

**Miami Valley Youth Softball League**  
**2022 Official League Rules**

This rulebook contains the rules for the 2022 season of the Miami Valley Youth Softball League. Every attempt has been made to align the rules with that of National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Softball rules with exceptions deemed appropriate based on the skill level of each division. We urge everyone to take the time to read this handbook, so there is clear understanding of the rules of league play.

Any rule not covered by this rulebook will be governed by the NFHS rulebook.

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## **I. Purpose and Objectives**

The purpose of the Miami Valley Youth Softball League (MVYSL) play are:

1. Provide girls softball for as many children as possible in our respective communities.
2. Teach basic knowledge of the game of softball and to develop character in the children by teaching them to play together fairly, abide by the rules, and to win and lose like sportsmen.

## **II. General Rules**

1. The rules outlined in the following paragraphs are the common set of rules for MVYSL play. All league play shall be governed by the NFHS Softball Rules except as noted herein and in the ensuing individual division rules that follow.
2. Rules and Sections of the NFHS rulebook that don't apply:
  - a. Softballs with the NFHS Authenticating Mark.
  - b. Gloves with a maximum of two colors.
  - c. DP/FLEX
  - d. Uniforms
  - e. Protested Games

## **III. Responsibilities of Managers and Coaches**

3. As a condition of managing and/or coaching a team competing in the MVYSL, managers and coaches must comply with their community code of conduct.
4. Some specific responsibilities of Managers and Coaches are the following:

The Manager has three (3) primary responsibilities:

1. Do everything possible to encourage the participation and enjoyment of each player.
2. Teach and develop the proper softball skills.
3. Protect the girls from permanent injury frequently caused by improper playing and throwing techniques.

5. Discipline

A player may be disciplined by being benched for any scheduled games. The opposing manager must be notified before the game begins or the player must play in the game.

6. Conduct of Managers

The Manager must be in complete charge of their coaches, players, and parents/spectators at all times and are responsible for the instruction and enforcement of all League rules.

7. Treatment of Umpires

Managers, coaches and players must not argue with or be abusive toward umpires before, during or after games. They may question interpretation of the rules but not a judgement call. The manager must also ensure that abusive language and unsportsmanlike conduct directed at umpires and other teams is completely eliminated on the part of his or her players and coaches. An umpire may remove, from the game and park, any manager, coach or player for use of abusive language or unsportsmanlike conduct.

Any manager, coach or player ejected from a game by an umpire shall also be suspended for one (1) additional game. It shall be the responsibility of the Community Representative to ensure enforcement of this rule.

8. Profanity

Profanity will not be tolerated and will be cause for immediate ejection from the game.

At the request of the umpire, a manager/coach is required to provide the name and contact information of a parent/spectator ejected from the park for profanity.

If the manager/coach does not know the parent/spectator ejected, he/she should so state to the umpire. If, in the judgement of the umpire, the manager does not cooperate, the manager/coach shall be ejected from the game.

9. Emergency Procedures

If a player is injured and requires professional assistance, teams are to follow the procedures of their community organization.

**IV. Team/Player/Manager/Coach/Parent/Spectator Conduct Rules**

The following actions will not be condoned or permitted under any circumstances:

1. Abusive actions, language, profanity, or unsportsmanlike behavior on the field, in the dugout, or in the stands.

2. Abuse of equipment.
3. Use of any tobacco products (including E-cigarettes, vaping) inside fences, dugouts, on the field, or in the stands.
4. When playing in a league game, the umpire is the final authority. He or she can eject a player, coach, or parent/spectator from the field and/or stands for any acts identified above.
5. A parent/spectator ejected for a second time will be contacted by the Community Representative after discussion with the League Coordinator/Board of Directors to discuss behavior issues, expectations, and possible consequences if such behavior occurs at future games.
6. Consequences to a parent/spectator who does not abide by an umpire's order may involve any one or more of the following:
  1. Ejection from the ball field and surrounding area.
  2. Ejection from the Park.
  3. Notification of Law Enforcement
  4. Banishment from attendance at future games.

All of these instances shall be judgement calls by the umpire(s).

7. Throwing (slinging) of a bat. On the first occasion during any game, the team shall be given a warning. On the second occasion by the same player, that player shall be called out. On the third occasion by the same player, that player shall be called out and disqualified from the contest.
8. Players are not permitted to taunt the opposing team's players. Chants may not include a player's name or nickname.
9. The penalty for a player being ejected from a game shall be that she shall sit out the team's next game. The umpire shall document the offending player to the Community Representative and the manager shall be responsible to make the player sit out the next game. **If the player does not sit out, the team will incur a forfeit and the League Coordinator is notified.**
10. The penalty for a manager, coach, or scorekeeper being ejected from a game shall be that he or she sits out the team's next game. The umpire shall document the offending person and report it to the Communities Representative who will report it to the League Coordinator. If the offending person fails to comply, the team will incur a forfeit.

## **V. Player Equipment Rules**

1. Catchers must wear a chest protector, shin guards, protective mask, and skull helmet including while warming up pitchers.
2. All batters, base runners, and bat persons must wear protective helmets. Any player judged to have intentionally discarded their protective helmet while running bases will be called out.
3. All players are required to wear helmets with a permanently affixed face protector. Chin straps are optional but not required.
4. All players must keep their helmets on until they are safely inside the dugout fence even if the play is dead. This includes going back to the dugout from any base or from home plate after making an out. The only time a player can remove their helmet while on the field of play is due to an injury.
5. Shoes are required equipment. MVYSL prohibits the use of metal cleats worn by all players participating in the 12U and younger divisions.
6. All equipment must be kept inside the dugout fences at all times.
7. Exposed jewelry judged dangerous by the umpire must be removed and may not be worn during the game. Religious and medical alert bracelets may be worn but must be taped to the body.

