

# 15U Division Rules

## General Game Preliminaries

1. The home team head coach is responsible for postponing a game due to weather/field conditions and contacting the umpires and the opposing coach.
2. Prior to each game, batting orders must be exchanged and recorded into the respective scorebooks.
3. All players must be born on or after April 1, 2002.
4. Teams should be ready to play at the scheduled time.
5. No game shall be started without a minimum of 8 players on a team. A forfeit can be called; however, we are here to let the kids play, so do your best to work it out.  
**Forfeits require a full game fee for the umpire.**
6. The home team is responsible for acquiring and paying the umpire.
7. If there is no umpire present at game time, both coaches must agree on a substitute or the game should be made up.
8. Home team supplies game balls. A 12” traditional (optic yellow) softball will be used.
9. Coaches are not permitted in the playing field.
10. Catchers must wear full protective equipment, even when warming up.
11. All infielders including the pitcher, are required to wear a fielding mask. It is strongly recommended that the entire outfield wear one as well.
12. All batters and base runners must wear a league-approved helmet at all times. Helmets must contain a face mask.
13. No jewelry, metal cleats, or casts. If a player cannot remove her jewelry she must coverage it with a bandage or athletic tape.
14. All players must remain on the bench or in the dugout when not batting or on deck. The only exception is players warming up with the permission of their coaching staff in designated areas agreed on before the game.

## 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. Cheering for your own team is highly encouraged. Teamwork and building an enjoyable experience for all the girls in the league is our desired goal. However, there comes a time when the line can be crossed and it is up to the coaches and the umpire to be aware of the incidents and to try to maintain a level playing field for both teams. This issue is not only between girls from both teams, it involves coaches and parents. Negative cheers about the other team should not be tolerated. Sudden noises (shouts, horns, foot-stomping, "swing", or other noise making devices) shall not be tolerated. Players and Coaches should not purposely distract the other team's pitcher. Coaches are responsible for adherence to this etiquette for themselves, their other coaches, their players AND their players' parents.

### **Game Rules**

1. All rules not specifically noted here will follow ASA/USA Softball rules.
2. There are 6 innings per game (if time permits). No new inning may begin after 1 hour and 45 minutes have elapsed from the start of the game. If the time limit has been passed, regular season games can end in a tie.
3. Three outs or 6 runs end an inning. The final play of the inning should be allowed to finish even if more than 6 runs are scored. However, only 6 runs should be officially recorded. If time allows, the sixth inning (and ONLY the 6<sup>th</sup> inning) is an unlimited-run inning.
4. The "mercy rule" for the game is invoked when a team is ahead by 15 or more runs with the trailing team having batted at least 4 complete innings.
5. Ten players are permitted on the field, the short fielder must be positioned on the outfield grass.
6. All players must be in the batting order whether they played in the inning or not. Pinch-hitting is not allowed. No batting out of order. Late arrivals must be placed at the end of the batting order.
7. If a team is playing with 8 players, there is no automatic out for the 9<sup>th</sup> batting slot.
8. Free substitution for defensive positions.
9. Bunting is allowed.
10. Infield fly rule is in effect. Coaches should review the umpire's interpretation of the infield fly rule before each game. Umpires are asked to invoke the infield fly only for balls falling inside the base paths.
11. The dropped third strike rule is in effect.
12. A batted ball in the playing field is live until returned to and controlled in the pitching circle.

**Clarification:** On overthrown balls begun by a batted ball (i.e. balls overthrown in attempt to make a defensive play), runners may attempt to take as many bases as they desire, provided the ball is still within play and not controlled and within the pitching circle. Once the ball is controlled and within the pitching circle, no further advancement can be made other than the base they may be in the process of reaching at the time. If the ball is out of play, it becomes a dead ball and the appropriate out of play advancement is instituted. (One base on an overthrow that goes out of bounds).

13. Runners may leave the base (lead or steal) when the ball leaves the pitchers hand.
14. A team may NOT steal once they are up by 10 runs.
15. No pitcher will appear in more than 4 innings. A pitcher may leave the game and return in later innings as long as she doesn't appear in more than 4 innings per game. **One pitch thrown in an inning constitutes an inning of pitching.**
16. Pitching distance is 43 feet – no exceptions.
17. A pitcher must start with both feet in contact with the rubber and push off with their dominant foot and step in a forward direction. The dominant foot must maintain the plane of the ground
18. For the safety of all players, any pitcher who hits 3 batters in a game **must** immediately be removed from the pitching position for the rest of the game (she may play any other position). Hit by Pitch (HBP) is determined by the umpire – i.e., at the umpire's discretion, the batter has made a legitimate effort to avoid being hit by the ball. Coaches should review this rule with the umpire before each game.