

GIRLS SOFTBALL

League Rules

Changes for 2010 in yellow

PROGRAM

1. These leagues are designed for girls interested in playing recreational softball. The different leagues are designated below. The League Commissioner must approve exceptions.
 - a. **Coach Pitch** - This league is designed for girls in the 1st and 2nd grade.
 - b. **Minors** - This league is designed for girls in the 3rd and 4th grade.
 - c. **Majors** - This league is designed for girls in the 5th and 6th grade.
 - d. **Seniors** - This league is designed for girls in the 7th thru 12th grade.
2. Shirts, hats, and socks are included in the application fee paid to DYA. Players will provide coordinating shorts or white baseball pants. Players are to wear these uniforms when playing in any game. Metal cleats are NOT allowed in any league.
3. *Coach Pitch* is a non-competitive league, with all games played for the enjoyment and instruction of the players. Coaches are permitted in the field of play during an inning. There are no post-season tournaments. Each player is awarded a participation trophy at the conclusion of the season.

Minors, Majors, and Seniors are competitive leagues. Coaches are *not* permitted in the field of play during an inning as is allowed at the Coach Pitch level, **unless they are entering as a Minors' coach-pitcher as described below in Section 42.** League play will conclude with a post-season tournament. Tournament winners (1st & 2nd place) will be awarded trophies. Games will be scheduled Monday through Saturday. Tournament games and rainout games may be scheduled on Sundays if necessary. Paid umpires are provided.

4. All *Coach Pitch* players are assigned to teams by the league.

In all leagues players returning to the league are assigned to last year's team, unless specifically asking for a new team.

In *Minors, Majors, and Seniors* leagues players new to any league or returning players requesting to change teams within the league will be assigned to a team via a draft conducted by the league commissioner.

5. All programs are staffed by volunteers, including coaches and assistant coaches.

GAME PROCEDURES

6. All weekday evening games will begin by 6:00 P.M. or 6:15 P.M. All teams must field 8 players to start a game. **EXCEPTION:** Games may be delayed up to 15 minutes as a grace period. **Coach Pitch:** If a team has fewer than 8 players after the 15-minute delay, the 2 coaches will determine if any innings will be played. No new innings will start after 1 hour and 30 minutes or 7 complete innings. Note that the start of an inning is the time when the last out was recorded in the bottom of the previous inning. For example, the last out of an inning is made at 7:28 pm. The next inning may be played even though the batter may not come to the plate through delays until 7:31 pm or later. **Minors, Majors, Seniors:** Teams with fewer than 8 players after the 15-minute delay must forfeit the game. No new innings will start after 1 hour and 45 minutes from the scheduled starting time, regardless of when the game actually started. Note that the start of an inning is the time when the last out was recorded in the bottom of the previous inning. For example, the last out of an inning is made at 7:58 pm. The next inning may be played even though the batter may not come to the plate through delays until 8:01 pm or later. A game will consist of 7 innings or 1 hour and 45 minutes, whichever comes first.

7. Games must be played at the scheduled time unless approved by the League Commissioner.

8. **RAIN-OUTS:** the league commissioner will reschedule Rainouts, as necessary. Teams are guaranteed 12 games during the regular season. If one or both of the teams cannot show up for the rescheduled game, it will be forfeited.

Minors, Majors, and Seniors: Games suspended by weather are considered complete if 4 innings have been played (3.5 if the home team is winning). If fewer than that have been played, during the regular season the game will be considered “rained out.” During the tournament the game will be rescheduled and will start where the rained out game was suspended.

9. There will be no batting practice on the field of play 15 minutes prior to the game’s scheduled starting time. Furthermore, there will be no soft-toss or pepper permitted at any time. Soft-toss is hitting the ball into any fence as a batting practice alternative. Pepper is hitting/bunting a soft-pitched ball back to the pitchers. Violations of the “soft-toss” or “pepper rule” can result in forfeiture of the game. Both are dangerous to players and fans and soft-toss is destructive to the softball facilities.

10. Each team shall have 7 minutes of infield warm-ups prior to the start of each game. Home team shall have infield warm-ups first. All infield warm-ups will be completed by 1 minute before scheduled starting time. This time will be shortened or eliminated in order to keep games on schedule. On Saturday games, time may not permit infield warm-ups. Games are to be kept on time.

11. Games are to be kept moving along. One (1) minute between inning halves is an acceptable limit. Coaches should have players ready to bat, take to the field, etc. There will be no infield/outfield warm-ups between innings. **Coach Pitch:** You are

encouraged to have parent helpers at the bench to assist the girls getting helmets on and off and getting the catchers ready to go. Minors, Majors, Seniors: Pitchers will be allowed 3 warm-up pitches on the field. All youth catchers who warm up a pitcher must wear a mask.