## **VI. Field Maintenance**

The players of both teams are to clean up the area around the ball diamond after each game.

## **VII. General Playing Rules**

### **A. Playing Field Dimensions and Requirements**

1. The foul lines should be lined and extended ten (10) feet beyond first (1<sup>st</sup>) and third (3<sup>rd</sup>) base.
2. Distance between bases shall be sixty (60) feet for all divisions. If the bases are found to be at a different length and play has started, the team will complete the inning and adjust the bases to the proper distances. The time necessary to fix the bases will not be counted toward the game time limit.
3. The pitching distance is different for a couple divisions.

4. The pitching rubber must be on a horizontal plane with home plate.
5. A circle, eight (8) feet in radius and sixteen (16) feet in diameter, shall be lined around the pitching rubber.

B. Rosters, Eligibility and Participation

1. 18u High School Division and 14u Major Division must field at least eight (8) players. A team in the 12u Minor Division and 10u Rookie Division must field at least seven (7) players, and a team in the 8u Coach Pitch Division must field at least six (6) players. A manager shall have up to fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled time of their game to field a team of eligible players after which a forfeit will be declared.
2. Each player must play three (3) innings in each six (6) or seven (7) inning game. Two (2) of those innings must be in the field with one (1) inning of participation in the infield occurring within the first three (3) innings. In addition, no player will sit the bench for two (2) consecutive innings and no player may sit twice before all players have sat one (1) inning. The only exception to the above rule is upon written request of a player's parents/guardian that their daughter play only the outfield positions during the season. Managers should maintain a copy of such request if challenged during a game.
3. 18u High School Division and 14u Major Division, the two (2) inning infield rule above shall not apply.
4. A warning shall be given to the manager for the first rule violation and the removal of the manager for the rest of the year for a third violation.
5. The above rule doesn't apply in the event of player disciplinary action. In the event of player disciplinary action, the League Coordinator and opposing manager must be informed of such action before the start of the game.
6. All team players present at the start of the game will be in the offensive lineup and bat continuously. The only exception to this rule is if a player is injured, sick, ejected or disciplined by her coach.
7. Any team player arriving after the start of the game but before the top of the third inning will be added to the end of the batting order, but shall only be required to play half of the remaining innings.
8. If an umpire ejects a team player from the game, her position in the batting order is an out.

9. In all divisions, if a player leaves a game due to injury or any other reason, her inability to bat or absence from the lineup will not result in an out.
10. In all divisions, when a player is injured or unable to continue playing and is removed from the game, another player can come in off the bench and take the injured player's defensive position in the field. If a player is injured or unable to continue during her at bat and is removed from the game, the player who made the last out comes to the plate and assumes the injured batter's count. The injured batter from that point on is skipped in the batting order unless she is later able to participate, when she shall assume her prior batting order position.
11. Only team players, manager, coaches, one scorekeeper, and a bat person for each participating team will be allowed in their respective dugout. The offensive team will be permitted base runners, on deck batter, and only two (2) members of the coaching staff (limited to coaching boxes) on the field while the ball is in play. The coaches must not interfere with any player or their attempt to make a play on the ball.
12. All players must remain in the dugout and behind the fences until moving into the on-deck spot. Players may not stand or sit in the doorway to await their turn to bat or while sitting out of the defensive lineup.
13. Only one (1) player is permitted in the on-deck spot.
14. The base coaches can't touch a player until the play is dead.

C. Hazardous Conditions

1. The stated inclement weather and field condition protocol of the home team community park shall govern the guidelines to be used in determining if it is safe for a game to start or resume.
2. When hazardous weather conditions threaten the safety and health of the players, the game shall be suspended until the conditions have subsided. At that time, the umpire may resume the game.
3. At a minimum, if lightening is imminent or a thunderstorm is approaching, all personnel, athletes and spectators shall evacuate to available safe structures or shelters.
4. **Thirty-Minute Rule** Upon the first indication that thunderstorm development is within fifteen (15) miles of the contest, the umpire shall suspend the competition until thirty (30) minutes after the storm has left

the fifteen (15) mile zone. Any subsequent lightening or thunder after the beginning of the thirty (30) minute count shall reset the clock and another count should begin.

5. The umpire shall wait a minimum of thirty (30) minutes before calling a game, unless the managers agree in consultation with the umpire, to terminate earlier.

#### D. Time Limits

1. The time limit for all league games shall be as follows:
  - 8u Coach Pitch Division – one (1) hour and thirty (30) minutes finish the inning or six (6) innings
  - 10u Rookie Division - one (1) hour and thirty (30) minutes finish the inning or six (6) innings
  - 12u Minors Division - one (1) hour and thirty (30) minutes finish the inning or six (6) innings
  - 14u Major Division – two (2) hours finish the inning or seven (7) innings
  - 18u High School Division - two (2) hours finish the inning or seven (7) innings
2. The umpire shall announce the start time and keep the official time.
3. Determining the time limit, a new inning begins immediately after the final out of the previous inning, or the fifth run scored (for divisions playing with the five-run inning rule). Example – 10u game, bottom of the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning, and the 5<sup>th</sup> run scored to tie the game at 1 hour 27 minutes used. The 4<sup>th</sup> inning immediately starts after the 5<sup>th</sup> run is scored and the teams will finish the 4<sup>th</sup> inning.
4. No new inning may start after the game time limit has been reached. However, any new inning started prior to the time limit shall be completed in full (unless, of course, the home team is ahead after the visiting team has finished its offensive half of the inning).
5. Teams will have a two (2) minute time limit between innings. The umpire will have sole discretion on this as it is his/her responsibility to keep the game moving.
6. Prior to game time, teams are to warm up in the grass areas only. The exception being that both teams are granted five (5) minutes of infield practice, fifteen (15) minutes before game time. Managers (not umpires) are responsible for seeing that their teams get this pre-game infield practice. Failure to comply will result in forfeit of practice time. Games

must be started on time. Pitchers will be granted three (3) to five (5) warm-up pitches or two (2) minutes, whichever comes first, before each half inning.

