

Char-Meck Girls Softball Rules

General Rules

- 1) Char-Meck follows the general rules of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA), which has adopted the rules of the National Federation of State High School Associations, www.nfhs.org. Char-Meck uses the rules that apply to fast pitch softball. Exceptions and clarifications are included in the specific Char-Meck rules described herein.
- 2) **Equipment:**
 - a. **Softballs:** A 12" optic yellow ball will be used as the official ball by the 16U, 15U, 14U & 12U age groups. The 10U will use an 11" optic yellow ball and a 10" Markwort M10 S-Y yellow ball will be used for the 8U division. The 6U division will use the regular little league tee-ball baseball.
 - b. **Bats:** Girls can use any Official Softball bat. It does not have to say "ASA Approved".
 - c. **Face Masks:** All batters are required to have a face mask on their helmet. This rule applies to all age divisions within Char-Meck Softball.
 - d. **Mouth Guards or Face Masks:** All infielders are **REQUIRED** to wear either a mouth guard or a face mask when playing in the infield. This rule applies to all age divisions within Char-Meck.
 - e. **Metal Cleats:** Metal cleats will **NOT** be allowed in Char-Meck play.
- 3) **Age Groups:** T-Ball/Coach Pitch 6U; Modified/Coach Pitch 8U; Fast Pitch 10U, 12U, 14U, 15U, and 16U ; Player's age is determined by their age on January 1 of the playing year for the spring season and on July 1 of the playing year for the fall season. The League will not allow new or marginal players to play down in any age divisions. If an association allows a player to 'play up' from her actual age group and is listed on the older team's roster, said player may not play down as a substitute 'borrowed' player and if they participate in the All Stars, they must do so in the same age bracket as the regular season. Players can only move in one direction without approval from the Char-Meck Executive Board. Teams that are found in violation of this rule will forfeit all league games and standings and are immediately suspended from future league or tournament games.
- 4) **Playing Distance:**
 - a. Base paths for all age groups are 60 feet.
 - b. The pitching circle will be marked as an 8' radius around the 35' pitching rubber.
- 5) **Scores:** Coaches must provide win/loss records by updating our website after each game (www.charmecksoftball.org). Scores should be entered within 24 hours after the completion of the game.
- 6) **Base Coaches:** All base coaches should be adults. However, a player or other person may serve as a base coach. No base coach may have anything in their hands that may distract players on the other team including gloves.

- 7) **Number of Players:** 8U and 10U teams will field teams with 10 defensive players. At 8U, the 10th player can either play in the outfield or short field (directly in front of 2nd base). At 10U they will play with 4 outfielders. 12U, 14U, and 16U will play with 9 fielders. In the 6U division, teams may begin and end with any number of players. In the 8U, 10U, 12U, 14U & 16U divisions, games can be started with 8 players and finished with 8 players. If at any point in time during the game a team falls below 8 players for any reason, the game will continue but the team that fell below 8 players will forfeit the game (failure to complete the game will result in the Head Coach being suspended for no less than the remainder of the season). If a team begins with 8 players they do not take an out each time the 9th batter was scheduled to bat. However, if the team has nine or more players any time during the game and falls to 8 players for any reason (Other than injuries <see rule 11 for clarification>), an out is issued each time the 9th player is due to bat.
- 8) **Continuous Batting, Unlimited Substitution, & Must Play Rules:** All age groups will play continuous batting (all players bat) thus unlimited substitution shall be allowed. Each player must bat in the lineup, regardless of how many players the other team has. No player shall sit on the bench defensively for two consecutive innings. Each AC is responsible for monitoring their coaches and insisting that these rules are followed. Note: Umpires will not interpret or rule on this subject. If a coach feels that another coach is not following these rules they should report to their AC. Associations failing to enforce these rules may be subject to dismissal from the Char-Meck league by a 2/3 majority vote of the board. The protest committee will determine if associations are in violation of the rule.
- 9) **Player Borrowing:** A team may pick-up players from other teams within their association to achieve a limit of 9 players for a game; 8U and 10U limit is 10 players, as they play with 10 fielders. A maximum of two substitutions may be used; one player may be from the same age group at 12U, 14U, 15U and 16U. Any borrowed player must play **outfield** and bat last in the line-up. 8U and 10U may have two players from the same age group. They must play **outfield** and bat in the bottom two spots in the line-up. Coaches are responsible for using good judgment in using players who are capable of playing "up" to prevent injury. All players not on the regular roster must be identified to the opposing coach and their names are noted in the scorebook. They must also wear their uniform from their team regardless of a conflicting number. Late arriving players may join the game as long as a team has not reached the maximum number of players (9 at 12U and above and 10 at 8U and 10U). For example, if an 8U team has 7 players and borrows 2 players to reach 9, they COULD allow 1 late arriving player to play but they could not allow a 2nd late arriving player to join the game.
- 10) **Injury Rule:** If a player is injured during a game and can not play the player and team will not take an out each time the injured player was to bat. Injured players can return to the game at any time provided the player's coach and parents agree it is safe to do so.
- 11) **Player Arrives Late to Game:** Players arriving after the game starts shall be added at the bottom of the batting order. A player arriving late for a game must enter the game no later than the fifth inning, except in the 10U division where they must enter no later than the fourth inning. These players shall be added at the bottom of the batting order and might not bat due to their late entry. Players can enter the game at any time in 6U & 8U divisions. In the event of a suspended or called game, any players on the roster but not present at the original game may play in the resumed game. They will be placed at the bottom of the lineup. In addition, any player present at the original game but not present at the resumed game will be stricken from the lineup card with no penalty for not batting. (Please refer to rule 11 if you have borrowed players for the game in question.)