12. Players are to remain on the bench unless involved in play. In play includes warming up, on deck, base coaching, or other legitimate direction from the coaches.
13. Players, coaches and scorekeepers are the only persons allowed to be on the team bench after the umpire starts the game. Fans are required to remain well back of the playing field. Coach Pitch: Players and fans situated directly behind the backstop must move if requested to do so by a coach. Minors, Majors, Seniors: Players, coaches and fans are not permitted behind the backstop.
14. Coaches are expected to exercise influence over the fans. Games can be terminated for fan unruliness; but this is an extreme measure and is to be avoided except under the most extreme circumstances. Coach Pitch: Game termination is at the sole discretion of the coaches. Minors, Majors, Seniors: Game termination is at the sole discretion of the umpire. Players, coaches and fans may encourage pitchers or batters but not to the point of influencing calls made by the umpire or swings taken by the batter (e.g. shouting “good pitch” before the ball has crossed home plate and the call has been made by the umpire is not permitted).
15. If a player is hurt, the game will be stopped at the appropriate time (when the play is over). Concern for the player is the responsibility of all coaches. Said player will sit out that half of the inning in which she was injured. The player’s health comes first.
16. HOME TEAM WILL SET UP THE FIELD. Both teams are required to clean up their respective areas, picking up paper and disposing in trash barrels. Visiting team will take the bases up and put them in the dugout or on the bench.

	Pitching Location from Home Plate	Base Length
Coach Pitch	-	45 feet
Minors	35 feet	60 feet
Majors	35 feet	60 feet
Seniors	40 feet	60 feet

17. Minors, Majors, Seniors: Head Coaches only may question the umpires. He/she may call for a conference to question a rule and both head coaches ONLY and the umpire may be involved. Time limit for such a conference is three (3) minutes. No player/ fan is allowed to question or argue with an umpire’s call. NO HEAD COACH CAN QUESTION A JUDGMENT CALL, ONLY THE RULES. Coaches are to approach the umpire, not yell from the benches.
18. Minors, Majors, Seniors: UMPIRE BUDDIES: An umpire buddy is a volunteer parent/parents from each team who will help the coach control unruly fans. They are to remind the fans who the league is for. Umpire calls will be final whether the coaches agree or not. The “Buddy” is available to eliminate unnecessary arguing.

PARTICIPATION REGULATIONS

19. All players listed on the roster shall be included in the batting order (if at the game). Players arriving after the start of the game will be added to the end of the line-up. Every team member will be in the batting order even if that team member was not in the field the prior 1/2 inning.
20. Each player must play at least two innings on defense each game, provided:
- a. She is present at the start of the game.
 - b. She has not been a discipline problem.
 - c. She does not leave prior to the end of the game.
 - d. She is not injured during the game.
 - e. Coach Pitch: The game lasts four (4) full innings.
Minors, Majors, Seniors: The game lasts five (5) full innings.
- i.e. Each player must play the following number of innings based on the number of defensive innings played for by her team that game. No player will sit the bench in consecutive innings.
- 2 innings, if the game is 4 innings
 - 3 innings, if the game is 5 innings
 - 4 innings, if the game is 6 or more innings
 - 5 innings, if the game is 7 innings (Minor, Major leagues)
 - 4 innings, if the game is 7 innings (for Senior league)
21. There will be no designated hitter. Everyone plays the field at some time during the game. Free substitution of players is allowed.
22. Players arriving after the 13th out of the game occurs need not be played, but may be at the discretion of the head coach. Said late player is added to the bottom of the batting order, if played.
23. Each team shall rotate all players through infield and outfield positions throughout the season. The outfield (LF, LC, RC, RF) is considered one position. No player should have to play outfield every game if this is not what she wants to do.
24. If a player is a discipline problem, the amount of time on defense will be at the coaches' discretion. The coach is to inform the player and his parent(s) why the player did not play two (2) innings on defense. Before the game, the coach is also to inform the opposing coach of any player who will not be playing two defensive innings. All players are to be treated fairly with respect to other players. Minors, Majors, Seniors: Failure to comply with these rules will place the coach's action up for review by the league director and subject the team to forfeiture or subject the coach to disciplinary action.