7. Games will not be started after 7:00 p.m. on school nights and 8:00 p.m. on other nights.

#### E. Legal Game

1. A complete game shall consist of the following:
  - 8u Coach Pitch Division – six (6) innings
  - 10u Rookie Division - six (6) innings
  - 12u Minors Division - six (6) innings
  - 14u Major Division – seven (7) innings
  - 18u High School Division - seven (7) innings

In a game called for any reason other than time limit or run-ahead rule. Four (4) innings shall constitute a legal game and the losing team must have completed four (4) times at bat. In the case of a time limit, the game is legal after the losing team has had its turn at bat.

2. Games stopped for the four (4) inning requirement due to inclement weather, will not be rescheduled.
3. Games stopped before the four (4) inning requirement due to inclement weather, will be considered suspended games and will be rescheduled and resumed at the exact point where the game ended. Players in the original game lineup who are unavailable for the rescheduled game, will have their batting positions skipped with no out registered. New players who were unable to attend the originally scheduled game will be inserted at the end of the lineup.
4. Run-ahead rules; a complete game will be declared if after three (3) innings a team is ahead by 15 runs or more and if after four (4) innings a team is ahead by 12 runs or more and if after five (5) innings a team is ahead by 8 runs or more.
5. When a legal game is tied after the time limit has expired, the game shall end in a tie and be recorded as such in the division standings.
6. League standings will be final at the conclusion of the regular season play. Teams that end up tied will be decided by the following:
  1. Head-to-head competition
  2. Record against team immediately above them in the standings

3. Record against the team immediately below them in the standings
  4. Runs scored in head-to-head competition
  5. Runs scored against team immediately above them in the standings
  6. Runs scored against them immediately below them in the standings
  7. Flip a coin
7. If the scheduled umpire(s) fail to appear, the game will be played with a member of each team's coaching staff umpiring from behind the pitcher's plate while their team is on defense. The only exception to this rule is if both managers agree to have another individual(s) umpire the game.

F. Forfeits

A manager shall have up to fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled time of their game to field a team of eligible players or forfeit the game.

G. Substitutions

1. Defensive substitutions may be made freely but must be made prior to the start of a new inning. However, pitchers may be substituted from the bench or the field at any time.
2. If a pitcher is removed during any game, the manager shall be permitted to remove her from the pitching position for a minimum of three (3) recorded outs and then later return her to the pitching position as long as she does not pitch more than the innings (outs) allowed for that division. Only one (1) re-entry at pitcher is allowed.
3. Games that extend into extra innings, a pitcher is allowed one additional re-entry to the pitching position and may pitch an additional two (2) innings.
4. If a pitcher hits three (3) batters in one inning, that pitcher shall be removed from the pitching position and is permitted her one (1) re-entry at pitcher pursuant to the guidelines above, provided she has not already re-entered at the pitching position. The penalty for violating Substitution rules shall be forfeiting of that game.

H. Contact Rule

1. Runners are responsible for avoiding collisions with defensive players. When the defensive player has the ball and is waiting for the runner, and the runner remains on her feet and crashes into the defensive player, the runner will be declared out. If in the umpire's judgement, contact was made deliberately, the player shall be ejected from the game. The intention of this rule is to encourage baserunners to slide.

2. If a defensive player without the ball obstructs a runner, it is a call to be made in the judgement of the umpire(s) but collisions must still be avoided.
  3. When a play on a runner is imminent, the runner must either slide, try to “get around” the tag or surrender to the tag without making physical contact with the defensive player in anyway. Failure to comply, in the judgement of the umpire, shall result in the runner being declared out.
  4. When a defensive player blocks the runner from the base without the ball and the runner slides, she will be awarded the base due to obstruction. If the ball and the runner arrive simultaneously, the call will be based on the umpire’s judgement. If the runner fails to slide and contact is made, other than incidental, the runner will be called out. If there is no slide, but there is no contact, there will be no violation of this rule. The rule does not apply at first base as there is no requirement to slide at first base. However, malicious contact at first base will still be grounds to be called out, ejected, or both.
  5. The intent of this rule is to minimize injuries caused by unnecessary collisions. No player shall be called out for simply failing to slide.
- I. Charged Conferences
1. Defense  
There shall be only three (3) charged conferences between the manager or other team representative from the dugout with any defensive players in a six (6) or seven (7) inning game. For every inning beyond six (6) or seven (7), there shall be one additional conference per inning between manager or other team representative from the dugout with any defensive players. Time granted for an obviously incapacitated player or for the replacement of the pitcher shall not constitute a Defensive Conference.
  2. Offense  
There shall be no more than one (1) charged conference between team representatives and the batter, another team representative, and/or runners in an inning. The umpire shall not permit any such conferences in excess of one in an inning. Time granted for an obviously incapacitated player shall not constitute an Offensive Charged Conference.
- J. Player Pick-Up Rule
1. Teams may pick-up players to fill in for an absent or injured roster player(s) from that community’s age level division or the age-level division below.