- 12) **Suspended Players:** A player suspended for a game, or games, must not be in uniform if attending a game. The player's coach must notify the opposing coach that the player has been suspended prior to the beginning of the game.
- 13) **Courtesy Runner:** Runners for the pitcher and/or catcher may be used at any time during the game regardless of the number of outs. The runner must be the batter that made the last out. If the last out is a pitcher or catcher, move to the next out
- 14) **Tie Breaker:** Char-Meck will use the International Tie Breaker rule for all tournament games. If at the end of regulation play, either number of innings or time limit and the score is tied, the following will occur until the tie is broken. The visiting team will put their last out from the previous inning on second base as a base runner to start the inning. All other rules apply so each team receives three outs per extra inning. The visiting team will bat and play the remainder of the inning as they would any other inning. The home team will do the same when they come to bat. This will continue until one team is ahead after the home team bats and that team will be the winner.
REGULAR SEASON PLAY: No extra innings unless time allows. (i.e. ONLY if time is left after regulation innings have been played) Tie scores may be entered during regular season play only.
POST SEASON TOURNAMENT PLAY: Follow the [tie breaker rule](#) above until a winner is determined so brackets may be seeded for the next round of games.
- 15) **Pitching:** We do not follow all of the High School Federation rules for pitching. Here is a summary of our rules:
- a. At 12U, 14U, 15U and 16U both feet must be on the pitching rubber to begin the pitch and the feet must begin and end within the 24" length of the pitching rubber.
 - b. The windmill motion **MUST** be used at all times (except at 8U and 10U from the "T Position").
 - c. Prior to pitching you must "present". This means that your pivot foot must be on the rubber with both hands separated. The ball can be in the hand or the glove but the hands must be separated.
 - d. Once you have "presented", you must bring your hands together for a minimum of one second and a maximum of 10 seconds as you begin your windup.
 - e. Once you bring your hands together, your next step must be forward.
 - f. Crow hop and the leap are illegal pitching motions. The pivot foot must drag or remain in contact with the ground during the leap. **NOTE:** Umpires will not call an illegal pitch unless the pitcher clearly gains an advantage by planting her pivot foot closer to the plate.
 - g. The pitcher can't make more than one revolution of the arm in the windmill pitch. A pitcher may drop the pitching arm to the side and to the rear before starting the windmill motion. The ball does not have to be released the first time past the hip.
- 16) **Warnings:** Any player faking a tag will receive one warning. This warning will be issued to both teams upon the first occurrence. After the only warning, any player faking a tag will be ejected from the game. Any player throwing a bat will receive one warning. This warning will be issued to both teams upon the first occurrence. After teams receive their warning, subsequent violations will result in the batter being called out.
- 17) **Problems with Umpires:** If there are any problems concerning officiating, a coach should log the issue into the "Umpire Issues" section of the Char-Meck website. Examples of problems reportable to your AC are no shows, missing equipment, etc. If there is a real problem the Char-Meck Executive Board will review the issue and seek resolution with the umpires. If an umpire does not appear for a scheduled or make-up game, the home team must log the issue into the "Umpire Issues" section of the Char-

