

TINLEY PARK LEAGUE 8U SOFTBALL RULES

(Revised and Approved 3-2018)

1. Games are scheduled for 6 innings. In cases of rain or darkness, 3 innings constitutes a full game (2 ½ innings if the home team has more runs). No game will continue beyond 6 innings even if the game is tied. Games will start at 5:45. No new innings will begin after 1 hour and 45 minutes of play and all play will stop after 2 hours has elapsed regardless of the situation. (Examples: A game beginning at 5:45 p.m. will not begin a new inning after 7:30 p.m. and the game will be stopped at 7:45 p.m.)
2. WEATHER: If lightning is sighted in the distance coaches and umpire meet immediately to determine to continue or not, please don't just call it if lightning in far distance. However, good judgment and player safety should always be considered.
3. The home team is responsible for setting up and taking down the field as well as ensuring all field equipment has been put back in the field lock box and the box has been properly locked. In the case of inclement weather, the home team manager is responsible for notifying the visiting team of the game postponement and rescheduling the make-up game. In addition, the home team manager must also notify the umpire coordinator of any game cancellations. The home team also provides one 11" safety softball game ball.
4. Field dimensions for this level: baselines are 50 feet; and the distance from the pitching rubber to the apex (back point) of home plate is 30 feet.
5. An official game will be played with 8 or more players per team. If a team has less than 8 players present, the game will be rescheduled (there are no forfeits) for a later date (pending field availability). The home team manager should contact her/his League Representative to notify the league of the situation.
6. Each team will have 10 fielders: 3 outfielders; pitcher, catcher; 1st, 2nd, 3rd base, and a shortstop. There will be A SHORT CENTER fielder or 4th outfielder. This must be agreed upon with both teams at the umpires meeting in beginning of game. The outfielders must be in the outfield therefore creating a true infield and true outfield. Umpires will enforce this rule.
7. Each player must wear a complete uniform. A players' uniform consist of the standard team uniform shirt, shorts, and safety equipment. Uniform shirts should be tucked into the player's shorts or pants. No jewelry is allowed, Medical Alert Jewelry is permitted. Gym shoes, softball shoes, or Multi-purpose shoes must be worn. No metal cleats, dress shoes, or sandals are allowed.
8. Each player must have a glove and mask. **The masks must be worn while playing all infield positions and highly recommended in outfield.** Each coach will have face masks in their equipment bag if needed. (Tinley Park Bobcat Organization)
9. Catchers must wear a helmet, mask, chest protector and throat and shin guards. No player should be allowed to warm up a pitcher at any time without a protective mask.

10. A player should not play the same position more than two innings in the same game. A player should not play less than 3 innings per game. Play meaning both infield and outfield positions. A coach can use unlimited and free substitution.
11. Bats must be Official Softball bats. Bats made of aluminum, graphite, or ceramic materials must have an official softball insignia or have had it before such an insignia wore off. T-ball, little league, and baseball bats are prohibited. Coaches will have a couple bats in their equipment bags.
12. All batters, on-deck batters, and base runners are required to wear protective batting helmets at all times. It is mandatory for all batting helmets to be equipped with a face mask. A player may wear their own batting helmet only if it is equipped with the mandatory face mask.
13. All teams will use a continuous batting order (i.e. all players bat regardless if they are playing in the field that inning). If a player is injured or has to miss a turn at bat, the player can re-enter the batting order in her original spot whenever she is ready to do so.
14. The batter is to be warned by the umpire if she throws the bat. If the batter throws the bat a second time during the same game, the batter is called back to bat again and any runners must return to their original bases. A batter should be called out if the bat is thrown on every swing and delays the game. A batter will be called out if she throws the bat, and the thrown bat interferes with the defense trying to make a play.
15. There is no dropped third strike rule. There is no limit on foul balls.
16. No bunting will be allowed at this level. If a player sets up and bunts a ball they will be called out and all players will return to their respective bases.
17. Infield fly rule will not be applied at this level.
18. A coach may not physically assist a runner running the bases. The umpire will warn the coach once, if this happens again, play will be declared dead and the runner will be called out.
19. Lead offs will be 2-3 steps after the ball leaves the pitchers hands. **NO STEALING WILL OCCUR FIRST HALF OF SEASON OR UNTIL 6 GAMES ARE COMPLETE WHICHEVER COMES FIRST.**
One base per batter may be stolen on any pitch. Stealing home or double steals are not allowed. Only the lead runner may steal and this will be limited from 1st to 2nd base. If a runner improperly attempts to steal a base because a base has already been stolen during the current at bat or she is not the lead runner, the runner will be returned to the proper base without risk of being put out. **There is no walk continuation or walk into a steal allowed. Violation of this rule will result in the player will be called out. UMPIRES DISCRETION AND ALSO COACH RESPECT WILL BE UTILIZED AS PAST BALLS WILL NOT RESULT IN A STEAL. The fundamental goal behind this rule change is to prepare girls for the next level of play while remaining to have FUN playing the game.**
20. On any ball that goes out of play runners will be allowed the base they were running to, plus 1 additional base. Out of play is any ball that goes beyond the fence line. Balls thrown in foul territory are not to be considered out of play and runners may not advance.
21. On balls hit into the outfield the runner may continue running and play will stop once the ball crosses the plane of the Diamond infield. (We will ensure all 3 organizations utilize a halfway mark while lining the fields to ensure accuracy for the umpires.) **Note any runner attempting to take an additional base will be instructed by the umpire to return to the preceding base they were advancing to.**
22. Any runner is out when she passes a preceding runner. It does not matter if they switch back before they touch a base. As soon as the subsequent runner passes the runner in front of her she is immediately out and play continues (not a dead ball situation).

