



## OFFICIAL RULES

*Effective March 2026*

### **Program Objective**

The objective of this league is to provide all players with the opportunity to learn and develop the fundamental skills of the game of softball. It is the manager's and coach's responsibility to assist all players in developing a better understanding of the game, its rules and strategies while emphasizing good sportsmanship, self-discipline, team play, and most importantly, having fun.

### **Basis for Rules**

The Elk Grove Girls Softball League is committed to providing a safe and fun environment for all its participants. This is the driving force behind all its rules and regulations. These rules have been drafted and approved by the Elk Grove Girls Softball Advisory Board and the Elk Grove Park District.

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## Part One: General Rules

### Applies to All Divisions

#### Rule 1. Conduct

##### Section 1.1 Unsportsmanlike Conduct

The penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct (i.e., use of foul or abusive language, making disparaging or insulting remarks, threat of physical harm, etc.) is ejection. An umpire may opt to issue a warning before ejecting the offending manager, coach, player, or spectator but is not required to do so. If ejected, the offending person will be asked to leave the playing field or spectator area, including the parking lot, and will no longer be involved in the game. Play will not resume until the offending individual has left the vicinity. If the offender does not comply within 2 minutes, the umpire will leave the field and award the game to the opposing team by forfeit.

**ANYONE EJECTED FOR UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT IS SUBJECT TO FURTHER DISCIPLINE FROM THE EGGS ADVISORY BOARD.**

##### Section 1.2 Penalties for Unacceptable Conduct

All unsportsmanlike conduct — whether it resulted in a warning, ejection, or neither — will be reviewed by a Discipline Committee consisting of the EGGS Advisory Board President, Commissioner, and Member at Large. If one of these members is directly involved in an incident, they will abstain and a third Board Member will serve in their place. The committee will hear all sides of the incident(s) in question, including input from all relevant witnesses, in a timely fashion, and will make a recommendation to the full EGGS Advisory Board for any potential further discipline. All disciplinary decisions made by the EGGS Advisory Board are final and are not subject to appeal. Anyone not adhering to the discipline imposed by the Board will be immediately removed from the program.

An Incident Reporting Form is available on the EGGS website and in field boxes at all fields. Forms can be emailed to [president@egvgirlssoftball.com](mailto:president@egvgirlssoftball.com), [commissioner@egvgirlssoftball.com](mailto:commissioner@egvgirlssoftball.com), or [memberatlarge@egvgirlssoftball.com](mailto:memberatlarge@egvgirlssoftball.com). All submissions will be reviewed promptly.

##### Section 1.3 Alcohol, Drugs, and Smoking

**ALCOHOL, TOBACCO PRODUCTS, VAPING, OR ILLEGAL DRUGS ARE PROHIBITED ON ALL ELK GROVE PARK DISTRICT PROPERTY!**

Any managers, coaches, or players suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs during practices or games will be removed from the program immediately. There is **NO SMOKING OR VAPING** allowed on Elk Grove Park District property by managers, coaches, players, or spectators **AT ANY TIME**. A warning will be issued to the manager for anyone on their team smoking or vaping on Park District property. Failure to address this will result in the ejection of both the manager and the offending individual(s).

##### Section 1.4 Elk Grove Park District & EGGS Code of Conduct

All families enrolled in the EGGS Program will be required to acknowledge receipt of, understanding of, and willingness to comply with the Elk Grove Park District and EGGS Code of Conduct. Players will not be allowed to begin practice with their teams until this is done. Anyone refusing to sign the Code of Conduct will not be permitted to participate in the program.

#### Rule 2. Equipment

##### Section 2.1 Team Uniforms

Players must wear their current year's uniforms to be eligible to play. The uniform consists of the current year jersey and softball pants. **SHORTS ARE NOT ALLOWED DURING GAME PLAY**. Cloth hats are optional. Jersey numbers must be visible while a player is at bat. Jerseys must be completely tucked in when at bat.

### Section 2.2 Catcher's Equipment

The catcher must wear a mask, chest protector, helmet, and shin guards at all times behind the plate. Catching gear will be supplied by the league, but catchers may use their own equipment so long as it meets safety guidelines. No one other than a manager or coach may warm up a pitcher between innings without proper equipment on.

### Section 2.3 Shoes

Cleats are highly recommended but gym shoes or all-purpose shoes with rubber soles are acceptable. **NO METAL SPIKES.**

### Section 2.4 Safety Helmets

The batter and all base runners must always wear safety helmets securely on their heads with chin straps and face mask on the field. Helmets shall not be removed until the player is back in the dugout.

### Section 2.5 Bats

**Instructional Level:** All bats with grips are acceptable.

**All Other Levels:** All bats must be no longer than 34 inches and labeled "Official Softball." All bats must have a wrapped or rubberized grip. When a batter is discovered using an illegal bat — by the umpire or upon appeal by the opposing manager before the 1st pitch to the next batter — the offending batter is out, and the bat is removed from the game. Base runners may not advance as a result of a hit with an illegal bat.

