

TEANECK BASEBALL ORGANIZATION SENIOR GIRLS SOFTBALL RULES 2023

National Federation of State High School Association Softball Rules will be followed in all games with the exception of the following TBO league rules:

1. **Regulation Game** is 6 innings. Official game is 4 innings, 3 ½ if the home team is winning.
2. **THE FIELD:**
 - a. Bases 60 feet apart. Before the game, umpires should determine the halfway points between the bases.
 - b. Pitching rubber shall be set 38 feet from the rear point of home plate.
 - c. The backstop should be 10 feet from the back of home plate. (On Middle Field)
3. **TEAMS:**
 - a. Teams must have 7 players available (regular season or playoffs) by 15 minutes after the scheduled game time, to avoid forfeit.
 - b. All available players are in the batting order. *Example: If 13 players are available, the batting order is 1-13 and 10 play in the field.*
 - c. Ten (10) players in the field. **At no time** will more than ten (10) players be allowed to play in the field.
 - d. If a game goes a full six innings, no player can sit more than two innings. However, if she comes late to the game, the manager may reduce the number of innings by the number of innings missed. That is, if she comes in the second inning, she may be limited to three innings; if she comes in the 3rd inning, she may be limited to 2 innings. If she comes in the 4th inning she may be limited to 1 inning. And if she comes in the 5th inning or later, it is at the manager's discretion that she plays during that game. During the playoffs, no player can sit for more than three innings; if she is late, the same alterations as during the regular season may be applied.
 - e. Anyone reporting to the game after the game has begun will added to the bottom of the batting order.
 - f. No more than three adults in the field/dugout.
 - g. At no time can there be more than six players in the infield, including the pitcher and catcher. If a team uses a short fielder, she must be at least 10 feet behind second base. Other outfielders must be at least that far.

4. RUNS:

- a. Teams are limited to a maximum of 4 runs per inning during innings 1 through 5
- b. The 6th inning and any extra inning(s) have no run limit.

5. BASERUNNERS:

- a. May not leave the base until the ball crosses the front of home plate or is hit. If a runner leaves early, she is out. There is no warning.
- b. On overthrows that put the ball out of play, the runner will be awarded one extra base in addition to the base he was headed to.
- c. It shall be deemed an obstruction if a fielder, during a play, fakes a catch or tag that causes the runner to alter course of action. The umpire shall award the runner one additional base in addition to the one she was headed to.
- d. The runner is not out if, after making contact with a base, the base is displaced and the runner is tagged; as long as the runner stays where the base originally was. The runner shall remain in position until time is called, or may advance at own risk. If the runner attempts to "follow" the displaced base or proceeds to another base and is tagged, the runner is out.
- e. No head-first slides except when returning to a base. A runner who otherwise slides head first is out.
- f. Managers and coaches should encourage baserunners to slide on close plays. The "slide or avoid" rule is in effect: If the ball is coming to or is in the possession of the fielder, and the runner attempts to reach that base without sliding or avoiding the fielder, the runner shall be out. If there is no play at the base, the fielder must allow the runner access to the base. Otherwise, it is obstruction and the runner is safe
- g. After a play is over, runner may not lead from a base while the pitcher has the ball on the rubber.
- h. On plays initiated by a batted ball, play stops when the pitcher has the ball on or in the vicinity of the pitcher's mound. At that point, the ball is dead and play must stop. Until then, the ball is in play; runners may advance at their risk, and a play may be attempted on them. When the ball is dead, any runners more than halfway to the next base are awarded that base, if it is not occupied. If the base is occupied, or if she is less than halfway to the next base, she must return to the base from which she came
- i. Stealing is NOT permitted.
- j. Tagging up is permitted.
- k. May NOT advance on wild pitches and passed balls.
- l. A courtesy runner may be inserted if a player is injured while batting or running the bases; or sustained a witnessed injury immediately before his at-bat. The pinch runner is the player who made the last batted out in the lineup. A pinch runner can only be inserted once for any given player in any given game. A pinch

runner may also be inserted for the catcher when there are two outs. If a pinch runner is used for a catcher, then the manager shall use the replaced runner as a catcher on defense for the entire inning immediately following.