Meck website in order to prevent overpayment to the umpire association. In the event an umpire does not show up, teams should play the game with parents and/or coaches umpiring the game (umpires should be given no more than 10 minutes, at which time parents and/or coaches should umpire the game).

- 18) **Forfeits:** A team (excluding 6U) that doesn't have 8 players after a 10-minute grace period from the scheduled game time will forfeit the game. The opposing coach may **NOT** waive the forfeit. Coaches that forfeit multiple league or tournament games (forfeits can be over multiple seasons) may be subject to suspension from the league for at least one season, by a majority vote of the executive board. Teams will be expected to play the game with the players present (working together to field a viable team). Failure to play the game will result in a 2 game suspension for the Head Coach that refused to play the game.
- 19) **Protest:** The CMVP will decide if a complaint will be heard as a protest. There will be a \$25 protest fee to be heard before the protest committee consisting of commissioners of the associations not involved in the game. If the protest is won the fee is refunded. Provided that even though a protest is allowed, the results of a particular game will not be amended or reversed unless the matter protested shall have material effect upon the outcome of the game. The material effect and/or decision to replay the game in part or in its entirety shall be in the sole judgment of the protest committee. Failure to follow NCHSAA protest procedures will result in said protest denied by the CMVP.
- 20) **Inclement Weather:** Only an umpire can suspend or call a game that is in progress if the field conditions are hazardous because of inclement weather or due to darkness. If, in the opinion of the umpire, there is lightning in the area all games will be immediately suspended up to 30 minutes. The umpire may also immediately call the game and send players home. Coaches can offer opinions but the umpire makes the final decision. If your fields are unplayable, the home team must call their AC two hours prior to game time. The home team coach is responsible for notifying the visiting coach if a game is not going to be played. The home team AC is responsible for notifying the Head Umpire. If there is any doubt as to the condition of the field, wait and let the umpire decide whether or not the game will be played.
- 21) **Suspended Game Rule:** Games that are suspended in the first 1/3 (minutes) of the game it will be replayed in its entirety. Games suspended in the second 1/3 (minutes) would be frozen and picked up where left off. Games in the final 1/3 (minutes) would be official (score would revert back to the last completed inning).
- 22) **Rescheduling Games:** There is no game re-scheduling or cancellations for any reason other than inclement weather without prior approval of the CMP. When a game is called due to inclement weather, the two teams involved will get together and decide on a make-up date. The coaches must decide on a new date and time within 24 hours and that game must be played within 7 days of the canceled game. Once the two teams have set a date, they will then contact the home teams AC to schedule the umpires. If by chance, the two teams cannot come up with an agreeable date; the CMP will pick the date. Once the CMP has set the date, failure to show will result in a forfeit for said team. If teams wait too long to ask the CMP to set a date and it becomes unrealistic to schedule a make up game, both teams will receive a forfeit. Teams may not accept an automatic forfeit from another team.
- 23) **League Tournament:** A league tournament will be held following the regular seasons. Dates and format will be decided at the league meeting before the season begins. All regular season rules will apply except: no substitute players, no 10 minute grace period, and the game must be played until a winner is determined in order to seed the brackets for tournament games. Players that have been entered on the regular season roster and

wish to participate in the tournament must have played a minimum of $\frac{3}{4}$ (9 of 12) of the regular season games. Coaches must bring their regular season score book to the tournament for verifying player participation. Should a coach protest a player, failure to have the appropriate score book may result in the protest being upheld. Players that had been injured and could not fulfill the regular season playing time are exempt and are allowed to play in the tournament. Tournament Directors for the appropriate age group will rule on any "minimum playing time" protests during the tournament. They will review the score book and consult with the team's commissioners and coaches to arrive at their decision. Their decision is final and if a player is found to be illegal for any reason, said player may not play in any more league or tournament games. Spring and fall seeding will be handled via a blind draw before the season begins. All AC's are welcome to attend.