### Section 2.6 Gloves

All players on the field must wear a glove.

**Ponytail, Sophomore, Junior & Senior Levels:** The pitcher's glove, wristbands, and/or sleeves shall be a color other than the ball and without any distracting logos or markings. The umpire shall have the final say on whether any item is distracting.

### Section 2.7 Defensive Player Face Protector

**Instructional, Ponytail & Sophomore Levels:** It is required that all defensive players wear an approved face protector (e.g., RIP-IT Defense Softball).

**Junior & Senior Levels:** All infield defensive players must wear an approved face protector. Use by outfield players, while recommended, is optional.

## Rule 3. Game Administration

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### Section 3.1 Pre-Game Warm-Ups

Pre-game practice is conducted in the teams' respective outfields (Home Team = Left Field, Visiting Team = Right Field). No teams shall take batting or fielding practice on the infield. Pitchers are not allowed to warm up off the mound before the game. Pitching warm-ups should be conducted down the team's respective baselines.

**THE START TIME OF THE GAME WILL NOT BE DELAYED FOR PRE-GAME WARM-UPS!**

### Section 3.2 Sides of the Field

The home team will have the third base side of the field. The visiting team will have the first base side. Home and visiting designations are based on the schedule distributed by EGGS.

### Section 3.3 Dugout and Backstop Area

When players are not on the field, they must remain in the dugout unless using the bathrooms with a coach's permission. Spectators are not allowed in the dugouts. Managers, coaches, and players will not be allowed to stand directly behind the backstop or so close to the playing field that their presence may be disturbing to the players or the umpire. Spectators are not permitted to sit or stand immediately behind the dugouts or in the backstop area from dugout to dugout. The umpire will be the sole judge concerning this matter.

### Section 3.4 Cancelled/Suspended Game Procedures

A game called before it has reached complete game status is considered suspended and will be resumed at the exact point where it was suspended at an agreed-upon date determined by the EGGGS Board. Scorekeepers from both teams shall compare scorebooks to ensure the exact point and count on the batter is agreed upon.

Players removed due to disciplinary action may not play in the resumed game. Players removed due to illness or injury are eligible to return in their original lineup position. Players not at the original game but present at the resumed game will be placed at the bottom of the batting order. Players at the original game but not at the resumed game will be dropped from the lineup at the point of resumption.

Only EGGGS Board Members or Elk Grove Village Park District staff may cancel a game before it starts. Once the game has begun, only the umpire (consulting with a non-competing Board Member, if available) may suspend the game due to severe weather or unsafe conditions. In the Instructional Division, the decision to suspend is made by both managers since there are no umpires. Conditions may include rain, hail, excessive wind, the first signs of lightning, tornado sirens, or any other cause that may place players in peril. If there is no lightning and mild conditions, the umpire may delay the game up to 30 minutes. If the lightning detector has not given the all-clear after 30 minutes, the umpire may elect to delay an additional 15 minutes if a reasonable possibility exists to resume the game.

All playoffs, championship, and consolation games will be played out in their entirety (slaughter rules still apply). If the game must be called for severe weather or unsafe conditions, it is considered suspended and the Complete Game rule for suspended games applies. This provision does not apply to the Instructional Division as scores are not kept.

### Section 3.5 Setting Up the Field

It is the responsibility of the home team to set up and dismantle the field, including setting the bases and pitching mound at the appropriate distances. At the conclusion of the game, the home team manager must confirm all equipment has been returned to the storage box and the box is locked.

### Section 3.6 Fielder Warm-Ups

At the beginning of the game, fielders will be allowed to bring a ball out onto the field to warm up. After the first inning, an infield ball will be allowed so long as it is thrown in within the allotted 90 seconds between innings.

## Rule 4. Player Health & Safety

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### Section 4.1 Injured or Sick Player — Prior to Game Time

A manager may keep a player out of a game for injury or illness but must report it to the opposing manager before the game begins.

### Section 4.2 Player Injury During Play

**Instructional Level:** Play will cease when there is an injury. Managers and coaches will determine the placement of runners.

**Non-Instructional Levels:** Play does not cease when there is an injury until the play is completed and the umpire calls time. If in the judgment of the umpire the injury is serious, they may call time immediately and base runners are awarded the base they were advancing to.

### Section 4.3 Blood Rule

Any player actively bleeding must leave the field for medical attention (cleaning and bandaging) and then may return. If the injured player is a base runner, the Courtesy Runner Rule (Section 4.4) applies. If the injured player is the pitcher, she will be allowed to return and will only be charged with one inning pitched. Any interim pitcher in this case will not be charged with an inning pitched.