2. No Pick-Up players from outside any participating community's organization are allowed.
3. The Pick-Up players must bat in the last batting position in the lineup and only play the outfield position(s).
4. Any team using Pick-Up players must field at least six (6) rostered players (five (5) in the 8u Coach Pitch Division).
5. Players rostered on the MVYSL "All Star" team are not eligible to play as Pick-Up players for a "Recreation" division team.

K. Score Keeping

1. The home team will be the official scorekeeper.
2. The winning team will be responsible for reporting all game score results to the League email address at [MiamiValleyYSL@gmail.com](mailto:MiamiValleyYSL@gmail.com) .

## VIII. Division Specific Rules

### GIRLS 18U HIGH SCHOOL DIVISION RULES

#### 1. Legal Team

Nine (9) players shall constitute a team, but teams shall be permitted to play with eight (8) players (see Player Pick-Up rule for utilizing players from other teams or a lower division).

#### 2. Pitching

1. Pitchers are allowed one (1) re-entry.
2. Pitchers must be removed after hitting three (3) batters in one (1) inning and may re-enter the game at the pitching position subject to the one re-entry rule.
3. Games extended into extra innings, a pitcher is allowed one additional re-entry to the pitching position.
4. NFHS Softball Rules require pitchers to do the following:
  1. The pitcher shall bring her hands together for not less than one (1) second and not more than ten (10) seconds before releasing the ball.
  2. A backward step may be taken before, simultaneously with or after the hands are brought together.
  3. The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate at all times prior to the forward step.
  4. Once the ball has been returned to the pitcher to prepare for the next pitch, the pitcher has 20 seconds to release the pitch. PENALTY – The batter is awarded a ball.
5. Managers and Coaches are to teach the girls the proper technique for pitching. Such rules will be fully enforced for all High School Division games.
6. NFHS rules shall govern in the event a pitch is declared "illegal" by the umpire. An illegal pitch shall be declared immediately by the umpire after the hands separate (delayed dead-ball signal). The batter is awarded a ball.

#### Exceptions:

1. If the batter reaches first base safely and each other runner advances at least one base, the illegal pitch is nullified.
2. If the batter doesn't reach first base safely or if any base runner fails to advance at least one base, the coach of the team at bat shall have the option of the result of the play or the penalty of the illegal pitch.

3. If the batter is hit by an illegal pitch, the batter is awarded first base.
  4. If ball four is an illegal pitch, the batter is awarded first base.
  7. Intentional walks are permitted without throwing pitches.
  8. The distance from the front edge of the pitching plate to the base edge of home plate is forty-three (43) feet.
3. **Stealing/Lead-offs** can occur after the ball leaves the pitchers hand.
  4. **Courtesy Runners** are allowed for Pitchers and Catchers after two (2) outs have been recorded in an inning. The player who made the last batted out shall be the courtesy runner.
  5. **Bunting** is allowed in this division.
6. **Maximum Runs**
    1. The batting team may score a maximum of six (6) runs per inning. If more than six (6) runs are scored within the completion of the batters at bat in which the sixth (6<sup>th</sup>) run scores, the play shall be completed but only six (6) runs count. Example – If the offense has four (4) runs scored in an inning and there are runners on 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> bases and the batter hits a triple scoring three (3) runs, only two (2) runs are recorded in the scorebook. When the play ceases, all play is stopped, and the fielding team becomes the batting team. Play ceases and the half inning is complete when the runners have stopped running and the umpire calls time.
    2. Unlimited runs may be scored in the 7<sup>th</sup> inning or any extra innings.
    3. A complete game will be declared if after three (3) innings a team is ahead by fifteen (15) runs or more and if after four (4) innings a team is ahead by twelve (12) runs or more and if after five (5) innings a team is ahead by eight (8) runs or more.
7. **Look-Back Rule**
    1. The Look-Back rule pertaining to base runners' actions while the pitcher has the ball in the pitching circle will apply.
    2. If a runner circles a base while the pitcher has the ball in the pitching circle, she is allowed to stop once, but immediately return to the base or advance to the next base.
    3. Once the runner stops at a base for any reason while the pitcher has the ball in the circle, the runner will be declared out for leaving the base.
    4. There will be one (1) warning per team, per game. Subsequent occurrences will result in the runner being declared out.

8. **Dropped Third Strike** will be enforced in this division.
9. **Outfielder Positions**
  1. This division shall field three (3) outfielders.
  2. All outfielders must be positioned in the outfield grass until the pitch crosses home plate.
  3. If playing on a field with a large infield (i.e. a baseball field), outfielders must be positioned twenty (20) feet behind the bases until the ball crosses home plate.
10. **Hit by Pitch** If a batter is hit by a pitched ball, the batter shall be awarded first base unless, in the judgement of the umpire, the batter made no attempt to avoid being hit.

## GIRLS 14U MAJOR DIVISION RULES

### 1. Legal Team

Nine (9) players shall constitute a team, but teams shall be permitted to play with eight (8) players (see Player Pick-Up rule for utilizing players from other teams or a lower division).

### 2. Pitching

1. Pitchers are permitted to pitch no more than four (4) innings per game. If a pitcher throws one (1) pitch in an inning, it shall constitute one (1) inning pitched under this rule. The only exception to this rule is if a game goes into extra innings.
2. Pitchers are allowed one (1) re-entry.
3. Pitchers must be removed after hitting three (3) batters in one (1) inning and may re-enter the game at the pitching position subject to the one re-entry rule.
4. Games extended into extra innings, a pitcher is allowed one additional re-entry to the pitching position and may pitch an additional two (2) innings.
5. NFHS Softball Rules require pitchers to do the following:
  1. The pitcher shall bring her hands together for not less than one (1) second and not more than ten (10) seconds before releasing the ball.
  2. A backward step may be taken before, simultaneously with or after the hands are brought together.
  3. The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate at all times prior to the forward step.