24) **League Standings:** League standings will not be kept for the regular season.

25) **Summer All-Stars:** Char-Meck will decide each spring whether or not to offer a series of Summer All-Star Tournaments. Each association will be made of any program offered and the specific rules that will apply to play that summer. All member associations are eligible for Summer All-Star Competition.

Please refer to detailed Summer All-Star Program rules.

6U Special Rules

- 1) This age group is meant to be a basic introduction to softball, no scores or outs are to be kept. The ball is hit from a tee for a majority and possibly all of the season. Teams may play with more than 10 players in the field but utilizing the same restrictions as the 8U rules. No scores or standings are kept. No protests are allowed. All players bat each inning and each team must announce the last batter. Batting order and fielding positions must be rotated each game to allow players to bat and field all positions. There must be a pitcher in the position during the entire game. The player must have at least one foot inside the pitching circle. Balls hit by the batter must travel outside the 12' home plate arc to be fair balls. If teams or players advance to the point of coach pitch, the batter bats until they hit the ball outside the 12' arc. Coaches will not be limited to seven pitches. No bunting allowed. Runners only advance on a hit ball. Player/runners can not advance on any overthrows. All runners may advance home when the last batter puts the ball into play. .
- 2) **Innings:** There is no inning restriction, but games will normally be two or three innings.
- 3) **Time Limit:** 1 Hour
- 4) **Slaughter Rule:** There will be no slaughter rule.
- 5) **Stealing:** There is no stealing or leading off.
- 6) **Dropped Third Strike:** A batter can not run to first base on a dropped third strike.
- 7) **Infield Fly Rule:** The infield fly rule shall not apply.
- 8) **Defensive Coaches:** Teams may have 3 defensive coaches in the field. Coaches should not touch players and should remain a reasonable distance from the infielders.
- 9) **Bunting:** There will be no bunting.

8U Special Rules

- 1) This age group is meant to be instructional however; coaches need to refrain from excessive instruction during a game. Umpires have the discretion to ask coaches to refrain from excessive, time consuming instruction. They also have the ability to eject the coach should they continue with the excessive instructions. Teams will play continuous batting at all games.
- 2) **Innings:** Six innings if time allows.
- 3) **Time Limit:** 1 Hour 15 Minutes, a new inning begins as soon as the 3rd out is registered. No inning can begin after time has expired unless the score is tied.
- 4) **Slaughter Rule:** There will be no slaughter rule.
- 5) **4 Run Rule:** A team cannot score more than four (4) runs per inning in each of the 1st four innings of a game. If a team scores (4) runs in their half of any of the 1st four innings, play is stopped when the 4th run scores and the teams switch. The only exception to this will be if the batter hits a home run over the fence, then all runners will score. Starting in the 5th inning, there are no limits to the number of runs that a team can score, or the number of batters that may bat in an inning. NOTE: The game is played to the end of an inning if the home team is behind and can 'reach' the visiting team. If the game is not in 'reach' for either team the losing team should complete their at bat and then the game will end. If the event that the home team is losing and the game is 'out of reach' visiting teams are encouraged to 'step off' to allow the home team to complete their at bat. Games that are 'out of reach' will 'drop dead' once the official game time **PLUS 15** minutes has expired OR when the losing team completes their final at bat...whichever comes first.
- 6) **Stealing:** There is no stealing or leading off.
- 7) **Dropped Third Strike:** A batter can not run to first base on a dropped third strike.
- 8) **Infield Fly Rule:** The infield fly rule shall not apply.
- 9) **Defensive Coaches:** Teams may have 2 defensive coaches in the field. Coaches should not touch players or the ball and must remain a reasonable distance behind the outfielders.
- 10) **Bunting:** There will be no bunting.
- 11) **Defensive Rules:** There must be a player in the pitching position and catching position during the entire game. The defensive pitcher may be placed no closer than the coach pitcher (35 feet) and must have one foot inside the pitching circle. Catchers must be in full gear when catching.
- 12) **12' Foul Arc:** Balls hit by the batter must travel outside the 12' home plate arc to be considered a fair ball.
- 13) **Stopping play:** The defensive team must stop the base runner(s) after a hit by having possession of the ball in front of the lead runner and/or the runner(s) stop due to any play by the defensive team. If the lead runner is stopped by a defensive player, any other base runners must go back to the previous base if not more than half way to the next base. NOTE: The umpire should call time when this occurs. Examples: Runner(s)

return to the last base they passed or runner(s) stopping on a base due to any defensive play.