### Section 4.4 Courtesy Runners

When an injury or illness prohibits a player from running, a courtesy runner can be substituted. The courtesy runner must be the player who made the last out (excluding the incoming pitcher or catcher). If no outs have been made in the game, the player at the bottom of the batting order will run. A player who plays any defensive position must run the bases unless: (a) an injury or illness occurs during her at bat or while she is a base runner, or (b) both managers agree at the pre-game meeting that a particular player requires a courtesy runner.

Teams are entitled to 90 seconds between innings to switch. Teams are allowed to utilize a courtesy runner at any time for their pitcher and/or catcher and are strongly encouraged to do so with two outs so that the pitcher and/or catcher can be ready to start the next inning.

### Section 4.5 Player Leaving During a Game

**Instructional Level:** A player pulled due to sickness or injury may return to the defensive position at any time but must wait for her next scheduled at bat. If a player leaves for personal reasons, the manager must notify the opposing manager, and the player is dropped from the lineup. NO PENALTY WILL BE ASSESSED.

**Non-Instructional Levels:** A player pulled due to sickness or injury may return to the defensive position at any time but must wait for her next scheduled at bat. If her turn comes while she is out, the manager has two options: (1) declare her out for the remainder of the game — the next batter bats with no penalty; or (2) take an out for the injured player's turn, after which she retains the option of returning.

**All Levels:** If a player leaves due to illness or injury and the game is later suspended, she may return in the same place in the order when the game is completed.

## Rule 5. Team Composition

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### Section 5.1 Defensive Players Required

**Instructional Level:** A team must field no more than 9 and no fewer than 5 defensive players. A team with fewer than 5 players must borrow players.

**Non-Instructional Levels:** A team must field no more than 9 and no fewer than 7 defensive players. A team with fewer than 7 players must borrow players or forfeit. Any team having fewer than 6 players at any point during the game must forfeit.

## Rule 6. Batting

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### Section 6.1 Missed Turn at Bat

If a restroom trip causes a player to miss their turn at bat, they will not bat until their next scheduled at bat. No penalty will be assessed. The batting team's manager should inform the opposing manager prior to the at bat beginning.

### Section 6.2 Batters Arriving Late

Players arriving after the game has started will be placed at the bottom of the batting order regardless of their original place. A player whose team is in the field and has fewer than a full defense may enter prior to the end of the inning.

### Section 6.3 Batters On-Deck

Batters may take practice swings on the field of play so long as they are positioned at the batter's back (3rd base line if the current batter is right-handed, 1st base line if left-handed). Warming up while On-Deck is the **ONLY** form of hitting practice allowed once the game starts. **NO OTHER HITTING PRACTICE IS ALLOWED AFTER THE FIRST WARM-UP PITCH** — including hit sticks, batting tees, or any other warm-up involving the swinging of a bat.

### Section 6.4 Throwing the Bat

Throwing the bat in an unsportsmanlike manner will result in a warning and possible ejection as deemed by the umpire.

**Instructional Level:** Players need to be taught not to throw the bat; no penalty will be assessed against the team.

**All Other Levels:** The offending team will be issued a warning on the first offense. On the second and subsequent offenses, the batter will be called out, and all runners will return to the bases they occupied at the time of the pitch. A batter will also be called out if she carries the bat beyond 1st base.

### Section 6.5 Caught Foul Balls

A batter is out when a foul ball (not a foul tip) is caught by any defensive player within the perimeter of the playing field. If the defensive player is in bounds and reaches out of bounds to make the catch, the batter is out and runners may advance at their own risk. If the defensive player makes the catch in bounds and her momentum carries her out of bounds, the batter is out, the ball is dead, and all runners are awarded one base from the base they occupied when the ball was pitched. If the defensive player carries the ball out of bounds intentionally (umpire's judgment), the batter is out, the ball is dead, and all runners are awarded two bases from when the ball was pitched.

## Rule 7. Base Running

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### Section 7.1 Overthrown Ball — Out of Play

When a ball is overthrown and goes out of play, it is a dead ball, and all runners are awarded the base they were advancing to plus one. Division-specific rules for overthrows that remain in play are detailed in Part Two.

### Applies to Non-Instructional Levels Only

The rules in this section apply to the Ponytail, Sophomore, Junior, and Senior divisions. They do not apply to the Instructional Division.

## Rule 8. Umpires

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### Section 8.1 Umpire Calls Are Final

All umpire calls are final. **NO EXCEPTIONS!!** Judgment calls (out/safe, fair/foul, ball/strike, etc.) are **NEVER** allowed to be questioned by managers, coaches, players, or spectators. Questioning these calls may lead to ejection of the offending individual(s) with or without warning. Any rule interpretation questions should be asked of the umpire by the manager between innings, off to the side and in a respectful manner. **NO PROTESTS ARE ALLOWED!**

Umpire performance concerns are not to be addressed during the game. Any concerns must be submitted to the Board following the game so they may be reviewed and addressed appropriately.

