

SSBA Fall Softball Rules and Regulations

8U Coach Pitch

Except as otherwise stated herein, all games will be determined according to the rules implemented by USA Softball. A situation not specifically covered by the local rules will be governed by USA rules, which can be found at https://www.usasoftball.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/120/2025/01/USAS-2025-Rulebook_digital67.pdf.

- 1. FIELD OF PLAY:** The base distance shall be 60 feet. The pitching distance shall be 35 feet. If the base distance or the pitching distance is found to be at the wrong dimensions during the course of the game, the error shall be corrected immediately, with no penalty.
- 2. EQUIPMENT:**
 - a. Bats** –Only official softball bats will be allowed. Bats made of aluminum, graphite, or ceramic materials must have an official softball insignia on it.
 - b. Batting Helmets** – All batters, on-deck batters, and base runners are required to wear protective batting helmets at all times. It is mandatory for all batting helmets to be equipped with a face mask.
 - c. Protective Masks:** The player playing pitcher must wear a protective face shield while pitching. It is recommended that protective shields be worn by all infielders for their safety.
 - d. Catcher's Equipment:** Catchers must wear a catcher's helmet, face mask, throat guard, chest protector, and shin guards.
 - e. Cleats**-Metal cleats will are not allowed in any games on any field.
 - f. Balls** –Only 11 inch softballs with the official softball insignia are to be used for game play. Two game balls are supplied by home team at the beginning of each game.
- 3. REGULATION GAMES:** Each game is 6 innings, 5 ½ if home team is ahead. An inning consists of three outs. In case of rain, darkness etc., a complete game is declared at the completion of 4 completed innings or 3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead. If a game ends in a tie, at the completion of six innings, the game will continue if time allows. If, due to time, darkness, or weather, a tie game will be continued at a later date to be scheduled by the division Vice President. If a game is called in the middle of an inning, the score reverts back to the end of the previous full inning.
- 4. MERCY RULE:** A game is considered complete:
 - a.** 15-run lead after 3 innings (2 ½ if home team is ahead)
 - b.** 12-run lead after 4 innings (3 ½ if home team is ahead)
 - c.** 10-run lead after 5 innings (4 ½ if home team is ahead)
- 5. TIME LIMITS:** All game times will be specified on the schedule. No new inning may begin after 1.5 hours (one hour and thirty minutes). After two hours, the game is over. If there is a tie

after 2 hours, the game can be continued to a later date to be scheduled by the league Vice President. If darkness sets in after an inning, then the score will revert back to the previous full inning. If time is available, the home team has the field for practice until 10 minutes before game time at which time the visiting team receives the field for practice prior to the game.

6. **PARTICIPATION:** Each player must be allowed 2 innings in the field. Each team is able to bat the entire lineup. This allows all available players on a team to bat in an assigned order. Managers are able to alternate players into the field as they choose as long as each player plays in the field a minimum of 2 innings.
7. **PITCHING:** The manager, coach or designated person shall be responsible for pitching to his/her respective team. There shall be a maximum of 9 pitches per batter. After 9 pitches, the batter shall be out. There are no walks. The player “pitcher” shall be positioned just to the right or the left of the manager/coach pitcher.
8. **BATTING/BASERUNNING:** Baserunners may not lead off or steal. Batters may not bunt. On a hit ball that stays within the infield, the base runners and batter may advance one base. On a hit ball that goes into the outfield, the base runners and batter may advance as far as possible, until the ball is returned to inside the infield. The infield is defined here as the space inside the base paths between first and second and second and third; the outfield is any area beyond those base paths. Base runners are allowed to proceed to the base they were running to if they were at least half-way, and may proceed no further. In case of an overthrow in the infield, the runners may not advance.
9. **INNING:** A half inning shall consist of 3 outs or a maximum of 5 runs.
10. **UMPIRES:** Umpires shall not be provided for the games. The managers shall jointly have the responsibility for calling games due to weather conditions, darkness and time limitations.
11. **SPORTSMANSHIP:** All players, managers, and parents shall conduct themselves with appropriate sportsmanship and show respect to others. The manager/coach is responsible for the conduct of their players as well as the spectators for their team.
12. **TEAM:** Before each game, the manager of each team should supply the opposing manager a list of their eligible players for that game and starting batting line-up.
 - a. All players will be placed in a batting order for the entire game. All players bat irrespective if they have played in the field.
 - b. Each team may field 9 or 10 players on defense. If there are 10 players there shall be six infielders and four outfielders positioned in the outfield grass.
 - c. Any team with only eight players at game time may begin play and be allowed fifteen minutes for the ninth player to arrive. If after fifteen minutes a ninth player is not

present, the game is continued with eight players and the ninth position in the batting order is considered an automatic out, unless the coaches agree otherwise.

- d. Any team with less than eight players after the fifteen minutes will automatically forfeit the game. In a non-tournament game, the coaches may agree to play with less or “trade” a player so the teams can still play a game.
- e. Managers have the option of calling a player up from a lower division or another team within that division to act as a substitute player. There are no restrictions on the position the substitute player can play. Open substitutions are allowed for the entire game.
- f. The Home team will occupy the third base dugout and will keep the official score. The Home team is the second team listed on your game schedule and is responsible for lining the field and setting the bases each game, if necessary.

13. FORCE OUTS: Any defensive player can make a force out. An outfielder does not need to throw it to an infielder to make the force out.

14. PRE-GAME CONFERENCE: Managers are encouraged to meet prior to the game to discuss agreed upon amendments to the league rules regarding pitching, stealing, etc.

15. UNIFORMS: Each player must be in proper uniform to participate. A players’ uniform must consist of the standard team uniform shirt, shorts/pants, hat/visor and safety equipment. Shirt shall be tucked into the short/pants. No jewelry is allowed to be worn during game play.

16. DEAD BALL: The ball is considered dead once the pitcher has control of the ball and is within the designated pitching circle. Once the ball is dead, no runner may advance. Any runner who has not gone past the halfway point to the next base must go back to the preceding base.

17. THROWING BATS: No throwing of the bat will be allowed. One team warning will be issued after which, any subsequent violation will be cause for offending player to be called out.

18. INJURED PLAYER/COURTESY RUNNER: A courtesy runner will be allowed for a batter who has been injured in a play. Courtesy runners may be used for catcher if there are 2 outs (to help speed up game). If catcher is already on base and 2nd out occurs, no courtesy runner is allowed. The courtesy runner will be the player who recorded the last out.

19. OBSTRUCTION/SLIDING: Fielders must allow access to the bases and home plate. If a play is being made at a base, the base runner must avoid unnecessary contact with the defensive player or the base runner is out. Catchers cannot block the plate without the ball.

20. INCLEMENT WEATHER: In case of rain, the manager may call the SSBA Weather Hotline (1888-475-7770) one hour before the start of the game. A decision will be made at this time and cannot be reversed.

21. VIOLATIONS: Any violations of the rules should be documented and reported immediately to the League President. Violations may result in penalties including, but not limited to: forfeiture of game in which the violation occurred; suspension for one or more future games; exclusion from tournament play or expulsion from the League. All violations will be documented and submitted to the Board of Directors for review.