4. Once the ball has been returned to the pitcher to prepare for the next pitch, the pitcher has 20 seconds to release the pitch. PENALTY – The batter is awarded a ball.
6. Managers and Coaches are to teach the girls the proper technique for pitching. Such rules will be fully enforced for all Major Division games.
7. NFHS rules shall govern in the event a pitch is declared “illegal” by the umpire. An illegal pitch shall be declared immediately by the umpire after the hands separate (delayed dead-ball signal). The batter is awarded a ball.

Exceptions:

1. If the batter reaches first base safely and each other runner advances at least one base, the illegal pitch is nullified.
  2. If the batter doesn't reach first base safely or if any base runner fails to advance at least one base, the coach of the team at bat shall have the option of the result of the play or the penalty of the illegal pitch.
  3. If the batter is hit by an illegal pitch out of the strike zone, the batter is awarded first base.
  4. If ball four is an illegal pitch, the batter is awarded first base.
  8. Intentional walks are permitted without throwing pitches.
  9. The distance from the front edge of the pitching plate to the base edge of home plate is forty (40) feet.
3. **Stealing/Lead-offs** can occur after the ball leaves the pitchers hand.
  4. **Courtesy Runners** are allowed for Pitchers and Catchers after two (2) outs have been recorded in an inning. The player who made the last batted out shall be the courtesy runner.
  5. **Bunting** is allowed in this division.
  6. **Maximum Runs**
    1. The batting team may score a maximum of six (6) runs per inning. If more than six (6) runs are scored within the completion of the batters at bat in which the sixth (6<sup>th</sup>) run scores, the play shall be completed but only six (6) runs count. Example – If the offense has four (4) runs scored in an inning and there are runners on 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> bases and the batter hits a triple scoring three (3) runs, only two (2) runs are recorded in the scorebook. When the play ceases, all play is stopped, and the fielding team becomes the batting team. Play ceases and the half inning is complete when the runners have stopped running and the umpire calls time.

2. Unlimited runs may be scored in the 7<sup>th</sup> inning or any extra innings.
3. A complete game will be declared if after three (3) innings a team is ahead by fifteen (15) runs or more and if after four (4) innings a team is ahead by twelve (12) runs or more and if after five (5) innings a team is ahead by eight (8) runs or more.

#### **7. Look-Back Rule**

1. The Look-Back rule pertaining to base runners' actions while the pitcher has the ball in the pitching circle will apply.
2. If a runner circles a base while the pitcher has the ball in the pitching circle, she is allowed to stop once, but immediately return to the base or advance to the next base.
3. Once the runner stops at a base for any reason while the pitcher has the ball in the circle, the runner will be declared out for leaving the base.
4. There will be one (1) warning per team, per game. Subsequent occurrences will result in the runner being declared out.

8. **Dropped Third Strike** will be enforced in this division.

#### **9. Outfielder Positions**

1. The division shall field three (3) outfielders.
2. All outfielders must be positioned in the outfield grass until the pitch crosses home plate.
3. If playing on a field with a large infield (i.e. a baseball field), outfielders must be positioned twenty (20) feet behind the bases until the ball crosses home plate.

10. **Hit by Pitch** If a batter is hit by a pitched ball, the batter shall be awarded first base unless, in the judgement of the umpire, the batter made no attempt to avoid being hit.

## **GIRLS 12U MINOR DIVISION RULES**

### **1. Legal Team**

Nine (9) players shall constitute a team, but teams shall be permitted to play with seven (7) players (see Player Pick-Up rule for utilizing players from other teams or a lower division).

## 2. Pitching

1. Pitchers are permitted to pitch no more than three (3) innings per game. If a pitcher throws one (1) pitch in an inning, it shall constitute one (1) inning pitched under this rule. The only exception to this rule is if a game goes into extra innings.
2. Pitchers are allowed one (1) re-entry.
3. Pitchers must be removed after hitting three (3) batters in one (1) inning and may re-enter the game at the pitching position subject to the one re-entry rule.
4. Games extended into extra innings, a pitcher is allowed one additional re-entry to the pitching position and may pitch an additional two (2) innings.
5. NFHS Softball Rules require pitchers to do the following:
  1. The pitcher shall bring her hands together for not less than one (1) second and not more than ten (10) seconds before releasing the ball.
  2. A backward step may be taken before, simultaneously with or after the hands are brought together.
  3. The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate at all times prior to the forward step. Crow-hopping constitutes an illegal pitch.
  4. Once the ball has been returned to the pitcher to prepare for the next pitch, the pitcher has 20 seconds to release the pitch. PENALTY – The batter is awarded a ball.
6. Managers and Coaches are to teach the girls the proper technique for pitching. **However**, in the spirit of focusing the girls' efforts on throwing strikes, the umpires have been asked to relax their interpretation of the above rules for all games in the Minor Division. If in the umpire's judgement, the pitcher is gaining an unfair advantage by not enforcing the above rules, the umpire shall enforce the above rules accordingly.
7. NFHS rules shall govern in the event a pitch is declared "illegal" by the umpire. An illegal pitch shall be declared immediately by the umpire after the hands separate (delayed dead-ball signal). The batter is awarded a ball.