### Section 8.2 Manager's Responsibility Toward Umpires

Each manager is responsible for the conduct of his or her coaches, players, parents, and other spectators toward umpires. Only managers (not coaches, players, or spectators) should be communicating with umpires. If unacceptable behavior toward an umpire is observed, the manager and offending party(ies) may each receive a warning, and time out will be called so that the manager may speak to the offender(s). If the umpire chooses to eject the offending party without warning, the manager is responsible for ensuring the offending party leaves the field in a timely manner without further incident.

Only the Manager may ask rule interpretation questions of an umpire. Coaches, players, parents, or spectators who approach an umpire to ask rule interpretation questions risk ejection without warning. **NO ONE IS PERMITTED TO APPROACH THE UMPIRE TO QUESTION JUDGMENT CALLS!**

### Section 8.3 Umpire Conduct & Safety Equipment

All umpires are expected to: (1) learn and know the rules, (2) use proper mechanics, and (3) conduct themselves in a professional manner. All plate umpires are required to provide their own safety equipment.

### Section 8.4 Umpire No-Shows

In the event that the umpire is not present 5 minutes prior to the scheduled start of the game, the home team manager should reach out to the Board Member tasked with communicating with the umpire service. In the event that the umpire is not on site at the scheduled game time, one of the following solutions can be implemented:

- A Board Member who is present and does not have a child involved in the game can umpire the game.
- Both managers can agree on a single individual to umpire the game from behind the pitcher's mound.
- Each team can designate someone to umpire while their team is batting, calling the game from behind the pitcher's mound. The designated person should call the entire game unless unable to do so due to injury or extreme circumstance.

**ANYONE WHO VOLUNTEERS TO UMPIRE A GAME IS TREATED AS A REGULAR UMPIRE. ALL CALLS ARE FINAL AND NOT SUBJECT TO DISCUSSION OR PROTEST. ANYONE FOUND TO BE IN VIOLATION OF THIS WILL BE SUBJECT TO IMMEDIATE DISCIPLINARY ACTION FROM THE BOARD.**

A parent umpire may only be used for regular season games. All playoff games will be umpired by umpires provided by the umpire service or a Board Member who does not have a child involved in that game.

## Rule 9. Roster Rules

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### Section 9.1 Borrowed Players

Borrowed players may play any defensive position except Pitcher or Catcher and will not play offense. The borrowed players will always be the last outs from the previous inning. In the event they are due to bat, they will be switched with the player who made the last out. If the team loaning player(s) has not batted yet, the borrowed player(s) will be the last scheduled batter(s) in the batting order.

### Section 9.2 Advanced Call-Ups

If a manager knows in advance that their team will be short players, they may request to call up a player or players from the division directly below theirs. All call-ups must be approved by the Board prior to the game. Call-up players must be placed at the bottom of the batting order and are not eligible to pitch.

### Section 9.3 Defensive Playing Time

**Ponytail & Sophomore Levels:** No player can sit twice before every player has sat once, and no player can sit out three times before every player has sat twice. All players must play both infield and outfield positions by the end of the fourth inning. Extra innings shall be considered a new game for purposes of this rule.

**Junior & Senior Levels:** No player can sit twice before every player has sat once, and no player can sit out three times before every player has sat twice. All players must play both infield and outfield positions by the end of the fifth inning. Extra innings shall be considered a new game for purposes of this rule.

## Rule 10. Pitching Regulations

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### Section 10.1 Pitcher Positioning

- The pitcher must assume the pitching position with the ball in either hand with the hands separated.
- Stepping on the pitching plate with hands together is a violation.
- While legally on the pitching plate, putting hands together and then separating them without simultaneously delivering the pitch is a violation.
- After separating hands and starting the motion, making a second touch and separation as part of the delivery is a violation.

### **Section 10.2 Pitcher's Feet**

- The back (non-pivot) foot must begin within the 24-inch width of the pitcher's plate and land within or partially within that 24-inch width.
- The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate or push off and drag away from the pitcher's plate, or be airborne prior to the non-pivot foot touching the ground. The pitcher may leap from the pitcher's plate, land with the non-pivot foot, and with a continuous motion deliver the ball to the batter. The pivot foot may follow through with the pitcher's continuous motion.

NOTE 1: It is not a step if the pitcher slides their pivot foot in any direction on the pitcher's plate, provided contact is maintained.

NOTE 2: The pitcher's push off to drag or leap must start from the pitcher's plate. The pitcher must not crow hop or push off from any place other than the pitcher's plate. Once having lost contact with the pitcher's plate, the pivot foot may not bear weight again until the pitch is released.

NOTE 3: All movement of the pitching arm must be continuous as the pitcher steps, pushes, or leaps from the pitcher's plate.