- m. In those leagues using safety bases: the first baseperson must touch the white part of the base for the runner/batter to be out. If she touches the orange part, the batter/runner is not out. The batter/runner may touch either white or orange. However, if she touches white and makes contact with the first baseman, the batter/runner is out. On a dropped third strike play, the first baseman can touch either side of the safety base, on the throw from the catcher.
- n. If a pitch goes over, through or under the backstop, the ball is dead; and runners get the base they are going to, only.
- o. If a coach touches a runner during play in a manner deemed to assist the runner, the runner will be called out.
- p. When a player is pitching, a coach may stand behind the catcher to retrieve and return balls to the pitcher. That coach may not direct or instruct fielders or hitters and may not have any impact on plays at the plate.

6. PITCHING:

- a. Pitcher's motion must be within or partially within the 24" width of the pitcher's rubber. The pitcher must start her motion with her pivot (non-striding) foot on top or making contact with the pitcher's rubber. The non-pivot foot must be either on or behind the rubber. Only one forward step with the non-pivot foot may be taken before releasing the ball. The pivot foot may not lose contact with the ground until the non-pivot, or striding foot, hits the ground. Penalty: Illegal pitch, the ball is dead at the end of playing action. A ball is called on the batter, and the base runners are awarded one base without liability to be put out. *Example: Pitcher raises pivot foot off rubber/ground prior to releasing the ball. (a) Batter swings and misses ball. The Umpire calls illegal pitch, the batter is given a ball and not a strike and all runners advance one base. (b) Batter hits ball and is thrown out. The Umpire calls illegal pitch, the batter is given a ball and returns to the plate and all runners advance one base.*
- b. An 11" ball shall be used. Pitching style will be "free form" fast pitch with the pitching hand passing within 8" of the leg as the ball is released.
- c. Starting pitcher may have 8 warm-up pitches before the first inning, and 5 warm up pitches before each subsequent inning unless the umpire permits more. Relief pitcher may have 8 warm ups unless the umpire permits more, and 5 in all subsequent innings. In the event that a pitcher is removed for injury, the relief pitcher shall have as many warm ups as the umpire deems necessary but no

less than 8. Upon removal as pitcher, player may play any other position but may not return as pitcher in that game. Exception: If the game is suspended and resumed on a later date, a player removed from the pitcher position (but not from the game) may pitch in the resumed game in accordance with other applicable pitching rules.

- d. Coach permitted 2 mound visits per pitcher per inning. The 3rd visit requires removal of the pitcher.
- e. Rules regarding pitchers being removed for hitting batters have been rescinded in this league.
- f. A player may pitch a maximum of 3 innings in a game.
- g. One pitch constitutes an inning.
- h. All innings pitched must be consecutive.
- i. There is no weekly limit to the number of innings pitched.
- j. In the judgment of the umpire, a batter intentionally attempts to be hit by a pitch the batter will be out. A pitch that bounces prior to hitting a batter is considered a hit batter. If a batter swings at a pitch that hits her; or if the batter is hit by a pitch in the strike zone, it is a strike.
- k. The pitcher may not wear a long-sleeved shirt of a color similar to the softball used.

7. BATTING:

- a. 4 balls and 3 strikes in effect.
- b. Batter must be in the batter's box when swinging. Except where the batter's swing carries the batter out of the batter's box, a strike will be assessed against the batter if the batter leaves the batter's box to swing at a pitch. If the batter leaves the batter's box to swing at a pitch and puts the ball in play, the fielding team shall have the option to accept the result of the play or the strike.
- c. If the batter is called out for throwing the bat, the ball is dead and no runners may advance.
- d. Dropped third strike rule is NOT in effect.
- e. There must be no attempt at distracting the pitcher once she has begun her motion. This includes, but is not limited to chanting or yelling. Any yells or cheers must end as soon as she begins her windup. Failure to comply results in that pitch being called a strike.
- f. No foul third strike, except when foul tip is caught and held by the catcher. Any foul exceeding the height of the batter shall be considered playable and if caught, the batter is out.
- g. **BAT THROWING:** During the preseason, the umpire shall issue warnings (reminders) only. Thereafter, the umpire shall issue one warning before the game. With each occurrence, the batter shall be called out in accordance with rule 7c.
- h. Infield fly rule in effect. An Infield Fly is a fair fly (not including a line drive or an attempted bunt), which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort; and provided the hit is made before two are out and at a time when 1st and 2nd bases or all bases are occupied. When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an infield fly, the plate umpire immediately announces it and the batter is called out. At this point, runners may advance at their own risk. If the hit

should then prove to be foul, the decision is reversed and it is treated the same as any other foul.