23. When a runner interferes with a fielder attempting to make a play on a ball, the runner is immediately out. When a fielder not attempting to field a ball interferes with the runner, the runner is immediately awarded the base she was headed to.
24. On close plays at any base it is recommended that the incoming runner slide for the protection of the fielder and base runner. However, the runner will not be penalized if she does not slide.
25. When a base runner is hit with a fair batted ball that has passed through an infielder other than the pitcher, the base runner is NOT out and play continues.
26. In the case of an injured player on the field, all play stops and the runners advance to the base they were going to, the ball is dead.
27. Pitchers are allowed to pitch 2 full innings per game. If they leave an inning they have pitched a full inning, meaning if they throw 1 pitch they have completed that inning allowed.
28. Pitch counts starts with a 1 and 0 count. (Batter starts with 1 ball and 0 strike) This is being done in an effort to help move the game along, and allow for more innings to be played. **During the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd innings the players will pitch and continuation will occur if decided upon with both coaches.** This is highly encouraged. If the pitcher throws four balls to a batter before the batter hits the ball or strikes out, then a coach from the batter's team will come out and pitch to the batter. The strike count does not reset until she gets a hit or strikes out. The umpire will call strikes when the coach is pitching, so called strike outs are possible. If a pitcher hits 3 batters with the ball during the inning that she is pitching, she will be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game and another pitcher will be brought in to finish the inning. A relieving pitcher will be allowed 5 warm up pitches. **Pitching machine will be utilized by Mokena on their own fields for their own teams. Bulldogs and Bobcats have agreed but will utilize Coach pitch for their respective organizations/teams.** This rule is being reviewed for playoffs.
29. If a Coach is unable to throw strikes it will be the Umpires decision to ask for another Coach to come in and relieve to ensure the game continues. This will be enforced to ensure as many innings as possible can be completed.
30. During the 4th, 5th, and 6th innings the coaches of the batting team will pitch if agreed upon by both Coaches at beginning of game or end of 3rd inning. This will be decided on at the beginning of the game if a respective team does not have pitching strength after 3 innings. This will be implemented if needed so the girls can continue to focus on the fundamentals of the game at the same time keep the game moving. The umpire will call balls and strikes; however, there will be no walks allowed (either because of four balls or hit by a pitch). When a coach is pitching, the player playing the pitcher's fielding position will stand on the coach's glove hand side. The coach will only touch the ball to defend himself/herself.
31. When the 5th batter comes to bat in an inning there are automatically two outs. The maximum runs per inning per team are 5.
32. No slaughter rule will be applied and good sportsmanship by all Coaches is expected. This level of play is to encourage fundamental growth and most of all a FUN experience.
33. Score will be kept and reported at end of games at designated Central location. Playoffs will occur 1 week after end of Season and format will be determined by Bobcats, Bulldog and Mokena Softball leadership.

34. Coaches may call time out for pitcher encouragement only 3 a game are allowed. Defensive coaching shall be done from the bench area and behind the fence.
35. Chatter is permitted; however, no one is allowed to tell the batter to swing or make remarks toward the batter.
36. **No protests are allowed, umpires will make final decisions. These rules are in addition to A.S.A. Softball rules. Common sense should also be used while coaching and umping this age group.**
37. **Good Sportsmanship is expected of all players, coaches and parents. Blatant disregard (taunting, arguing, etc.) of Good Sportsmanship warrants immediate removal of the player for the remainder of the game. Additional penalties may be assessed against the player upon review by the Bobcats' organization.**