### **Section 10.3 Pitcher's Motion**

- The hands must come together in front of the body for approximately one second and not more than 10 seconds before releasing the ball.
- The pitching arm must go back to at least parallel with the ground before completing one full circular turn on the way to the plate.
- No step backwards is allowed once the motion has started.
- The pitch must be completed with a single step toward the batter with the non-pivot foot.
- Pushing off or leaping from any place other than the pitcher's plate is a crow hop and is illegal. See Section 10.2, Note 2.

Any violation above constitutes an illegal pitch and will result in a ball being called by the umpire.

### **Section 10.4 Illegal Pitch Enforcement**

A manager or coach may not challenge a pitcher's delivery during an inning. A first occurrence will result in a warning from the umpire; a second occurrence will result in ejection of the challenging manager. A manager's challenge must be made between innings.

The umpire will give a warning to the pitcher on the first offense and rule the pitch a ball. On the second offense, the pitcher is removed from pitching for the rest of that inning (counts as 1 inning pitched) but may return depending on the Limited Pitching Innings rule for their division. On a third offense, the pitcher is removed from pitching for the remainder of the game.

### **Section 10.5 Intentional Walks**

Intentional walks are not allowed. If in the umpire's judgment an intentional walk has been attempted, the pitcher will be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game, and the manager of the offending pitcher will be issued a warning. On the second occurrence in a game, the manager will be ejected.

### **Section 10.6 Repositioning the Pitcher**

The pitcher must be positioned within the eight-foot pitching circle. Repositioning the pitcher to another fielding position shall be considered a pitching change. If the player returns to pitching in the same inning, a second inning of pitching shall be recorded. As the eight-foot pitching circle is not present at all fields, it is the umpire's sole discretion as to whether or not a repositioned pitcher is positioned properly.

### **Section 10.7 Limited Hit Batters**

A pitcher may hit a maximum of 3 batters in a game. When she hits the 3rd batter she must be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. She may play any other defensive position.

### Section 10.8 Warm-Up Pitches

The pitcher will be allowed 90 seconds or 5 warm-up pitches per inning, whichever comes first.

## Rule 11. Charged Conferences

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**Defensive:** A team is allowed 1 Charged Conference between a manager/coach and each pitcher per inning. A 2nd charged conference results in the pitcher's removal from the pitching position for the remainder of the inning. *A Manager/Coach may not return for a 2nd Charged Conference during the same At-Bat. Penalty: Batter awarded first base; all base runners advance one base.* Tending to an injured pitcher is NOT a Charged Conference.

**Offensive:** A team is only allowed 1 Offensive Conference per inning. *A 2nd Offensive Conference will not be granted. Penalty: The batter is called out.*

## Rule 12. Base Running

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### Section 12.1 Sliding

Players must make all reasonable attempts to avoid contact with a fielder who has the ball. Contact can be avoided by sliding, slowing down, reversing direction, or going around the fielder while remaining in the baseline as judged by the umpire. Players are not required to slide as long as they take one of these other actions.

### Section 12.2 Fielding Restrictions on Outfielders

**Ponytail Level:** Does not apply.

**Sophomore, Junior & Senior Levels:** Defensive players in outfield positions may field batted balls, relay throws, and back up bases as needed. However, outfielders may not cover a base or receive a throw at any base on force outs, stolen bases, or dropped third strikes. For example, the center fielder may not cover 2nd base when there is a runner on first on a ground ball or a steal attempt.

If an outfielder violates this rule and makes a play on a runner, the runner shall be ruled safe, the ball shall be declared dead, and all other runners shall be awarded the base they were advancing to.

## Part Two: Division-Specific Rules

Each section below covers the rules that differ by division, including game format, field dimensions, pitching, batting, and base running. Rules stated in Part One apply unless expressly noted otherwise here.

### Instructional Division

#### Field & Game Specifications

<b>Base Distance</b>	50 feet
<b>Pitching Distance</b>	~32 feet (adult pitcher)
<b>Game Length</b>	No more than 4 innings or 60 minutes
<b>Complete Game</b>	After 2 complete innings
<b>Score Kept</b>	No — evaluation purposes only
<b>Umpires</b>	None — both managers officiate
<b>Run Cap</b>	None — no score is kept
<b>Slaughter Rule</b>	Does not apply

#### Coaches on the Field

Up to 2 coaches or managers may place themselves in the field when their team is on defense. They must remain beyond the baselines and at the edge of the grass when the ball is live. If a coach in the field is struck by a batted ball, the ball is dead and all runners advance one base. A thrown ball that strikes a coach is NOT dead — play continues.

#### Pitching

An adult volunteer (18 years or older) pitches to their own team.

**Maximum 4 Pitches:** There will be NO WALKS. A maximum of 4 pitches per batter is allowed — NO EXCEPTIONS. If after the 4th pitch the batter has not hit the ball fair, a batting tee will be set up. If after 3 swings the player has not hit the ball off the tee, a coach will assist the batter.

