

## Coach Pitch/8U Division Rules

- A coach for the team that is batting will pitch. Each batter will be thrown 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 number of pitches thrown will be counted. A batter can strike out if the third strike is a swing and miss.
- 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.
- 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.
- A chalk line will be installed in the outfield, 125 ft 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. At fields with fences of 125 feet or less, any ball hit off the fence will have the same effect. A ball that bounces over the fence will be a ground rule double.
- A defensive player will occupy the pitchers' position on either side of the adult pitcher. The player must stay inside (both feet) the pitchers circle until the ball is hit.
- 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.
- 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. 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.
- Games will be 6 innings in length, unless shortened by the run-ahead rule (see below) or if the time limit has been reached. No new inning will begin after 80 minutes. The last inning will be declared when there is 70 minutes or less on the timer. In bracket play, the USA Softball international tie breaker rule will be used when a game is tied after either 80 minutes or 6 innings. Pool play games may end in a tie.
  - **Run-ahead rule:** If a team is ahead by 12 runs after 4 complete innings (3 and ½ innings, if the home team is ahead), or 8 runs after 5 complete innings (4 and ½ innings if the home team is ahead), the game is over.

- In both pool play and bracket play, a maximum of 4 runs can be scored in all innings except for the last declared inning where runs scored are unlimited. The last inning will be declared when there is 70 minutes or less on the timer
- There will be no infield fly rule in this division.
- 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.
- 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.
- All players must play a minimum of 3 innings on defense unless the game is shortened by the run-ahead rule.
- 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.
- Pitching distance will be 30 feet for this division. Base distance will be 50 ft
- A safety softball will be used.
- 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 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).
- A game may begin or finish with one less player than is required to start, (ten), an out will be recorded in the 10th spot in the batting order if the game starts with 9. 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.
- 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.
- Air horns and other noise makers are not allowed.

- 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.
- 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 on the field or in and near the dugout area.
- 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.
- 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 only when clarification of the rule in question is completed. When the game is stopped, the timer is stopped, also.
- 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 undue 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 Ft line, the third base coach cannot send 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.
- **Courtesy Runners** - Courtesy runners are only provided for the catcher or an injured player, no one else. The last scheduled batter at the time when a courtesy runner is needed will be the runner for a player that requires a courtesy runner. The insertion of an incorrect courtesy runner discovered after the next pitch is thrown will result in an out. Should the incorrect runner be discovered prior to the next pitch being thrown, the correct runner is inserted without penalty.
- Example 1: The first batter of the inning pops out for the first out of the inning, the next batter gets a hit, and requires a courtesy runner. The courtesy runner is the batter that just made the first out of that inning.
- Example 2: There are no outs in the inning when the first batter gets on base, the courtesy runner is the last scheduled batter in the lineup at that time