25. **Not Enough Players:** If a team will have 10 or fewer players in Minors or Majors, or 9 or fewer players in Seniors, it may call up a player from the league immediately below its level, i.e. Minors may call up Coach Pitch, Majors may call up Minors, Seniors may call up Majors. The player called up to play may not miss her own game to play up. All the players on the team's roster will play at least the same number of innings as the player called up—provided the team's regular player(s) is/are present at the start of the game. No called up players may pitch. The called up player must be reported to the opposing team as such and must wear her own team jersey.
26. **Bat or any other items thrown in anger may subject said player to disqualification.** There will be no warnings for objects thrown in anger. A warning will be issued to any player who throws the bat after hitting a foul ball. The second instance of a thrown bat in the same game by a player shall result in her being declared out, regardless of whether the ball was hit fair, foul, or not at all. A player who throws the bat after hitting a ball in fair territory shall immediately be called out and all base runners are returned to their bases. No warning shall be issued for thrown bats on fair balls.

GROUND RULES

27. **Ground rules will be discussed before each game. Coaches and umpires have the responsibility for making any changes to the ground rules to protect the player or batter in the game.**
28. **Home team will sit on the first base side. The home team will take the field first and will be the last team to bat in the last inning.**
29. **Base coaches' boxes are in play. Base coaches must stay in the vicinity of the base they are coaching. Base coaches are not permitted to influence play by touching a base runner (i.e. pushing a runner off the base, grabbing a runner to prevent overrunning the base, etc.). Base coaches must be adults only.**
30. **A ball that lands in fair territory beyond first (1st) or third (3rd) base and subsequently bounces out of play shall be a ground rule double. Any ball dropping in front of an outfielder and bounding out of play shall be ruled a ground rule double.**

LOCAL RULES:

Batting:

31. **Bunting is not allowed in Coach Pitch. PENALTY: Batter is out, runners return to their bases.**

Bunting will be allowed in Minors, Majors, and Seniors. An unsuccessful bunt (missed or foul) with two strikes is an automatic out.

32. Dropped third strike.

Coach Pitch, Minors, Majors: The batter is out on any third strike.

Seniors: Dropped third strike rule will be observed, i.e. when the catcher fails to catch the third strike before the ball touches the ground when there are fewer than two outs and first base is unoccupied, or any time there are two outs, the batter/runner may attempt to reach first base.

33. If a player leaves the game for any reason, and their “at bat” comes up, the players “at bat” will be skipped without penalty.

Baserunning

34. Whether or not to slide is at the discretion of the player. However, on a close play, a runner not sliding must avoid collision or be called out.

35. Lead-Offs are not permitted.

Coach Pitch: Base runners shall not be off the base prior to the pitched ball reaching home plate. PENALTY: base runner is OUT.

Minors, Majors, and Seniors: Base runners shall not be off the base prior to the pitched ball being released from the pitchers hand. PENALTY: base runner is OUT. (There are no lead-offs in this league).

36. For purposes of softball leagues the definition of stealing shall include advancing a base by stealing, advancing a base on wild pitches, and advancing a base on passed balls.

Coach Pitch: Stealing will not be allowed in this league.

Minors: Base stealing is allowed from second to third base when there are two outs. If there is a runner on first base during an attempted steal, the runner on first cannot advance to second. If there is an overthrow on a steal attempt at third, the runner may not advance to home and any runner on first may not advance to second.

Majors: Players may only steal second or third base and only when there are two outs. Players may only steal one base at a time. Stealing home is not allowed under any circumstances. Furthermore, a base runner cannot advance to home on a pick-off play at any base.

Seniors: Stealing is allowed in this league.

37. **Coach Pitch, Minors, and Majors (only):** When a ball is hit to the outfield, the ball is in play until the ball is returned and controlled by any player who is positioned within the baseline. The ball becomes dead and time is called, when the ball is in the possession of any fielder positioned within the baseline. The runner(s) will stop at the closest base, but may be tagged out if not on the base.

Pitching & Scorekeeping (Minors, Majors, and Seniors only)

- 38. Pitches must be thrown underhand (max. 3' arch). Pitchers must start with both feet touching the pitcher's plate (a.k.a. pitcher's rubber). All steps must be forward. The ball needs to be released on the first step, while still maintaining contact with the pitcher's plate with the other foot. If a ball is pitched illegally, it is a ball on the batter. The arch of the ball is to simulate fast-pitch, but accuracy is more important than the speed.**
- 39. Pitchers may pitch 3 innings maximum per game. Any part of an inning pitched counts as 1 of the 3 innings. The 3 innings do not have to be pitched consecutively.**
- 40. A pitcher must pitch to at least one batter and until the batter is out or on base before being removed as the pitcher.**
- 41. STRIKE-OUT is when a batter has accrued 3 strikes by swinging or called by the umpire. A foul ball is counted as a strike. The third strike cannot be determined by a foul ball.**
- 42. *Minors*: The will be no walks allowed. Upon ball four, a coach-pitcher from the offensive team will enter the game to continue pitching to the batter. The count on the batter will return to the same count as was prior to ball four. (For example – If a pitcher walks a batter after a 3-1 count, the coach will enter the game against the batter with the same 3-1 count). The player-pitcher will remain on the field within three feet to the left or right of the coach-pitcher. All defensive plays must be made by the player-pitcher and the coach-pitcher shall head toward the foul line in a direction away from the play.**

Coach-pitchers must be ready to enter the game throughout their team's offensive series as to not delay the timing of the game. The coach shall abide to the pitching arc and speed requirements as outlined in Section 38.

