



8U Fall Fastpitch League Rules

Points of Emphasis

- **When is a Play Dead?:** Infield Overthrow Rule: When a batted ball is fielded by an infielder, runners may advance at their own risk during the initial play. If the first throw by a defensive player is overthrown or not caught, each runner may advance a maximum of one additional base beyond the base they were attempting to reach at the time of the throw. Once runners have advanced to that base, the play is dead and no further advancement is allowed, regardless of any additional throws or defensive errors.
- **Ball Returned to the Infield Rule:** When a ball is hit to the outfield, play will be considered dead once the ball is returned to and controlled by a defensive player in the infield. At that point, runners may finish advancing only to the base they are actively moving toward. Once runners stop or safely reach that base, no further advancement is permitted.

Batting and Offensive Rules

- Teams will bat until 3 outs are recorded or 5 runs are scored, whichever occurs first.
- No stealing is allowed.
- **Player Pitch / Coach Pitch Hybrid:** A defensive player pitches from 30 feet using either a simple Power-X stance or full pitching motion. The player pitcher may throw up to 3 pitches. If the batter has not put the ball into fair play, the offensive coach may throw up to 3 additional pitches. If no fair ball is hit after six total pitches, the batting tee will be used. An adult may stand behind the catcher to help keep the game moving.
 - **Players CANNOT walk, but will keep the count when the coach comes in to pitch.** For example, pitcher throws 2 strikes swinging or called and one ball (2-1 count). The coach picks up that count. If the player swings and misses that is considered their 3rd strike and a tee comes out.
- A player may make an attempt to advance to an unoccupied base forward after the ball passed the catcher to the backstop and must be pitched by a player.
 - No advancing to home.
 - Coaches are encouraged to begin teaching proper lead-off techniques during practices and games to help players prepare for passed-ball situations and support overall player development.
- **Hit Batter Rule:** If a player pitcher hits a batter, the player pitcher's turn immediately ends. The offensive coach assumes the remaining pitches, with a maximum of 6 total pitches in the at-bat.
- Each team must provide their own 11-inch softballs and batting tee.
- Teams are encouraged to teach proper lead-off mechanics, but runners may not steal.

- A continuous batting order is mandatory. Every player present must remain in the batting lineup for the entire game, and the batting order may not change during the game.

Defensive Rules

- A maximum of 12 defensive players may be on the field at one time.
- Only traditional defensive positions may be used in the infield: pitcher, catcher, first base, second base, third base, and shortstop. Additional players must play in the outfield.
- Teams are encouraged to use 10 defensive players when possible and rotate players regularly.
- Teams may play with fewer than 10 players if necessary.
- **Coaches on the Field:** Defensive coaches may stand on the field to assist with positioning and player instruction.
- **Defensive Playing Time:** Every player must play at least one inning in an infield position during each game. No player may play the same defensive position for more than two innings per game, except pitchers and catchers as needed.

Equipment Rules

- All bats must display the official USA Softball certification mark.
- Metal cleats or spikes are not permitted for players, coaches, managers, or umpires.
- Jewelry deemed dangerous by the umpire must be removed before play.
- Medical alert bracelets or necklaces are permitted but must be taped securely to the body while remaining visible.
- Batting helmets must include a face mask or protective cage.

Team Expectations

- Teams are encouraged to arrive 30–45 minutes before game time to warm up and prepare.
- Home and away teams will be decided by a coin flip at the umpire meeting prior to the game.
- Each team must provide at least one new softball per game. Softballs will be returned after the game.
- **Postgame Expectations:** Teams should line up and shake hands after each game. For doubleheaders, handshakes will occur after the second game only.
- Both teams are responsible for cleaning dugouts, bleacher areas, and surrounding field space.

Sportsmanship

- **Expectations for Coaches and Spectators:** Parents and spectators should promote a positive atmosphere centered on recreation, learning, and fun. Unsportsmanlike behavior toward players, or coaches will not be tolerated.

- **Addressing Concerns:** Only the head coach should discuss rule interpretations or concerns with other coaches. All conversations must remain respectful. Formal concerns should be directed to the league office at least 24 hours after the game.

Starting and Ending the Game

- Games will be played using 60-foot base paths and a 30-foot pitching distance.
- No new inning may begin after 75 minutes. Game time begins when the home team takes the field to start the game.
- Games may end in a tie.
- Games will be canceled if the wind chill is 40 degrees or lower at scheduled game time.
- Once a game has started, umpires may suspend or end play at their discretion due to unsafe weather conditions.
- **Lightning and Thunder Policy:** Play must be suspended immediately when thunder is heard or lightning is seen. A minimum 30-minute delay is required before play may resume. Any additional thunder or lightning restarts the 30-minute delay. Weather delays do not extend the game time limit.
- **Air Quality Policy:** If the Air Quality Index (AQI) is between 151–200, games may still be played. If teams do not have enough players due to air quality concerns, the umpire will determine whether the game can proceed. If the AQI exceeds 200, games will be canceled.