- 14) **Overthrows:** Runners may only advance one base on any balls overthrown in an attempt to register an out. Runners advance at the risk of being put out. Players should be encouraged to make plays at 2nd base where feasible. The overthrow rule is in place to encourage girls to make the “extra” throw after an overthrow...there’s no additional penalty since there is a maximum of one base on the first overthrow.
- 15) **Umpires:** One umpire will be provided for 8U games. If an umpire does not show up for the game, coaches should play the game and work together to umpire the contest.
- 16) **Pitching Distance:** Players will pitch from 28 feet and coaches will pitch from 35 feet...only one foot is required to be in contact with the 35 foot rubber.
- 17) **Pitching:**
 - a. At 8U, pitchers may either follow rule 15a **OR** they may pitch from the “T” position. No underhand pitching.
 - b. There will be three (3) kid pitch innings.
 - c. In games where there are three (3) kid pitch innings, batters will begin with a 1-0 count (1 ball) in all three (3) kid pitch innings.
 - d. Pitchers at 8U may only pitch two (2) innings in consecutive games. In the regular season, teams found in violation of this rule will forfeit the said two consecutive games and the Head Coach will be suspended for two games. If a pitcher makes one pitch during an inning it counts as one inning (warming up before the inning begins is **NOT** considered to be an inning pitched). NOTE: All coaches are required to sign their opponents score book immediately after each game; verifying the number of innings pitched by each pitcher. All scorekeepers must note at the bottom of the score book the number of innings by pitcher name and number. In addition, coaches must input this information into the specified area of our website for all to view. Coaches found in repeated violation of these reporting procedures may be suspended from league play for one (1) game.
 - e. Once a kid pitcher registers four (4) balls on a batter, the coach of the batter comes in to deliver three (3) pitches. If the final pitch is fouled off, the batter receives another pitch...batters can not be put out on a foul ball. Balls and strikes do not carry forward from kid pitch to coach pitch.
 - f. Should the pitcher hit a batter the “coach pitcher” immediately comes in to pitch. The batter **MUST** attempt to evade the pitch or it won’t count as a hit batter (umpires discretion).
 - g. If a pitcher hits two batters in one inning and the umpire rules that the batters tried to avoid the pitch, the pitcher would be removed from the pitching position for the balance of the game. If the batters did **NOT** attempt to avoid the pitch the kid pitcher can remain in the game (this is up to the umpire’s discretion). This player may field the pitching position during the remaining player pitch and coach pitch innings.
 - h. Coaches can pitch a maximum of 3 pitches to their batters in **ALL** innings. Batters can strike out during coach pitch (3 strikes is an out). If the final pitch is fouled off, the batter receives another pitch.
 - i. Coaches should attempt to deliver a flat pitch. Any pitch in excess of a four foot arc will count against the batter as one of their 3 pitches.

