

South County Softball League

8U Division Rules

(Rev 4.12.2024)

The sole purpose for these rules for the 8U division is to provide a venue for younger players in which they can play and learn the game of softball free from an undo pressure placed upon them. The rules in this division were developed to ensure that is what takes place.

Being the first introduction a player has to the concept of "player-pitch", the following methodology is a tested process that has a track record of success:

- A six (6) inning game will attempt to be played, unless shortened by the run ahead rule or if the time limit has been reached. At 1 hour 20 minutes, the current inning will be finished, and one more complete inning will be played. At 1 hour and 40 minutes, the current inning will be finished.
- The game will be considered complete after 4 innings (3.5 if the home team is winning) in the case of weather, darkness, or time limit.
- The batter is allowed three strikes, and she is out (unless the third strike is a foul)
- Walks, the use of tees, and called strikes are not permitted. Swing-and-miss and fouls count as strikes. This is to introduce the players to the concept of "outs" without specifically calling pitches.
- Pitching
 - During the first half of the season (4/22/24 - 5/18/24): Each batter will be pitched a maximum of 5 pitches. If still at the plate after the 5th pitch has been thrown, the batter will be declared out, unless the 5th pitch is fouled off.
 - During the second half of the season (5/19/24 - 6/16/24): Each batter will be pitched a maximum of 8 pitches (up to 3 Player pitches and up to 5 Coach pitches). Teams may choose to waive their player pitch at their discretion (and just have the coach pitch). In this event, the batter would just get the 5 coach pitches. If still at the plate after the 8th pitch has been thrown, the batter will be declared out, unless the 5th pitch is fouled off.
- Umpires are not required, as walks and called strikes are not permitted. Outs at a base will be called by the defensive coach in the field, nearest the play.

- The pitcher will stand on either side of the adult pitcher when/if the Coach is pitching. The player must stay inside (with both feet) the pitcher's circle until the ball is hit.
- No advance on an overthrow
- Coaches are allowed to be on the field in fair territory to provide instruction when his/her team is on defense, in the outfield, and behind the infielders. An additional Coach of the team that is on defense, is allowed to set up behind the catcher to retrieve pitched balls that get by the catcher.
- The Infield Fly Rule is NOT in effect.
- The Dropped Third Strike Rule is NOT in effect.
- A continuous batting order is to be used (all players bat). Should a player be unable to take their turn at bat for any reason, proceed to the next scheduled batter without penalty. Free defensive substitutions.
- All players must play a minimum of 2 innings on defense unless the game is shortened by the run rule.
- Run / Run Ahead
 - There is a five (5) run rule per inning. Once the fifth run has crossed home plate in any inning, play will stop and no subsequent runs will be scored in that inning.
 - There are unlimited runs in the declared final inning for the playoffs.
 - Run ahead rules are as follow:
 - 15 runs ahead after 3 complete innings
 - 12 runs ahead after 4 complete innings
 - 8 runs ahead after 5 complete innings
- 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.
- 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 them. 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.
- Equipment
 - All fielders must wear a protective fielders mask.

- All batters must wear a batting helmet with face protection.
- Catchers must have a chest protector, leg guards and a masked helmet.
- Metal spikes are not allowed
- An 11" ball will be used