### Exceptions:

1. If the batter reaches first base safely and each other runner advances at least one base, the illegal pitch is nullified.

2. If the batter doesn't reach first base safely or if any base runner fails to advance at least one base, the coach of the team at bat shall have the option of the result of the play or the penalty of the illegal pitch.
  3. If the batter is hit by an illegal pitch out of the strike zone, the batter is awarded first base.
  4. If ball four is an illegal pitch, the batter is awarded first base.
  8. Intentional walks are permitted without throwing pitches.
  9. Strike Zone: An optional strike zone may be adopted by the plate umpire. This optional zone is defined as follows- The strike zone shall be vertically from the batters shoulder to the knee, and horizontally to 3" from either side of the plate. This is a recommended zone that the plate umpire may enforce. **NOTE: THIS MUST BE DISCUSSED AT THE PRE-GAME MEETING OF THE UMPIRES AND COACHES.** At mid-season, the strike zone will be called according to NFHS Softball rules.
  10. The distance from the front edge of the pitching plate to the base edge of home plate is forty (40) feet.
3. **Stealing/Lead-offs** can occur only after the ball crosses home plate.
  4. **Courtesy Runners** are allowed for Pitchers and Catchers after two (2) outs have been recorded in an inning. The player who made the last batted out shall be the courtesy runner.
  5. **Bunting** is allowed in this division.
  6. **Maximum Runs**
    1. The batting team may score a maximum of five (5) runs per inning for innings 1-3. If more than five (5) runs are scored within the completion of the batters at bat in which the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) run scores, the play shall be completed but only five (5) runs count. Example – If the offense has four (4) runs scored in an inning and there are runners on 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> bases and the batter hits a triple scoring three (3) runs, only one (1) run is recorded in the scorebook. When the play ceases, all play is stopped, and the fielding team becomes the batting team. Play ceases and the half inning is complete when the runners have stopped running and the umpire calls time.
    2. Unlimited runs may be scored in the 4<sup>th</sup> inning and beyond.
    3. A complete game will be declared if after three (3) innings a team is ahead by fifteen (15) runs or more and if after four (4) innings a team is ahead by twelve (12) runs or more and if after five (5) innings a team is ahead by eight (8) runs or more.

## **7. Look-Back Rule**

1. The Look-Back rule pertaining to base runners' actions while the pitcher has the ball in the pitching circle will apply.
2. If a runner circles a base while the pitcher has the ball in the pitching circle, she is allowed to stop once, but immediately return to the base or advance to the next base.
3. Once the runner stops at a base for any reason while the pitcher has the ball in the circle, the runner will be declared out for leaving the base.
4. There will be one (1) warning per team, per game. Subsequent occurrences will result in the runner being declared out.

**8. Dropped Third Strike** will be enforced in this division.

## **9. Outfielder Positions**

1. The division shall field three (3) outfielders as long as the team has nine (9) or more players present.
2. All outfielders must be positioned in the outfield grass until the pitch crosses home plate.
3. If playing on a field with a large infield (i.e. a baseball field), outfielders must be positioned twenty (20) feet behind the bases until the ball crosses home plate.

**10. Infield Fly Rule** will be enforced in this division.

**11. Hit by Pitch** If a batter is hit by a pitched ball, the batter shall be awarded first base unless, in the judgement of the umpire, the batter made no attempt to avoid being hit.

## **GIRLS 10U ROOKIE DIVISION RULES**

### **1. Legal Team**

Ten (10) players shall constitute a team (four (4) outfielders), but teams shall be permitted to play with seven (7) players (see Player Pick-Up rule for utilizing players from other teams or a lower division).

### **2. Pitching**

1. Pitchers are permitted to pitch no more than two (2) innings per game. If a pitcher throws one (1) pitch in an inning, it shall constitute one (1) inning pitched under this rule. The only exception to this rule is if a game goes into extra innings.

2. Pitchers are allowed one (1) re-entry.
3. Pitchers must be removed after hitting three (3) batters in one (1) inning and may re-enter the game at the pitching position subject to the one re-entry rule.
4. Games extended into extra innings, a pitcher is allowed one additional re-entry to the pitching position and may pitch an additional two (2) innings.
5. NFHS Softball Rules require pitchers to do the following:
  1. The pitcher shall bring her hands together for not less than one (1) second and not more than ten (10) seconds before releasing the ball.
  2. A backward step may be taken before, simultaneously with or after the hands are brought together.
  3. The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate at all times prior to the forward step.
  4. Once the ball has been returned to the pitcher to prepare for the next pitch, the pitcher has 20 seconds to release the pitch. PENALTY – The batter is awarded a ball.
6. Managers and Coaches are to teach the girls the proper technique for pitching. **However**, in the spirit of focusing the girls' efforts on throwing strikes, the umpires have been asked to relax their interpretation of the above rules for all games in the Rookie Division. Any style of pitching is acceptable as long as upon release of the ball one foot is in contact with the pitching plate or the pitcher is properly dragging her back foot. Crow-hopping constitutes an illegal pitch.
7. NFHS rules shall govern in the event a pitch is declared "illegal" by the umpire. An illegal pitch shall be declared immediately by the umpire after the hands separate (delayed dead-ball signal). The batter is awarded a ball.

Exceptions:

1. If the batter reaches first base safely and each other runner advances at least one base, the illegal pitch is nullified.
2. If the batter doesn't reach first base safely or if any base runner fails to advance at least one base, the coach of the team at bat shall have the option of the result of the play or the penalty of the illegal pitch.
3. If the batter is hit by an illegal pitch out of the strike zone, the batter is awarded first base.

