

8 & UNDER (Coach-Pitch) RULES

This age group is meant to be instructional however; coaches need to refrain from excessive instruction during the game. Umpires have the discretion to ask coaches to refrain from excessive, time consuming instruction.

1. A regulation game is 6 innings. A complete game consists of **four** (4) full innings or **three and one-half** (3 1/2) innings, if the home team is ahead, or when the **one and one-half** (1 1/2) hour time limit has been reached. Innings started before the time limit will be completed unless it is mathematically impossible for one team to catch up. No mercy rule will be in effect. An 11" fast pitch yellow optic **safety** softball will be the official ball.

2. Each team will consist of eleven (11) defensive positions, standard positions will be used except there will be five (5) outfielders. Each team is allowed to substitute defensive fielders freely throughout the game. The batting order will consist of ALL players at the game, and will run in a continuous order. Any player arriving after the game starts shall be added at the bottom of the batting order. Only official fast pitch softball or T-Ball bats will be used. Batters are required to use NOSCAE approved helmets with facemasks.

3. Pitching will be from a clearly marked 8-foot radius circle with the pitching distance being 35-feet. Coaches will pitch the ball to their own player. Strikes will be called if batter swings and misses, or hits a foul ball/foul tip. Normal strikeout rules apply, however the batter will have a maximum of **seven** (7) pitches to put the ball in play, with the only exception being a foul ball on the 7th pitch. If the batter hits a foul ball on the 7th pitch, then **one** additional pitch will be added to the maximum pitch count. This pitch must be put into play or will be recorded as a strikeout. If the 7th pitch is a foul-tip and is caught and controlled by the catcher, the batter is out. No additional pitch will be awarded. A batted ball must cross or stop on the 15-foot arc line or will be considered a foul ball. There will be **no walks**. Coach discretion is allowed to maximize participation for developing players. Limited exceptions, such as a tee for extreme situations should be agreed to by coaches from both teams prior to the start of the game.

4. An inning is ended in any of the following ways:

- a. When **three** (3) outs are made.
- b. When **five** (5) runs are scored.
- c. When a team bats through their lineup.

5. Coaches will pitch the ball underhand to their own players. The pitch should be as flat as possible in order to cross home plate, and coaches must not touch the ball while it is in play except for the protection of the pitcher. If the Coach Pitcher comes into contact with the batted ball in attempt to protect the pitcher, the ball becomes dead, the batter is awarded first base and any Base-runner will be awarded one (1) base. If the batted ball hits or is touched by the coach-pitcher, ALL runners (including the batter-runner) must return to their starting position and the play is repeated. If the coach-pitcher interferes with the ball or fielder attempting to make a play on the ball, the play is also repeated. In either case, the play counts against the pitch count.

6. Coaches must pitch from within the 8-foot radius circle with at least one foot in contact with the pitching plate, and **MAY NOT** coach the base runners. The player-pitcher must have one foot within the pitching circle when the ball is pitched by the coach-pitcher. Player - Pitcher Development: It will be determined prior to the start of the game by both teams to allow one (1) or both teams to develop their pitchers. If this is agreed upon by both teams, the first two

pitches per batter will be delivered by the player-pitcher. Remaining pitches will be thrown by Coach-pitcher as noted above in Section 3. If a player-pitcher is utilized, the batting team coach-pitcher may take a defensive position beside the player-pitcher. This will be allowed to protect the player-pitcher and avoid delays in the game.

7. Play stops when the player-pitcher gains possession and control of the ball within the circle. The umpire will instruct the runners to advance or retreat to the nearest base. Hash mark's will be drawn at midpoint between bases (1st to 2nd, 2nd to 3rd, 3rd to home) to serve as the decision point for awarding bases. Runners that are **BEYOND** the hash mark when time is called by the umpire will be awarded the next base. Runners that have not reached the hash mark must return to the previous base. It is encouraged to stop play by having possession of the ball in front of the lead runner. If the lead runner is stopped by a defensive player with possession of the ball, the umpire should call time when this occurs and any other base runners must return to the previous base if not more than half way to the next base.

8. No more than **six** (6) infielders including pitcher and catcher may occupy the infield. The Pitcher, first and third basemen are required to wear protective faceguards. The pitcher is also required to wear a protective heart-guard. Infielders must remain behind the hash marks until the ball is hit. The baseline is the imaginary straight line directly between the bases. Outfielders must stay at least **ten** (10) feet behind the baseline or on the outfield grass until the ball is hit.

9. NO stealing or leading off is allowed. Base runners may not leave base until the batter puts the ball in play - no penalty issued. Coaches are not permitted to touch base runners during live play.

10. NO bunting is allowed; NO "Infield Fly" rule applies; NO "Dropped Third Strike" rule is observed. On fly outs a runner(s) may tag and advance at their own risk. No Metal Cleats.

11. The defensive team in the field may have up to **two** (2) defensive coaches in the outfield. They must stay in the outfield equal to or beyond outfielders when the ball is in play, and must not touch the ball while it is in play. If a live ball is touched by defensive field coaches, runners are awarded an extra base. A defensive team coach should stand at the fence behind the catcher to help the game moving and gain control of the bat once the ball is put into play. The offensive team at bat may have a base coach for 1st and 3rd base.

12. All players must play a minimum of 2 innings in the field. This rule is suspended in the event of injury, sickness, or disciplinary action taken by a coach before or during a game.

13. When a catcher is on base with two outs, a courtesy runner must to used. That runner will be the player to make the last out unless it is the pitcher.

14. 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. Defensive players should be encouraged to make plays at 2nd base where feasible. The overthrow rule is in place to encourage players to make the "extra" throw after the overthrow. There is no additional penalty since there is a maximum of one base on the first overthrow.

15. No Throwing bats. If a bat is thrown by a player, both teams will receive a warning. The next thrown bat by either team will result in an out. The throwing of other equipment including gloves will not be tolerated.