**Defensive Pitching Position:** One of the 9 defensive players must take a position next to the adult pitcher within the 8-foot radius around the pitching plate.

**Adult Pitcher Interference:** If the batted ball contacts the adult pitcher, the ball is dead and the batter is awarded first base. All other runners advance only one base from the start of the play.

#### Batting

Every player will have a turn at bat during each inning.

**Hit by Pitch:** No bases are awarded if an adult pitcher hits the batter. The pitch counts as one of the four pitches in the at bat.

**Throwing the Bat:** Players need to be taught not to throw the bat; no penalty will be assessed against the team.

**Batting Out of Order:** No penalty assessed.

**Bunting:** Not allowed.

**Infield Fly Rule:** Does not apply.

#### Base Running

**Stealing:** Not allowed.

**Sliding:** Not permitted.

**Overthrown Ball:** Dead ball at any base. Runners may continue to the base they were initially advancing to, but no additional bases are awarded.

**Conclusion of Play:** Play is concluded after the first attempt at a defensive play. Runners may advance only to one base on an infield hit and a maximum of two bases on an outfield hit.

## Ponytail Division

### Field & Game Specifications

<b>Base Distance</b>	55 feet
<b>Pitching Distance</b>	32 feet
<b>Game Length</b>	6 innings
<b>Complete Game</b>	After 4 complete innings (3½ if home team is ahead)
<b>Time Limit</b>	2 hours 15 minutes from first warm-up pitch
<b>Run Cap</b>	5 runs per inning (innings 1–5); unlimited in inning 6
<b>Slaughter Rule</b>	12-run lead after 4 complete innings (3½ if home team is ahead)

### Coaches on the Field

Up to 1 coach or manager may place themselves in the field when their team is on defense. They must remain beyond the baselines and at the edge of the grass when the ball is live.

A coach may also be placed behind the batter/catcher/umpire to return pitched balls to the catcher. These coaches are only to return the pitched ball to the catcher, who should return it to the pitcher. **IN EXTREME CASES WHEN NEEDED, TEAMS ARE REQUIRED TO DO THIS TO INCREASE THE PACE OF PLAY.** If this coach interferes with a ball in play, the play is immediately dead, and all base runners are awarded one base.

### Pitching

All at bats begin with a kid pitching. There will be no walks. Once a batter has received ball four, an adult (18+) from the offensive team will pitch from the pitching plate, and the batter's strike count continues. There will be no called strikes from the adult pitcher — only swinging strikes. Balls batted foul on the third strike result in another adult pitch until the batter hits the ball fair or strikes out.

The batter's turn ends with a strikeout when: (1) the batter swings and misses the third strike within three adult pitches, or (2) the third pitch from the adult does not result in a fair or foul hit ball.

Examples:

- 4 balls, 0 strikes — batter swings and misses the 3rd adult pitch: out on strikes.
- 4 balls, 1 strike — batter swings and misses 2 adult pitches: out on strikes.
- 4 balls, 2 strikes — adult throws a called strike, but batter doesn't swing: count stays 4–2; batter may receive up to 2 more adult pitches. Swing and miss = out.
- 4 balls, 2 strikes — batter fouls off the 3rd adult pitch: awarded another pitch until she hits fair, swings and misses, or takes a non-foul pitch.

**Pitching Innings Limit — Regular Season:** 2 innings per pitcher.

**Pitching Innings Limit — Playoffs/Championship:** 2 innings per pitcher.

A pitcher who pitches any portion of an inning is charged with 1 inning. A pitcher removed and returned in the same inning is charged 2 innings (Blood Rule exception — see Section 4.3). In extra-inning games, any pitcher may return but not exceed one additional inning above their per-game allotment.

## Ponytail Division

### Batting

**Hit by Adult Pitcher:** No bases are awarded. The pitch counts as one of the three coach pitches. If the coach hits the batter with the third pitch, the batter is out on strikes with no additional pitch. A batter must make a reasonable attempt to avoid the pitch. Bounced pitches that hit the batter are considered balls.

**Batting Out of Order:** If discovered before the at bat is complete, the correct batter takes over and inherits the count — no additional penalty. If discovered after, the out-of-order batter is out, base runners return to their original bases, and the next scheduled batter is up.

**Bunting:** Not allowed.

**Infield Fly Rule:** Does not apply.

**Dropped Third Strike:** Does not apply.

### Base Running

**Stealing:** Not allowed. Extra bases may be awarded for a ball going out of play.

**Overthrown Ball (in play):** Runners remain on the base they were advancing to.

**Overthrown Ball (out of play):** Dead ball — everyone awarded the base they were going to plus one.

**Conclusion of Play:** A batted ball remains live. Play concludes naturally when any defensive player has possession and control of the ball anywhere in the infield. All runners may continue to the base they were advancing to and must stop there.