- i. **Injured batter:** An injured batter may be replaced by the next player in the order, without penalty and without the injured player being prevented from returning. The replacement batter assumes the count of the injured batter.
- j. Caged helmets must be worn while batting.

8. EQUIPMENT:

- a. Catchers must wear full gear, including mask, chest protector, shin guards and catcher's mitt.
- b. Non metal cleats are mandatory.
- c. Complete uniforms must be worn by all players. Players may wear alternate pants, as long as they are the same color as the TBO recreational uniform for the player's team. Player not in uniform must bat at the end of the batting order.
- d. No jewelry or combs. Medic Alert bracelets are permissible. Players with casts, hard splints or braces on extremities may not play. Braces on the trunk are permissible with a note from the child's physician other than a parent.
- e. Intentional throwing of equipment is prohibited and can mean ejection from the game.
- f. All team equipment must be kept in the dugout or in dead ball territory.

9. BATS:

The bat must be a softball bat which meets Little League specifications and standards as noted in this rule. It shall be a smooth, rounded stick and made of wood or a material tested and proved acceptable to Little League standards. The bat shall be no more than 34 inches in length, not more than two and one-quarter ($2\frac{1}{4}$) inches in diameter, and if wood, not less than fifteen-sixteenth ($15/16$) inches in diameter ($7/8$ inch for bats less than 30 inches) at its smallest part

10. HOME TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES:

Winning team must post the results of the game on the website. Home team is responsible for raking the field at the end of the game and putting away all equipment in the lockboxes.

11. GAME CANCELLATION/RE-SCHEDULING:

No game can be cancelled or rescheduled for the convenience of the teams without the **prior** approval of the Schedule Coordinator. Failure to observe this rule shall result in forfeiture of the game by both teams. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

12. TIME LIMIT:

- a. In the regular season, no full inning shall start more than 1 hour and 50 minutes after the SCHEDULED start time. If the game is tied, the game shall end in a tie.
- b. In the playoffs, all games should be played to completion. If a game is called because of darkness or rain, it will be continued from the exact point at which it was stopped, with the same lineups, at a time to be determined by the Division President in conjunction with the Scheduler. At the subsequent finishing of the game, any player not present initially but who are at the game at the time the game is finishing, may be added to the bottom of the batting order.

13. UMPIRES:

- a. The umpire shall have the authority to call or suspend a game once the game has commenced. Managers, coaches, parents, etc, shall have no say. An executive member of the TBO board who is not a manager, coach, or parent in the division may end or suspend the game if he/she feels there is a safety issue.
- b. **NO UMPIRE:** If there is no umpire, the managers may agree to utilize anyone they deem suitable and the game will be official. Please notify the Head Umpire if the umpire fails to show.
- c. The umpire is responsible for setting out the bases prior to the game.
- d. Umpires must enforce all rules as written. Managers, coaches and/or umpires **may not** alter or suspend any rules.

14. VERBAL ABUSE:

Verbal abuse of any umpire, player, manager or coach, by any other player, manager or coach will not be tolerated and shall be deemed unsportsmanlike conduct. The offender shall be subject to ejection at the discretion of the umpire or at the direction of a Member of the Board who observes the abuse and is not involved with either team. If the ejected party refuses to leave, the umpire may forfeit the game to the opposing team.

If the abuse is from a spectator partisan to a team, the umpire shall direct the manager of that team to intervene to stop the abuse. If the manager refuses or is unsuccessful in stopping the abuse, the umpire, after a warning, may declare forfeit to the other team.

If the abuse is from a spectator who is not a partisan of either team the umpire may request the assistance of either or both managers to intervene. If the intervention is unsuccessful, the umpire may suspend the game.

15. PROTESTS: Protests can be on a point of rule interpretation only, not on an umpire's judgment call.

- a. Protesting manager must inform the umpire and opposing manager of the protest and the basis for it before the next pitch is thrown.
- b. The umpire must sign both managers' scorebooks at the point of protest and make a notation of the progress of the game (i.e. top of 3rd, 2nd batter, 1 out).
- c. The protested game must be completed.
- d. The protesting manager must submit in writing or email to the Division President the basis for the protest within 24 hours of the completion of the game. The division president will review the protest with the relevant executive board as defined in the bylaws. If needed, a hearing will be scheduled and the presence of the umpire and both managers (and their score books) shall be required.
- e. If the protest favors the protesting team, the game shall revert back to the time of the protest.
- f. All decisions are final.
- g. Failure to follow any of these rules shall result in a denial of your protest. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**