Coach-pitchers will finish the batters count until the ball is put into play or a strike out is recorded. Each pitch thrown by the coach-pitcher will be recorded as a strike regardless of its location. If a pitch is fouled with two strikes, a replacement pitch will be awarded.

If a hit ball strikes a coach-pitcher unintentionally, then the ball will remain live and in-play. If a coach intentionally touches a hit ball, the ball shall be dead and the batter will be out.

There will be no bunting, stealing, or batters hit-by-pitch while a coach-pitcher is in the game.

43. Majors and Seniors: WALKS are four balls called by the umpire. There is no “WALK LIMIT” per inning. Coaches are encouraged to change pitchers who are struggling to throw strikes.

44. There will be no limit on 2 strike fouls.

45. The home team will provide the official scorer for each game. Each team must have a scorekeeper and each scorekeeper should verify the score between innings.

Each team will be permitted two (2) free visits to the mound per game to consult with the team’s pitcher. On the third visit to the mound during the game, as well as on each subsequent visit to the mound, the pitcher must be removed as the pitcher. She may continue to stay in the field and play another position.

For purposes of this rule, any time the pitcher is changed during an inning, it counts as a visit to the mound, regardless of whether or not the coach actually leaves the bench and goes to the mound. Thus, if during the inning the coach does not go to the mound, but directs the pitcher to trade positions with another player, it shall be treated as if he/she had made a trip to the mound to make the change and the team shall be charged accordingly with a trip.

Defense & Fielding:

46. *Coach Pitch, Minors, and Majors:* there will be 10 fielders (4 outfielders). Teams are permitted to play with fewer than 10 players on the field, but must have at least eight players on the field.

***Seniors:* there will be 9 fielders (3 outfielders).**

47. There is no infield fly rule in any league.

48. Out-of-play shall be that area beyond a line (real or imaginary) extending indefinitely from the outside poles of the backstops, parallel with the foul lines. The umpire shall rule whether the ball has gone out-of-play and will make the appropriate rulings.

Play on overthrows shall be:

- a. If the ball goes out-of-play, the runner(s) is awarded the base she is going to at the time the ball is thrown, plus one additional base.
- b. If the ball remains in play, the runner(s) may advance at her own risk.

49. End of an inning:

***Coach Pitch:* An inning is completed when three outs have been recorded, or ten (10) players have batted, whichever occurs first. In the case of a maximum 10 batters in an inning, if Team A has 13 players present, only ten (10) may bat in any inning. If Team B has only eight (8) players, it may bat all eight, plus the next two may bat for a total of**

ten maximum in the inning. The head coach is responsible for notifying the umpire and the opposing head coach that the tenth (final) batter is at the plate.

Play on the last (10th) batter shall occur as though there were two outs. All play terminates the instant a fielder gets the ball to ANY BASE AHEAD OF ANY RUNNER. Any runs scored ahead of the out will count, unless the 10th batter is out on a natural out (ex: fly ball that is caught).

Minors: A team's at bat is completed when three outs have been recorded or five (5) runs have been scored in the inning.

Majors: A team's at bat is completed when three outs have been recorded or six (6) runs have been scored in the inning.

Seniors: A team's at bat is completed when three outs have been recorded.

Additional COACH PITCH Rules and Procedures

A team coach or other parent designated by the coach will pitch to his/her team. Pitches must be thrown underhand (max. 3' arch). The arch of the ball is to simulate fast-pitch, but not the speed.

Two defensive coaches are permitted on the field.

If the pitching coach or the defensive coach is hit by a batted ball, the ball is DEAD. The runners return to their bases and the batter will re-bat. If a thrown ball strikes the coach, the ball is LIVE and play continues as if the coach had not been struck.

Players are permitted six (6) attempts to put a ball in play. If the player does not hit the ball on the sixth try, he/she is out. **EXCEPTION:** If a player hits a foul ball on the sixth attempt, she will have an additional attempt. There are no walks in this league.

Scorekeeping is at the discretion of the head coach. Softball instruction is the focus, not winning or losing.