**Outfielder Fielding Restrictions:** Do not apply at this level.

## Sophomore Division

### Field & Game Specifications

Base Distance	60 feet
Pitching Distance	35 feet
Game Length	6 innings
Complete Game	After 4 complete innings (3½ if home team is ahead)
Time Limit	2 hours 15 minutes from first warm-up pitch
Run Cap	5 runs per inning (innings 1–5); unlimited in inning 6
Slaughter Rule	12-run lead after 4 complete innings (3½ if home team is ahead)

### Coaches on the Field

No coaches are allowed on the field when their team is on defense. Any coach exiting the dugout and entering the playing field at any time is considered a charged conference (see Rule 11). Managers are allowed to reposition their defensive players once per opposing player at bat.

### Pitching

Player pitching only — no adult pitcher. All pitching regulations in Part One, Rule 10 apply.

**Pitching Innings Limit — Regular Season:** 2 innings per pitcher.

**Pitching Innings Limit — Playoffs/Championship:** 2 innings per pitcher.

A pitcher who pitches any portion of an inning is charged with 1 inning. A pitcher removed and returned in the same inning is charged 2 innings (Blood Rule exception applies). In extra-inning games, any pitcher may return but not to exceed one additional inning above their per-game allotment.

### Batting

**Hit by Pitch:** Awarding of first base is solely at the umpire's discretion. The batter must make a reasonable attempt to avoid the pitch. If a bounced pitch hits the batter and the umpire determines the batter had a reasonable opportunity to avoid it, the base may not be awarded. **ALL RULINGS ARE FINAL AND NOT SUBJECT TO DISCUSSION, DEBATE, OR PROTEST!!**

**Batting Out of Order:** If discovered before the at bat is complete, the correct batter takes over with the inherited count — no additional penalty. If discovered after, the out-of-order batter is out, base runners return to original bases, and the next scheduled batter is up.

**Bunting:** Swinging through a fake bunt, regardless of contact, results in the batter being called out, the ball being dead, and no runners advancing. Slap hitting is allowed as long as the batter remains in the batter's box at contact.

**Infield Fly Rule:** Applies. The rule may be invoked when: (1) fewer than two outs, (2) runners on first and second or bases are loaded, (3) the batted ball is a true fly ball or pop-up in fair territory — not a bunt or line drive, and (4) it could be caught by an infielder with normal effort. If called, the batter is immediately out; runners may advance at their own risk. **ALL INFIELD FLY RULE CALLS ARE SUBJECT TO THE UMPIRE'S DISCRETION AND MAY NOT BE DISCUSSED, DEBATED, OR PROTESTED!!**

**Dropped Third Strike:** Does not apply.

## Sophomore Division

### Base Running

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**Stealing:** Base runners may leave the base to lead off or steal once the pitched ball has crossed home plate. Runners may steal second and third base only — home plate may not be stolen. A runner may steal only one base per batter. If in the umpire's judgment a runner leaves too early, a team warning will be issued; on the second infraction the runner is called out, the ball is declared dead, and all runners must return to the last base legally touched. Runners may advance to home only on a batted ball or if awarded home due to a ball out of play.

**Overthrown Ball (in play):** Ball is live; runners may advance up to one additional base at their own risk.

**Overthrown Ball (out of play):** Dead ball — everyone awarded the base they were going to plus one.

**Conclusion of Play:** A batted ball remains live. Play concludes naturally when the ball is returned to the pitcher's circle.

**Look-Back Rule:** When a runner is legitimately off her base and stationary when the pitcher has the ball in the 8-foot circle, she must immediately commit to returning or advancing — no stopping, hesitating, reversing, or faking. First infraction: team warning. Second infraction: runner is called out, ball is dead. No more than one out may be obtained per play from the Look-Back Rule.

**Outfielder Fielding Restrictions:** Apply at this level — see Part One, Section 12.2.

## Junior & Senior Divisions

### Field & Game Specifications

<b>Base Distance</b>	60 feet
<b>Pitching Distance</b>	40 feet (Junior) / 43 feet (Senior)
<b>Game Length</b>	7 innings
<b>Complete Game</b>	After 5 complete innings (4½ if home team is ahead)
<b>Time Limit</b>	2 hours 15 minutes from first warm-up pitch
<b>Run Cap</b>	5 runs per inning (innings 1–5); unlimited in innings 6 & 7
<b>Slaughter Rule</b>	15-run lead after 5 complete innings (4½ if home team is ahead)

### Coaches on the Field

No coaches are allowed on the field when their team is on defense. Any coach exiting the dugout and entering the playing field at any time is considered a charged conference (see Rule 11). Managers are allowed to reposition their defensive players once per opposing player at bat.

### Pitching

Player pitching only. All pitching regulations in Part One, Rule 10 apply.

