



Ridgefield Girls Softball

2017 – Expectations, Goals, Rules & Safety

Expectations:

6u Division

The 6u division offers an introduction to the game of softball. A soft baseball is used for play, and players hit off a stationary batting tee at the beginning of the season. Coach pitch will be introduced as the season progresses. Basic fundamentals are taught with an emphasis on instruction over competition. Tee ball meets only on weekends, either Saturday or Sunday. The first half of each session is practice and the second half is the "game." Teams are primarily formed by school attended to allow the players to see familiar faces, or to meet future classmates.

8u Division

The 8u fast pitch teams continue to have the goal of building player fundamentals and player skill improvement. The division director and/or coaches may elect to have the coach pitch for up to three games to provide time for the girls to be instructed on how to pitch.

Games are structured with rules to generate as many at-bats as possible. Defensively, every player will play both infield and outfield positions. Emphasis remains on instruction, but coaches will use best judgment where players should be placed on the field.

Teams meet once or twice during the week for practice, and once on the weekend for games. Games may have umpires and scores may be kept.

There may be opportunity for girls to play in a tournament at the end of the season. The division director and coaches will select the tournament team based on regular season performance, attendance and availability.

10u Division

The 10u fast pitch teams continue to have the goal of building player fundamentals and player skill improvement, but at a higher level of competition. Players pitch with coach relief pitching.

Teams are selected via a draft system in order to create a competitive balance between teams. As a result, please understand that we generally cannot accommodate requests to be on the same team as another player, or to be placed on a particular coach's team.

All teams meet once or twice during the week for practice. All teams meet once or twice on the weekend for a game. Additional games may be scheduled during the week in lieu of practice. The games may be played against other Ridgefield teams (if more



Ridgefield Girls Softball

2017 – Expectations, Goals, Rules & Safety

than one Ridgefield team exists) and/or teams from surrounding towns. If available, the games will be umpired by patched umpires. Otherwise, high school students will umpire. Scores and standings are kept.

There may be opportunity for girls to play in a tournament at the end of the season. The division director and coaches will select the tournament team based on regular season performance, attendance and availability.

12u & 14u Division

The 12U & 14u Rec/House fast pitch divisions are the first level of play where the games are played exclusively by the players (no coach relief pitching). Teams continue to have the goal of building player fundamentals and player skill improvement, but at an increased level of competition.

Teams are selected via a draft system in order to create a competitive balance between teams. As a result, please understand that we generally cannot accommodate requests to be on the same team as another player, or to be placed on a particular coach's team.

All teams meet once or twice during the week for practice. All teams meet once or twice on the weekend for a game. Additional games may be scheduled during the week in lieu of practice. The games may be played against other Ridgefield teams (if more than one Ridgefield team exists) and/or teams from surrounding towns. If available, the games will be umpired by patched umpires. Otherwise, high school students will umpire. Scores and standings are kept.

There may be opportunity for girls to play in a tournament at the end of the season. The division director and coaches will select the tournament team based on regular season performance, attendance and availability.

Goals:

- Basic Strategy
 - o Learn name and location of bases
 - o Learn name and location of the defensive positions
 - o Learn what balls & strikes are
 - o Learn what innings are
 - o Learn to run through 1st base
- Proper overhand throwing mechanics
 - o Correct grip (C-grip)
 - o Wrist flicks
 - o Throw (grip, stance, target, throw, follow through)
 - o 8u, 10u, 12u & 14u:
 - Long throws