4. If ball four is an illegal pitch, the batter is awarded first base.
  
8. Strike Zone: An optional strike zone may be adopted by the plate umpire. This optional zone is defined as follows- The strike zone shall be vertically from the batters shoulder to the knee, and horizontally to 3" from either side of the plate. This is a recommended zone that the plate umpire may enforce. **NOTE: THIS MUST BE DISCUSSED AT THE PRE-GAME MEETING OF THE UMPIRES AND COACHES.** At mid-season, the strike zone will be called according to NFHS Softball rules.
  
9. The distance from the front edge of the pitching plate to the base edge of home plate is thirty-five (35) feet.

### **3. Base on Balls**

1. There shall be NO WALKS in the Rookie Division.
  
2. If the batter receives a ball four (4) count, the team manager/coach of the hitting team, or his/her designee, shall pitch a maximum of three (3) pitches to the batter.
  
3. The strike count will continue from its previous point when the ball four (4) count was achieved, and the umpire will continue to call swinging strikes.
  
4. In the event the batter fouls the coach's third pitch, the at-bat continues until she either puts the ball in play, swings and misses, or takes another subsequent pitch. Example – The batter has a count of four (4) balls and two (2) strikes, the coach or his/her designee comes in and pitches a total of three (3) pitches; until the player swings and misses one (1) pitch; hits the ball or watches the third pitched ball go past.
  
5. The manager/pitcher must have one (1) foot on the pitching rubber when pitching. If the manager/pitcher interferes with the fielding play, the batter or runner shall be declared out.

### **4. Stealing/Lead-offs**

1. Stealing of second (2<sup>nd</sup>) and third (3<sup>rd</sup>) base is allowed but the runner may gain only the one (1) base she is attempting to steal (no advancement on an overthrow).
  
2. There is no stealing allowed while the manager of the hitting team, or his/her designee, is pitching.
  
3. There is no stealing of home at any time unless the catcher makes a throw to third base in an attempt to **pick-off** a runner leading off from third base.
  
4. Stealing/lead-offs can only occur after the ball crosses home plate.

5. **Courtesy Runners** are allowed for Pitchers and Catchers after two (2) outs have been recorded in an inning. The player who made the last batted out shall be the courtesy runner.
6. **Bunting** is not allowed in this division.
7. **Maximum Runs**
  1. The batting team may score a maximum of five (5) runs per inning for innings. If more than five (5) runs are scored within the completion of the batters at bat in which the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) run scores, the play shall be completed but only five (5) runs count. Example – If the offense has four (4) runs scored in an inning and there are runners on 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> bases and the batter hits a triple scoring three (3) runs, only one (1) run is recorded in the scorebook. When the play ceases, all play is stopped, and the fielding team becomes the batting team. Play ceases and the half inning is complete when the runners have stopped running and the umpire calls time.
  2. Unlimited runs may be scored in the 4<sup>th</sup> inning and beyond.
  3. A complete game will be declared if after three (3) innings a team is ahead by fifteen (15) runs or more and if after four (4) innings a team is ahead by twelve (12) runs or more and if after five (5) innings a team is ahead by eight (8) runs or more.
8. **Look-Back Rule**
  1. The Look-Back rule pertaining to base runners' actions while the pitcher has the ball in the pitching circle will apply.
  2. If a runner circles a base while the pitcher has the ball in the pitching circle, she is allowed to stop once, but immediately return to the base or advance to the next base.
  3. Once the runner stops at a base for any reason while the pitcher has the ball in the circle, the runner will be declared out for leaving the base. **However**, this shall be instructional only in the Rookie Division and no out shall be assessed.
9. **Defense Position Overthrows**
  1. There will be a maximum of one (1) additional base on an overthrow from any position.
  2. If a second overthrow results at the next base the runner may advance another base. The base must be earned by the runner.  
Example – An overthrow occurs on runner at 1<sup>st</sup> base, the runner is allowed one base (i.e. is allowed to go to 2<sup>nd</sup> base). However, if the runner doesn't attempt to advance to 2<sup>nd</sup> base, the runner is not awarded 2<sup>nd</sup> base. If the runner's advancement to 2<sup>nd</sup> base results in a second overthrow, the runner may attempt to advance one (1) more base.  
**NOTE:** This rule is designed to prevent runners from running around the bases while an overthrown ball is in play.

**10. Dropped Third Strike** will not be enforced in this division. The batter is considered out after the third strike and can't advance.

**11. Outfielder Positions**

1. The division shall field four (4) outfielders as long as the team has ten (10) or more players present.
2. All outfielders must be positioned in the outfield grass until the pitch crosses home plate.
3. If playing on a field with a large infield (i.e. a baseball field), outfielders must be positioned twenty (20) feet behind the bases until the ball crosses home plate.
4. Any batted ball fielded by an outfielder must be thrown to an infielder to produce an out in the infield. **NOTE:** The intent of this rule is to teach outfielders to throw the ball to the infield.

**12. Infield Fly Rule** will not be enforced in this division.

**13. Hit by Pitch**

1. While there are no walks in this division, if a batter is hit by a pitched ball from a player, the batter shall be awarded first (1<sup>st</sup>) base unless, in the judgement of the umpire, the batter made no attempt to avoid being hit.
2. No such award shall be made if a batter is hit by a pitched ball made by the manager/coach of a hitting team.

**14. Regulation Ball** An 11" ball will be used in this division.

## GIRLS 8U COACH PITCH DIVISION RULES

**1. Legal Team**

Ten (10) players shall constitute a team (four (4) outfielders), but teams shall be permitted to play with six (6) players (see Player Pick-Up rule for utilizing players from another team in the same division).