**Pitching Innings Limit — Regular Season:** 3 innings per pitcher.

**Pitching Innings Limit — Playoffs/Championship:** 3 innings per pitcher.

A pitcher who pitches any portion of an inning is charged with 1 inning. A pitcher removed and returned in the same inning is charged 2 innings (Blood Rule exception applies). In extra-inning games, any pitcher may return but not to exceed one additional inning above their per-game allotment.

### Batting

**Hit by Pitch:** Awarding of first base is solely at the umpire's discretion. The batter must make a reasonable attempt to avoid the pitch. **ALL RULINGS ARE FINAL AND NOT SUBJECT TO DISCUSSION, DEBATE, OR PROTEST!!**

**Batting Out of Order:** If discovered before the at bat is complete, the correct batter takes over with the inherited count — no additional penalty. If discovered after, the out-of-order batter is out, all base runners return to original bases, and the next scheduled batter is up. Any runs scored during the illegal at bat are removed.

**Bunting:** Swinging through a fake bunt, regardless of contact, results in the batter being called out, the ball being dead, and no runners advancing. Slap hitting is allowed, as long as the batter remains in the batter's box at contact.

**Infield Fly Rule:** Applies. The rule may be invoked when: (1) fewer than two outs, (2) runners on first and second or bases are loaded, (3) the batted ball is a true fly ball or pop-up in fair territory — not a bunt or line drive, and (4) it could be caught by an infielder with normal effort. If called, the batter is immediately out; runners may advance at their own risk. **ALL INFIELD FLY RULE CALLS ARE SUBJECT TO THE UMPIRE'S DISCRETION AND MAY NOT BE DISCUSSED, DEBATED, OR PROTESTED!!**

**Dropped Third Strike:** Applies when: (1) the catcher fails to catch the third strike before the ball touches the ground, (2) there are fewer than two outs, and (3) first base is not occupied at the time of the pitch. When these criteria are met, the catcher must tag the batter out or complete the put out at first base. If a base runner on first attempts to steal second on a strike-three pitch, first base is deemed occupied and the rule does not apply unless there are two outs. With two outs, the dropped third strike applies regardless of whether first base is occupied.

## Junior & Senior Divisions

### Base Running

**Stealing:** All bases may be stolen, including home plate. A base runner may leave the base when the pitched ball leaves the pitcher's hand. If in the umpire's judgment the runner left too early, she will be called out, the ball is dead, and all runners must return to the last base touched.

**Direct Steal Following a Walk:** Allowed, provided both first and second base are unoccupied at the time of the pitch. The runner may steal 2nd only if she rounds first and continues directly. If played on, she may stop and return to first. If not played on, she cannot stop; hesitation results in an out.

**Delayed Stealing & Look-Back Rule:** Delayed stealing is permitted. The Look-Back Rule is in effect once the pitcher has possession of the ball within the 8-foot pitching circle and is not making a play on a runner (the rule applies whether or not the circle is visibly marked). When the rule is in effect, any runner off a base must immediately commit to advancing or returning — no stopping, hesitating, reversing, or faking. A violation results in the runner being called out. If the pitcher makes a play or feints a throw toward a runner, the Look-Back Rule is suspended until the pitcher again has possession within the circle.

**Overthrown Ball (in play):** Ball is live; runners may advance at their own risk until the ball is returned to the pitcher's circle.

**Overthrown Ball (out of play):** Dead ball — everyone awarded the base they were going to plus one.

**Conclusion of Play:** A batted ball remains live. Play concludes naturally when the ball is returned to the pitcher's circle.

**Outfielder Fielding Restrictions:** Apply at this level — see Part One, Section 12.2.

### Time Limit Procedures

If the game reaches the 2-hour and 15-minute time limit, the game is deemed over. The following scenarios determine the final outcome:

- If the home team was ahead or the game was tied at the end of the last full inning and the visiting team has since gone ahead or tied in the top of the next inning without the home team having the opportunity to bat, the game reverts to the score at the end of the last completed full inning.
- If the visiting team was ahead or the game was tied and the home team ties or goes ahead but does not complete their at bat before the time limit, the score at the point the time limit was reached is the final score.
- If the time limit is reached before the minimum innings for an official game have been completed, the game is suspended and will be scheduled for completion. When resumed, the game continues until completion or until the 2-hour and 15-minute time limit is reached.
- If the 2-hour and 15-minute drop-dead time occurs during a player at bat, the batter shall finish her at bat, and the game is considered complete after the player arrives at a base or is struck out.
- If the visiting team is trailing after their at bat and it is after the 2-hour mark but before the 2-hour and 15-minute limit, the coaches may elect to play to completion of the inning or until 2 hours and 15 minutes, whichever comes first.

### Last Inning Declaration

If a new inning is set to begin in the 15-minute window between 1 hour 45 minutes and 2 hours from the time of the first pitch, the umpire shall declare that inning to be the last inning, provided that the minimum number of innings to make the game official have been completed or will be completed with that inning.