10U Special Rules

- 1) **Innings:** Six innings if time allows.
- 2) **Time Limit:** 1 Hour 15 Minutes.
- 3) **Fake Bunt/Slap or Swing Away:** Teams may not use this play. Violation of this rule will result in the batter being called out.
- 4) **Slaughter Rule:** 15 Runs any time after the both teams have batted 4 times, 10 runs after 5 completed innings, UNLESS the home team is leading after the visiting team has batted 5 times.
- 5) **4 Run Rule:** A team cannot score more than four (4) runs per inning in each of the 1st four innings of a game. If a team scores (4) runs in their half of any of the 1st four innings, play is stopped when the 4th run scores and the teams switch. The only exception to this will be if the batter hits a home run over the fence, then all runners will score. Starting in the 5th inning, there are no limits to the number of runs that a team can score, or the number of batters that may bat in an inning. NOTE: The game is played to the end of an inning if the home team is behind and can 'reach' the visiting team. If the game is not in 'reach' for either team the losing team should complete their at bat and then the game will end. If the event that the home team is losing and the game is 'out of reach' visiting teams are encouraged to 'step off' to allow the home team to complete their at bat. Games that are 'out of reach' will 'drop dead' once the official game time **PLUS** 15 minutes has expired OR when the losing team completes their final at bat...whichever comes first.
- 6) **Stealing:** A player may steal after the ball passes the batter. The player may advance a maximum of (1) base even if there is an overthrow. A player may never steal home. They can only advance to home as a result of a walk with the bases loaded, a batted ball or a throw that lands in dead ball territory where the umpire may advance runners. Catchers should be encouraged to throw to the bases on every steal.
- 7) **Dropped Third Strike:** A batter can not run to first base on a dropped third strike.
- 8) **Infield Fly Rule:** The infield fly rule shall not apply.
- 9) **Pitching Distance:** Players will pitch from 35 feet.
- 10) **Pitching:**
 - a. At 10U, Pitchers may either follow rule 15a or they may pitch from the "T" position. No underhand pitching.
 - b. Pitchers at 10U may only pitch four (4) innings per two consecutive games. In the regular season, teams found in violation of this rule will forfeit the said two consecutive games and the Head Coach will be suspended for two games. If a pitcher makes one pitch during an inning it counts as one inning (warming up before the inning begins is **NOT** considered to be an inning pitched). NOTE: All coaches are required to sign their opponents score book immediately after each game; verifying the number of innings pitched by each pitcher. All scorekeepers must note at the bottom of the score book the number of innings by pitcher name and number. In addition, coaches must input this information into the specified area of our website for all to view. Coaches found in repeated violation of these reporting procedures may be suspended from league play for one (1) game.

12U, 14U, 15U, & 16U Special Rules

- 1) **Innings:** Seven innings if time allows.
- 2) **Time Limit:** 1 Hour 30 Minutes.
- 3) **Fake Bunt/Slap or Swing Away:** Teams may not use this play at 12U. It **IS** allowed at 14U, 15U, and/or 16U. Violation of this rule will result in the batter being called out.
- 4) **Slaughter Rule:** 20 runs any time after the both teams have batted 4 times, 15 runs after 5 completed innings, and 10 runs after 6 at bats...UNLESS the home team is leading by 15 runs after the visiting team has batted 5 times or is leading by 10 runs after the visiting team has batted 6 times.
- 5) **5 Run Rule:** A team cannot score more than (5) runs per inning in each of the 1st four innings of a game. If a team scores (5) runs in their half of any of the 1st four innings, play is stopped when the 5th run scores and the teams switch. The only exception to this will be if the batter hits a home run over the fence, then all runners will score. Starting in the 5th inning, there are no limits to the number of runs that a team can score, or the number of batters that may bat in an inning. **NOTE:** The game is played to the end of an inning if the home team is behind and can 'reach' the visiting team. If the game is not in 'reach' for either team the losing team should complete their at bat and then the game will end. If the event that the home team is losing and the game is 'out of reach' visiting teams are encouraged to 'step off' to allow the home team to complete their at bat. Games that are 'out of reach' will 'drop dead' once the official game time **PLUS** 15 minutes has expired OR when the losing team completes their final at bat...which ever comes first.
- 6) **Pitching Distance:** Players will pitch from 40 feet.
- 7) **Pitching:**
 - a. Pitchers at 12U may only pitch seven (7) innings per two consecutive games. In the regular season, teams found in violation of this rule will forfeit the said two consecutive games and the Head Coach will be suspended for two games. If a pitcher makes one pitch during an inning it counts as one inning (warming up before the inning begins is **NOT** considered to be an inning pitched). **NOTE:** All coaches are required to sign their opponents score book immediately after each game; verifying the number of innings pitched by each pitcher. All scorekeepers must note at the bottom of the score book the number of innings by pitcher name and number. In addition, coaches must input this information into the specified are of our website for all to view. Coaches found in repeated violation of these reporting procedures may be suspended from league play for one (1) game. **NOTE:** There is no inning restriction at 14U, 15U, or 16U.