Ridgefield Girls Softball

2017 – Expectations, Goals, Rules & Safety

- Proper catching/receiving mechanics
 - o Thumbs together for balls at chest and higher
 - o Pinkies together for balls below chest
- Hitting
 - o Stance
 - o Grip (line up flats of knuckles)
 - o Swing
 - o Follow through
 - o 8u, 10u, 12u & 14u:
 - Load
 - Understanding strike zone (balls & strikes)
 - o 10u, 12u & 14u:
 - Bunting (stance & square)
 - o 12u & 14u:
 - Introduction to Slap Hitting (stance & step)
 - Strategy
 - Understand the steal home
 - Understand the strike zone
 - Know the count
 - Understand dropped 3rd strike rule
 - Understand pitch selection
 - Recognize the change-up
 - On deck batter
 - o Know the count
 - o Remove bat after hit
 - o Tell base runner if they should slide
- Base running
 - o Home to 1st base
 - o 1st base to 2nd base
 - o 2st base to 3rd base
 - o 3rd base to home
 - o 8u, 10u, 12u & 14u:
 - Running stance before pitch is thrown
 - o 10u, 12u & 14u:
 - Leading
 - Stealing (delayed & straight)
 - Tagging up
 - Sliding
 - o 12u & 14u
 - Sliding (basic, inside/outside to avoid tag, hook, backdoor & pop-up)
- Infield
 - o Ready position
 - o Fielding ground balls
 - o Charging ground balls



Ridgefield Girls Softball

2017 – Expectations, Goals, Rules & Safety

- 8u, 10u, 12u & 14u:
 - Backing up
 - Difference between “force-out” and “non force-out” (“Where’s the play?”)
 - Return ball to pitchers circle to end play
 - Understanding each position; location and purpose
- 10u, 12u & 14u:
 - Backhand
 - Bunt Defense
 - Steal Defense
 - Cut off on relay plays
 - Run down
- Outfield
 - 8u, 10u, 12u & 14u:
 - Catching/receiving mechanics
 - Crow hop
 - Communication
 - Backing up
 - 10u, 12u 14u:
 - Path to ball & drop step
 - Cut off
 - “Where’s the play?”
- Pitching
 - 8u, 10u, 12u & 14u:
 - Learn basics
 - 10u, 12u & 14u:
 - Continue with basics
 - Throw strikes!
 - 12u & 14u
 - Advanced pitching strategies
 - Learn additional pitches to fastball
 - Fielding & covering home
- Catching
 - 8u, 10u, 12u & 14u:
 - Learn basics
 - 10u, 12u & 14u
 - Handling bunts
 - Throws to 1st, 2nd & 3rd
 - 12u & 14u:
 - Dropped 3rd strike
 - Pick off at 1st & 3rd
 -
- Learn about sportsmanship
- Get to know & support your teammates
- Have fun!



Ridgefield Girls Softball

2017 – Expectations, Goals, Rules & Safety

Rules:

6u Rules

- I. Equipment
 - A. A soft baseball is used.
 - B. Batting helmets are required to be worn by the batter and base runners.
 - C. Batting helmets must have a protective facemask and chin strap.
 - D. Defensive fielding masks are required for all players.
 - E. No metal cleats
 - F. Players shall not wear jewelry during any game.
- II. Regulation Game & Run Limits
 - A. Games are a maximum of 3 innings unless the time limit is reached
 - B. A new inning cannot start after the 45 minute mark
- III. Playing Rules & Regulation
 - A. Offensively, every player bats once every inning.
 - B. Batters will hit off a tee until coach pitch is introduced.
 - C. A maximum of five (5) pitches will be thrown by the coach to each batter before the batting tee is used.
 - D. Base runners can advance one extra base on hits that reach the outfield grass.
 - E. Base runners cannot advance on an overthrow.
 - F. Base runners may not begin their advance until the batter has made contact with the ball.
 - G. Stealing is NOT allowed.
 - H. Bunting is NOT allowed.
- IV. Playing Time Rules
 - A. All players must bat every inning.
 - B. The batting order can be changed each inning.
 - C. All players must play defensively all game and be rotated to different positions
 - D. All players split time between the outfield and infield positions evenly



Ridgefield Girls Softball

2017 – Expectations, Goals, Rules & Safety

8u, 10u, 12u & 14u Rules

I. Equipment

A. Softball

1. 8u: An 11" reduced compression softball ("softie") is used.
2. 10u: An 11" regulation softball is used.
3. 12u & 14u: A 12" regulation softball is used.

B. Catchers are required to wear catcher's mask, helmet, chest protector and shin guards during games and while warming up pitchers

C. Batting helmets are required to be worn by the batter and base runners.

D. Batting helmets must have a protective facemask and chin strap

E. Defensive fielding masks

4. 8u & 10u: Required for all players.
5. 12u & 14u: Required for the pitcher, 3rd baseman and 1st baseman.
Defensive fielding masks are recommended for all other players.

