



# 2019 Girls Youth Softball Rules

## League Philosophy:

The philosophy of the league is to promote participation in softball in a fun and safe environment, to develop fundamental skills and to teach the rules of the game. By participating, we hope the players learn sportsmanship and display respect for other players, coaches, and officials.

## General Rules:

The official rules of the American Softball Association (USA/ASA) with the following exceptions:

1. The officials' and supervisors' collective authority and jurisdiction will be in effect at and around the playing area at all times.
2. No statistical records will be given out.
3. There shall be a minimum of seven (7) players in order to start or continue a game. A minimum of five (5) is allowed for T-Ball & Coach Pitch. Failure to field the minimum number of players shall result in a forfeit. *\*Umpires are not required to stay once a forfeit is declared.\**
4. There shall be a maximum of ten (10) players on the field defensively.
5. Only players and coaches of the teams playing are permitted to occupy the field, team benches, and dugouts.
6. No games may be added or rescheduled without the authorization of the Recreation Department. Any games suspended by an official prior to regulation play shall be rescheduled and replayed entirely.
7. A maximum of 6 innings will be played or a time limit of 1hr 15min. No inning will start after the time limit without agreement from both coaches.
8. An inning is over when a team scores **five** runs in one inning or three (3) outs occur.

## Participation Rule:

1. Coaches will strive for equal playing time for all participants.
2. All players shall field by the third inning and play a minimum of two innings.
3. Each player must play at least two full innings of defense and offense.
4. There are free substitutions for all players, including the pitcher, although the batting order shall not be altered once a game is started.

## Equipment:

1. All players shall be in their City of Ukiah issued shirt in order to be eligible to play.
2. Players are prohibited from wearing jewelry.
3. All players need to wear a glove while on the field.
4. All batters must wear league-approved helmets with a face-mask (excludes T-Ball & Coach Pitch) while at bat and a helmet (face-mask not required) on the bases.
5. Bats not identified as "Official Softball" or "USA/ASA" bat will not be permitted (i.e. "Little League", "Baseball", or similar bats are prohibited). (T-Ball bats may be used in the T-Ball & Coach Pitch divisions).
6. Catchers shall wear chest protectors, leg guards, mask and helmet for Machine Pitch and Up. Only helmet, mask and chest protector are required for T-Ball & Coach Pitch.

7. T-Ball Division will use 9" size soft t-balls. Coach Pitch (1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup>), Machine Pitch (3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup>) and Player Pitch (5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>) will use 11" softballs.

### **The Playing Field:**

1. Bases are 60ft apart for Coach Pitch and up. Bases for T-Ball are 50ft apart.
2. For T-Ball, Coach Pitch and Machine Pitch, a foul strike arc shall be made from baseline to baseline in front of home plate on a *three-foot radius from the back point of home plate*.

### **Pitching:**

1. Pitchers must have their pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate at the start of delivery and release of the ball. Stepping off of the pitcher's plate before release of the ball will result in a "no-pitch."
2. Pitching distance: Machine Pitch will be 35 feet. Grades 5 – 8 will be 35 feet. For T-Ball, the pitcher's mound will be 30ft from the point of home plate (batting tee).
3. An expanded strike zone will be utilized at the umpire's discretion, *please encourage your players to swing if the ball is close*. Coaches should check with umpires before the game starts if there are questions about the strike zone. (Let's be a good example, PLEASE DO NOT ARGUE)
4. A batter is out on the third strike, regardless if the catcher catches the ball or drops it.

### **Batting:**

1. Bunting is not allowed. If a player bunts a ball into fair territory, they shall be called out. Chopping down on the ball so that the same effect as a bunt is accomplished, even though the batter swings through the ball, shall be considered a bunt.
2. All batters must wear helmets with face masks. (This excludes T-Ball & Coach Pitch)
3. The third strike foul rule is not in effect. A foul ball on the third strike does not constitute an out.
4. All players in the game shall remain in the batting order.
5. T-Ball & Coach Pitch will bat through the line-up, clearing the bases after the last batter (no outs recorded).
6. Coach Pitch (Grades 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup>) will have the coach of the team *batting* throw the pitches to batters. Coaches will determine the level of player and pitch accordingly. In the case of the batter *not* getting a hit after **3 pitches**, the player will then hit off a T.
7. Grades 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> will have a pitching machine. Batters will receive normal pitch counts and play accordingly.
8. In the Machine Pitch Division, batted balls which strike the Pitching Machine/Coach will be a dead ball and the batter will be awarded first base.
9. All players present during the game will be placed on a continuous batting order (all divisions).

### **Base Running:**

1. No runner in shall advance on a dropped third strike, passed ball, or a wild pitch (all division).
2. No lead off shall be taken at any base. Stealing is not allowed, players may only advance on a batted ball or a walk (all divisions).
3. For T-Ball & Coach Pitch, base runners cannot pass another base once the ball is in a defensive player's possession.
4. Sliding is permitted only in grades 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> and may be done only feet first. Runners must slide or give up their right to the base (get out of the way) on a force play.
5. When a defensive player has the ball or is about to receive the ball, the runner must make every attempt to avoid contact with the defensive player covering or be declared out. Errant throws drawing defensive player into the path of the runner is not interference. The runner is out if she runs out of the base path to avoid being tagged out.

6. All runners must wear helmets.
7. Courtesy Runners are allowed at the discretion of the opposing manager for injuries only.
8. Runners must tag up on fly balls.
9. When the ball goes out of play on an overthrow, all runners will be allowed one base in addition to the base they were going to.

### **Coaches, Players, and Spectators:**

1. The coach is responsible for distributing rule information to the team members and parents and will be the single point of contact with the Recreation Department.
2. Coaches need to talk to parents and players before or during the first practice to explain the leagues philosophy to them and answer any questions that they may have. This meeting will reduce potential problems and give the parents and players a greater appreciation for what we are attempting to accomplish. Problems should be first addressed at the coach's level.
3. All of the personnel on the team must be registered as either players or coaches. All additions and/or reassignments of players will be done by the Recreation Department. Coaches are *NOT* allowed to practice any players who have not registered with the City of Ukiah. Any team using players who are not registered with the City of Ukiah will forfeit all games that the player(s) participated in. Coaches may not, in any way, attempt to recruit players for their team or influence the reassignment of players to better their team.
4. Allowances will be made for the younger players. This is an instructional level league; coaches and officials work together to teach rules and techniques.
5. Good sportsmanship should be practiced at all times, not just during the game.
6. Unnecessary roughness to equipment will not be tolerated.
7. Managers, coaches, players, parents, and officials are prohibited from using alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, vape or e-cig products during league activities.
8. Any abusive language, physical gestures or untimely questioning of calls directed at an official, supervisor, player, coach, or spectator is grounds for ejection. Coaches are responsible for controlling players and spectators.
9. No fighting or other aggressive behavior will be tolerated. This will result in ejection from the game without warning. Those who violate this rule will face termination from further league participation.
10. A player, coach, or spectator may be warned or ejected from a game by any league official. A team is responsible for its spectators' actions. Any disturbances will result in game sanctions or potential disqualification for the team involved. An ejected player, coach or spectator will be asked to leave the game site and will not be allowed to participate in the next scheduled game. Further disciplinary action will be at the discretion of the Recreation Department.