**2. Pitching**

1. This is a coach pitch division. There is no player pitching. The team manager of the batting team, or his/her designee, shall pitch with both feet within the pitching circle. However, a manager can pitch from a shorter pitching distance to accommodate a batters skill level.

2. The fielding team will have a fielding pitcher standing with both feet in the pitchers circle to either side of the manager/pitcher.
3. In the vent a batted ball strikes the coach/pitcher, the ball shall be considered "live" and will remain in play. If in the umpire's judgement, the manager/pitcher intentionally interferes with a fielding play, the batter shall be declared out.
4. The coach/pitcher can't coach while the ball is in play. The only time a coach/pitcher can talk to a player is if the coach/pitcher is giving instructions to the batter before making the pitch. If the coach/pitcher coaches in any other way, the umpire will issue a warning. Any additional offenses during the same game will result in the umpire calling the player out.
5. Distance from the front edge of the pitching plate to the base edge of home plate is thirty-five (35) feet.

### **3. Time at Bat**

No balls or strikes shall be called. A maximum of seven (7) pitches may be thrown to each batter by the batting team coach. If the batter fouls off the seventh (7<sup>th</sup>) pitch she is entitled to continue until she either puts the ball in play, swings and misses, or takes another subsequent pitch.

### **4. Base on Balls** There shall be NO WALKS in this division.

### **5. Stealing**

1. Base stealing is not permitted in this division and runners may not advance on a wild pitch or a passed ball.
2. Runners may advance upon a batted ball.
3. No runner advancement is allowed on any overthrow at any base.

### **6. Courtesy Runners** are allowed for Catchers (not Pitchers) after two (2) outs have been recorded in an inning. The player who made the last batted out shall be the courtesy runner.

### **7. Bunting** is not allowed in this division. The batter must take a full swing. A batter bunting or intentionally taking a partial swing will be called out.

### **8. Maximum Runs**

1. The batting team may score a maximum of five (5) runs per inning for innings. If more than five (5) runs are scored within the completion of the batters at bat in which the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) run scores, the play shall be completed but only five (5) runs

count. Example – If the offense has four (4) runs scored in an inning and there are runners on 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> bases and the batter hits a triple scoring three (3) runs, only one (1) run is recorded in the scorebook. When the play ceases, all play is stopped, and the fielding team becomes the batting team. Play ceases (as defined by Play Stoppage below), all play is stopped, and the fielding team becomes the batting team.

2. No unlimited runs in this division.
3. A complete game will be declared if after three (3) innings a team is ahead by fifteen (15) runs or more and if after four (4) innings a team is ahead by twelve (12) runs or more and if after five (5) innings a team is ahead by eight (8) runs or more.

#### **9. Play Stoppage**

1. Runners may only advance one base if the batted ball doesn't reach the outfield.
2. The outfield, for this Play Stoppage Rule, is defined as the grass on small fields with 60 foot base paths or 20 feet behind the base path on larger fields.
3. A batted ball fielded by a player, playing the outfield position, shall be deemed to have reached the outfield. If the ball reaches the outfield, the runners may continue to advance until the ball is returned via throw to the possession of an infielder in the infield.
4. The infield, for this play stoppage, is defined as within the base paths.
5. Once the ball is returned to the possession of an infielder, in the infield, the umpire shall call time so that no runners can advance or attempt to advance.
6. Runners not yet half-way to the next base, in the judgement of the umpire, will be sent back to the previous base.

**10. Look-Back Rule** doesn't apply in this division.

**11. Dropped Third Strike** is not enforced in this division.

#### **12. Catcher Position**

1. At the coach's discretion, the catcher will either be positioned behind the plate or stand off to the side and retrieve the ball off the backstop.
2. If off to the side, she will be positioned to the bat side of the hitter, facing the batter, and near the backstop.
3. In an effort to speed up play, coaches may be positioned behind home plate or in the catching position to catch pitches and return the ball to the coach/pitcher.

4. A player must still be positioned at the catcher position and must play the position with respect to batted balls and plays on runners at home plate.

**13. Outfielder Positions**

1. The division shall field four (4) outfielders as long as the team has ten (10) or more players present.
2. All outfielders must be positioned in the outfield grass until the pitch crosses home plate.
3. If playing on a field with a large infield (i.e. a baseball field), outfielders must be positioned twenty (20) feet behind the bases until the ball crosses home plate.

**14. Infield Fly Rule** is not enforced in this division.

**15. Hit by Pitch**

1. If a batter is hit by a pitch, the batter is not awarded first base.
2. The pitch is counted as one of the seven (7) pitches.

**16. Ball Hit on or in-front of Home Plate** is a fair ball and it should be played as any other fair ball.

**17. Regulation Ball** is an 11" ball for this division.

**18. Defensive Coach**

1. Teams are allowed one (1) roaming coach to help instruct infielders and outfielders.
2. The coach shall not come in contact with the ball or players nor shall they cross the baseline. If this happens, the play becomes dead, the runners are awarded the base they are running to and the coach will remain in the dugout for the rest of the game. The umpire's decision is final.

**IX. NFHS "All Star" Recreation League Softball Division Specific Rules**

1. Girls 18u High School Division Rules  
This division shall follow the NFHS Official Rules of Softball
2. Girls 14u Major Division Rules  
This division shall follow the NFHS Official Rules of Softball
3. Girls 12u Minor Division Rules  
This division shall follow the NFHS Official Rules of Softball
4. Girls 10u Rookie Division Rules  
This division shall follow the NFHS Official Rules of Softball