F. No metal cleats

G. Players shall not wear jewelry during any game.

H. Bases will be set at 60 ft.

II. Game Length & Run Limits

A. Games are 6 innings long unless the time limit is reached.

B. Time Limits

1. 8u & 10u: A new inning cannot start after the 1 hour and 30 minute mark. There is no drop-dead play. Games will play until the inning has been completed.
2. 12u & 14u: A new inning cannot start after the 1 hour and 30 minute mark. There is no drop-dead play. Games will play until the inning has been completed.

C. Inning Run Limits

1. 8u: Each inning will end either after 3 outs or after 4 runs are scored except the last inning which needs to end with 3 outs.
2. 10u, 12u & 14u: Each inning will end either after 3 outs or after 5 runs are scored except the last inning which needs to end with 3 outs.

D. Game Run Rule

1. 8u & 10u: There is no lead margin that will end the game before the innings or time maximums are met.
2. 12u & 14u: The game will be declared a complete game when the home team is leading by 10 runs after 3 ½ innings of play. The bottom half of the inning must be played if the visiting team accumulates the ten-run margin.



Ridgefield Girls Softball

2017 – Expectations, Goals, Rules & Safety

III. Playing Rules & Regulations

A. Player Requirements

1. Minimum Players
 - i. 8u: Teams are allowed to start a game with seven players.
 - ii. 10u, 12u & 14u: Teams are allowed to start a game with eight players.
2. If a team cannot field the minimum players, they will lose by forfeit.
3. If, for any reason, a team drops below the minimum players, they will automatically forfeit.
4. Teams are encouraged to play a scrimmage by borrowing player(s) from the opposing team in the case of a forfeit.
5. Players arriving late to the game must be placed at the end of the continuous batting order. If the player arriving late is the team's 10th player for 8u & 10u or 9th player for 12u & 14u and the team is in the field, the player may join the team in the field immediately after warming up.
6. Defensive Positioning
 - i. 8u & 10u: There will be a maximum of ten (10) defensive players on the field. Six players are allowed on the infield (Pitcher, Catcher, 1st Baseman, 2nd Baseman, 3rd Baseman and Shortstop). The remaining four players must play in the outfield grass.
 - ii. 12u & 14u: There will be a maximum of nine (9) defensive players on the field. Six players are allowed on the infield (Pitcher, Catcher, 1st Baseman, 2nd Baseman, 3rd Baseman and Shortstop). The remaining three players must play in the outfield grass.

B. Batting

1. Any batter hit by an opposing pitcher shall be awarded first base, unless it is after the ball has bounced. Balls that bounce before hitting the batter will be counted as a ball. Batters must make a reasonable attempt to avoid the pitch. (Umpire discretion)
2. 8u: Bunting is not allowed
3. 10u: Bunting is allowed except when coach is pitching
4. 12u & 14u: Bunting is allowed

