

# 8U Farm Division Rules

## Goal

**To teach the fundamentals of softball and to develop a positive attitude towards sports and team play. OUR MOST IMPORTANT GOAL IS TO HAVE FUN!**

## General Game Preliminaries

1. This is a developmental level and competition should not even be an aspect at this level. The goal is to make sure players have a great time, learn the basics, good sportsmanship, and want to continue to the competitive divisions in the future.
2. The home team head coach is responsible for postponing a game and contacting the opposing coach due to weather/field conditions.
3. Home team supplies game balls. Game balls may be 11” optic yellow traditional or safety softballs. In the event that the teams prefer to field opposite types of softballs, the visiting team will supply their preferred balls to be used when they are fielding.
4. If playing an opposing town, confer with the opposing manager on any field rules.
5. Teams should be ready to play at the scheduled time.
6. A game may start and continue with any number of players. Players arriving late are placed at bottom of the batting order.

## Safety Rules

1. No jewelry, metal cleats, or casts. If a player cannot remove her jewelry she must cover it with a bandage or athletic tape.
2. Catchers **must wear** full protective league approved equipment during games (and while warming up).
3. Players at pitcher (players fielding the pitching position), first base, and third base **must wear** a fielding mask or batting helmet with cage. It is strongly recommended that the entire infield wear a fielding mask.
4. All batters and base runners **must wear** a league-approved helmet at all times. Helmets must contain a face mask.
5. **No “on-deck” batters are allowed.** Only the batter may handle a bat in their designated areas-Under no circumstance is another player to have a bat in a non-designated area.

6. Players from the team batting **must be** in the dugout when not hitting. Players are not allowed to play catch on the sidelines during the game.
7. All batters should have on helmets & be ready to go to keep the game moving.
8. Runners must use the safety bag (colored bag in foul territory) at first base. Fielder must use white base in fair territory. Once on base, the runner uses the white bag
9. No sliding in the 8U division.
10. Players without the ball may not impede the runner's progress.

### **Conduct Rules**

1. Coaches are expected to know and abide by all rules.
2. Every coach is responsible for the safety and conduct of his/her team.
3. Good sportsmanship and behavior is expected from players, coaches and parents.
4. No throwing of equipment.
5. No playing with equipment in the dugout/bench area.
6. No climbing the fences or field apparatuses. No roughhousing.
7. No throwing rocks or dirt.
8. No playing with softballs in the dugout/bench area.

### **Game Rules**

1. Games are approximately 90 minutes long or typically 4 innings. You may play extra innings if time permits. If another game is scheduled after your game, please finish before their scheduled time.
2. Every player will bat in the line-up (continuous batting order). You may rotate your leadoff hitter every inning. This allows a different batter to be the "last batter" each inning.
3. Each team bats once around the order in the first, second, and third innings. The defensive team is encouraged to try to make as many outs as they can. Coaches should discuss an even batter order before the game (for instance if one team has 5 players and the other team has 10 players, the team with 5 should bat through twice in one turn)
4. Fourth and any additional innings are played to either three outs or once around the batting order, whichever occurs first. In the event of three outs, the order is resumed from the last player to make an out and NOT restarted at the top.

5. Managers/Coaches should try to have a player at every position (including a pitcher who fields for the coach and a catcher wearing the appropriate equipment and catching for their team). Coach will use discretion to place as many infielders on the field as safely possible. If all infield positions are covered remaining players will play outfield. In this league players should not be sitting on the bench.
6. Every player must play in the infield at some point-the best bet is to come up with a good rotation so that you know everyone gets an opportunity at each position. No player should play the same infield position for more than two innings in one game unless necessary. Use your best judgment, however, with pitcher & first base since those positions will have the most activity & the player should be able to pay attention.
7. Coaches are encouraged to take the field with their team and coach fielders from the field but they should not make a play on a batted ball.
8. Managers/Coaches pitch to their own teams. They should pitch from the pitching circle or mound area. Pitches should be thrown on a line as a fast pitch softball pitch not in an arc as a slow pitch softball pitch.
9. After several hittable pitches are missed by the batter (approximately eight to ten pitches), the coach may have the batter hit the ball off a batting tee.
10. No intentional bunting.
11. For the first couple of games of the season only, the coaches may agree before the game to allow batters who make an out remain at first and become a base runner in order to learn proper base running. After these first couple of games, all players must return to the bench when they are out.
12. A batter or baserunner may take a maximum of one base on an infield hit and a maximum of two bases on a hit to the outfield.
13. Runners may NOT lead off the base or steal any base.
14. Runners cannot advance until the ball is put in play by the batter.
15. Base runners may NOT advance on any overthrows.
16. The coach who is pitching should announce “last batter” when the final batter of the inning is up. All base runners may run all the way home after the ball is hit. Fielders should try to make a play, but once they have made a play they will remain on the field as the offensive team clears the bases. Players will return the ball to the pitcher (or coach in the pitchers’ circle), to be taught how to end a play.
17. At the conclusion of the game teams will say “good game” to and shake the hands of the opposing team.