If a ball is hit past this line in the air, on the ground, or after being touched by a defensive player, the batter and all base runners will be allowed to advance as many bases as they want to with the liability of being put out. A ball that bounces over the fence will be a ground rule double.
9. No lead may be taken. Base runners may not steal.
10. A defensive player will occupy the pitchers position on either side of the adult pitcher. Player must stay inside (both feet) the pitcher's circle until the ball is hit.
11. Any batted ball touching the adult pitcher will constitute play being halted and no pitch being declared. The batter will return to the plate and resume the previous count, all base runners will return to the bases

previously occupied. The adult pitcher must immediately attempt to get out of the way of defensive players once the ball has been pitched, and cannot impede a player from making a catch or throw. If in the umpire's discretion it is believed that the adult pitcher has violated this rule, the batter will be called out and all base runners returned to the base that they previously occupied.

12. Two coaches are allowed to be on the field to provide instruction when his/her team is on defense, one in the outfield, and one behind the infielders. The coach in the outfield will also help monitor the chalk line. The coach in the infield must position him/herself behind the infielders. One coach may be stationed at home plate while a team is on offense to help the batter. A first base coach and a third base coach are also permitted on the field. If a coach that is on the field with the defensive team is struck by a batted ball, the batter and all base runners will be awarded (2) bases.

A third coach of the team that is on defense, is allowed to set up at the backstop to retrieve pitched balls that get by the catcher. This coach is allowed to give verbal instructions to his/her players, but must remain at the backstop and cannot enter the playing field whether in fair or foul territory.

13. Games will be 6 innings in length, unless shortened by the run ahead rule. No new inning will begin after 90 minutes. Pool games can end in a tie. For elimination games, we will use the international tie breaker in case of a tie (see USA Softball rulebook).

14. Run ahead rule: If a team is ahead by 12 runs after 4 complete innings (3 and 1/2-innings, if the home team is ahead), or 8 runs after 5 complete innings (4 and 1/2-innings if the home team is ahead), the game is over.

15. In **pool play**, a maximum of 4 runs can be scored in all innings. If the game is tied or the home team is losing. The Home team will be allowed to score 4 runs in the last inning regardless of the score. (Runs allowed determines Seeding). Games can end in a tie.

In **bracket play (Sunday) only** the 6th / last inning will have unlimited runs. The last inning will be declared when there is 10 minutes or less left to play. Runs will be unlimited.

16. There will be no infield fly rule in this division.

17. The umpire will make all calls except for those involving whether or not a ball has passed the chalk line that is installed in the outfield. One coach from each team will monitor the chalk line. If the ball passes the line, the coach raises his/her hand above his/her head. If there is a difference of opinion as to whether or not the ball crossed past the line, the home plate umpire will make the call.

18. A continuous batting order is to be used (all players bat). Should a player be unable to take her turn at bat for any reason, proceed to the next scheduled batter without penalty. The player that was unable to take her turn at bat is out of the lineup, and cannot return to that game. Free defensive substitutions.

19. All players must play a minimum of 3 innings on defense unless the game is shortened by the run rule.

20. Each player that throws the bat will be given one warning, the next time the same player throws the bat, an out will be recorded whether the ball was hit or not. If the ball was safely hit, all base runners will return to the base that they previously occupied. When warnings are necessary, the umpire will inform the coach that a warning has been given, and will record the player's uniform number on his/her lineup card.

21. Pitching distance will be 30 feet for this division. Base distance will be 60 ft.
22. 11" leather, raised seam, optic yellow softballs (USA Softball Approved) will be used.
23. 10 defensive players in the field, 6 in the infield, 4 in the outfield. The four outfielders do not necessarily need to be on the outfield grass in order to be considered an outfielder; however they must play behind the infielders, not alongside of them. An outfielder cannot make a play in the infield unless the play is unassisted, (i.e. an outfielder cannot play over the second base bag and accept throws).
24. A game may begin or finish with one less player than is required to start, (ten). Failure to have the required number of players to start or continue a game will result in a forfeit. If a game is started with nine players, and the 10th player arrives late, this player can immediately be inserted in the game and will be placed last in the batting order.
25. There will be no tag up and advance on a pop fly caught by an infielder. A pop up or fly ball must be caught behind the infielders, by an outfielder in order for a runner to tag up and advance.
26. Air horns and other artificial noisemakers are not allowed.
27. Team cheers will be positive in nature and should be designed to rally the team that is doing the cheering, not to razz the opponent.
28. As is the rule for all USA Softball youth tournaments, no alcoholic beverages are allowed on the premises. Coaches please inform the adults that are associated with your team. No smoking is allowed in the softball complex or on school grounds.
29. There will be no arguing or disputing umpire judgment calls period! If this takes place, the offending coach will be given one warning that will apply to the entire coaching staff. If it occurs again the game will be declared a forfeit.
30. Only the head coach is allowed to speak to the umpire or state official when it comes to interpretation of the 8U playing rules. The game will be stopped and then resumed after clarification of the rule in question is completed. When the game is stopped, the timer is stopped also.
31. Lastly, the sole purpose for creating this division was to provide a venue for younger players in which they can play and learn the game of softball free from any unnecessary pressures placed upon them. The rules in this division were developed to ensure that is what takes place. With that being said, on a batted ball that goes past the 125-foot line, We do not want to see a third base coach sending his/her runners when the ball is back into the infield and in possession of a fielder. This is not about taking advantage of young and developing players in order to score a run, it is about teaching them the fundamentals of the game. If a coach tried to advance that runner in the next age division, she would be thrown out at home plate.
32. This is a zero tolerance tournament. If you are ejected from a game by the umpire, you are banned immediately from the premises for the duration of the tournament.
33. The home team will keep the official scorebook if an official scorekeeper is not provided. Both teams are encourage to keep the score.

34. Immediately after each game, both teams will submit the game result to into the Register to play website or the Tournament Director (or designated official). It is the responsibility of each team to go to the Concession Stand and submit the score. Teams have 30 minutes after the end of their game to dispute a score. After that time all scores are final.

35. Protests MUST be settled on the playing field before the game will be allowed to continue. JUDGEMENT CALLS BY AN UMPIRE ARE NOT GROUNDS FOR PROTEST AND CANNOT BE QUESTIONED. No protest will be allowed after the game is completed. Tournament Director and Umpire Staff will hear protests and make a decision.

36. Tournament directors will have last say on any rule interpretation that is debated or anything else not fully defined in this document.

37. Should any game be suspended due to weather or unusual circumstances, it will be resumed from the point of suspension. If we have inclement weather, the tournament director reserves the right to amend the schedule, including reducing the number of games played, if necessary. A suspended game will be considered complete after 3 innings or 2 1/2 innings if the home team is ahead. The score will revert to the last complete inning. We appreciate everyone's flexibility and patience should New England weather become an issue.

PLAYOFF RULES

1. Seeding will be based on pool games. 2 points for a win, 1 point for a tie.
2. Tie breakers will be used in the following order:
 - a. Head to Head Competition
 - b. Team with the Most Wins
 - c. Record Against Common Opponents
 - d. Runs Against (Lowest of: Total Number of Runs Allowed)
 - e. Coin flip (or "names drawn from a hat" if more than 2 teams are tied.)
3. Higher seed will be home team.
4. Games will be 6 innings. During the first round and quarter-finals, no new inning may start after 1 hour 30 minutes. There is no time limit for the semi-final and championship games.
5. In the event of a tie, we will use the international tie breaker (see USA Softball rulebook)