C. Pitching (see Playing Time Rules for pitching innings limits)

1. 8u:
 - i. Distance is 30 feet



Ridgefield Girls Softball

2017 – Expectations, Goals, Rules & Safety

- ii. No walks are allowed. When the count reaches three (3) balls, the manager/coach of the team batting will continue to pitch to the batter. The batter maintains the number of strikes and cannot walk. The player cannot advance to first base if the coach's pitch hits the player. Coaches are to pitch 30' from home plate. The umpire will continue to call balls and strikes when the coach pitch is in effect.
 - 2. 10u:
 - i. Distance is 35 feet
 - ii. No walks are allowed. When the count reaches four (4) balls, the manager/coach of the team batting will continue to pitch to the batter. The batter maintains the number of strikes and cannot walk. The player cannot advance to first base if the coach's pitch hits the player. Coaches are to pitch 35' from home plate. The umpire will continue to call balls and strikes when the coach pitch is in effect.
 - 3. 12u: Distance is 40 feet
 - 4. 14u: Distance is 43 feet
- D. Base Running
- 1. Substitute runner for catcher and pitcher is allowed with 2 outs. The substitute runner must be the player who made the last out.
 - 2. Sliding Rule: a base runner, advancing to any base, must attempt to avoid a collision if the defensive player has possession of the ball or is about to catch a thrown ball. If the base runner does not attempt to avoid a collision and makes aggressive contact with the defensive player, she is automatically declared out and will be ejected from the game if deemed flagrant (umpire discretion).
 - 3. 8u:
 - i. Base runners can advance one extra base on hits that reach the outfield grass.
 - ii. Base runners cannot advance on an overthrow.
 - iii. Base runners can tag up on fly balls. There is NO Infield Fly Rule.
 - iv. Base runners may not begin their advance until the batter has made contact with the ball.
 - v. Stealing is NOT allowed.
 - 4. 10u:
 - i. Base runners can advance at their own risk until the ball is returned to the pitchers circle and umpire calls time.



Ridgefield Girls Softball

2017 – Expectations, Goals, Rules & Safety

- ii. Base runners can tag up on fly balls. There is NO infield fly rule.
 - iii. Base runners may lead at pitchers release.
 - iv. Base runners can only steal 3rd base. The runner will be sent back to 2nd base unless the catcher maintains “control” of the ball after the pitch. The ball must be caught, or within arm’s length of the catcher. (Umpires discretion)
 - v. No dropped 3rd strike rule (batter does not have the opportunity to run to 1st base when catcher drops 3rd strike).
5. 12u & 14u:
- i. Base runners can advance at own risk until the ball is returned to the pitchers circle and the umpire calls time.
 - ii. Base runners may lead at pitchers release.
 - iii. All bases can be stolen.
 - iv. Base runners can tag up on fly balls.
 - v. Dropped 3rd strike rule shall apply. Batter may attempt to reach 1st base before being tagged or forced out if
 - a. 1st base is unoccupied –OR–
 - b. There are two outs
 - vi. Infield fly rule is in effect on umpires call. Base runners may advance at their own peril.

IV. Playing Time Rules

- A. Continuous Batting Order: each team shall have a batting order consisting of all members of the team that are preset for the game. Players will bat in this order throughout the game.
- B. No player shall sit two or more consecutive innings on defensive
- C. Infield Play
 - 1. 8u: All players must play at least 2 innings in the infield
 - 2. 10u, 12u & 14u: All players must play at least 1 innings in the infield
- D. Pitching - The coach must provide an opportunity to all players interested in pitching.
 - 1. One pitch thrown in an inning counts the same as one (1) full inning pitched.
 - 2. 8u: A player can pitch a maximum of two (2) innings per game.
 - 3. 10u, 12u & 14u: A player can pitch a maximum of three (3) innings per game.
 - 4. Exceptions – A player may pitch more than the maximum innings per game in the event there are no other players on the team eligible to pitch. A player may also pitch more than the maximum



Ridgefield Girls Softball

2017 – Expectations, Goals, Rules & Safety

innings per game if there are no other players interested in pitching that have not reached the maximum innings per game. The coach is responsible for asking the eligible players if they would like to pitch in these instances.

- E. Catching - The coach must provide an opportunity to all players interested in catching.
1. One pitch thrown in an inning counts the same as one (1) full inning caught.
 2. 8u: A player can catch a maximum of two (2) innings per game.
 3. 10u, 12u & 14u: A player can catch a maximum of three (3) innings per game.
 4. Exceptions – A player may catch more than the maximum innings per game in the event there are no other players on the team eligible to catch. A player may also catch more than the maximum innings per game if there are no other players interested in catching that have not reached the maximum innings per game. The coach is responsible for asking the eligible players if they would like to catch in these instances.

Safety:

1. All players should be warmed up and stretched before each practice and game.
2. Pitchers must warm-up away from all spectators. Catchers must be in full gear while warming up a pitcher.
3. There will be no practice swings in the dugout. The next batter should be at the end of the bench with the helmet on. All bats are to be kept in the bat rack until the player is ready to approach the plate.
4. Players should be on the bench if not in the game.
5. All accidents and injuries shall be reported to the manager or assistant coach.