

# RBBA Softball Youth Fastpitch Rules



Spring 2026

RBBA Softball follows National Federation of State High School Associations Rules for Fastpitch Softball with some modifications. The modifications are intended to address the developmental aspects of the younger leagues, ensure player safety and facilitate the equitable participation of all players.

These rules will be used at all games. Coaches should not deviate from these rules and must have a discussion and mutual agreement on all rules at the plate meeting before the game with the umpire for 10u and 13u games.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

- For all divisions, the home team must provide 2 game balls for each game. For 10U and 13U, the ball must have a .47 Max COR and 375 compression. Umpires will check ball specifications so the balls must have these markings.

	Rookie - 8U	Minors - 11U	Majors - 14U
Ages	Girls in K -2nd Grade	Girls in 3rd – 5th Grade	Girls in 6th – 8th Grade
Size of Ball	11" (.47 Max COR / 375)	11" (.47 Max COR / 375)	12" (.47 Max COR / 375)
Distance of Bases	60'	60'	60'
Distance of Pitching Plate	35'	35'	40'
Length of Game <sup>1</sup>	Complete 6 innings or 105 minutes	Complete 6 innings or 105 minutes	Complete 7 innings or 105 minutes

#### 1. Length of Game – ALL Divisions:

- The game clock will start at the scheduled time. If teams are not ready, this does not delay the start of the clock. The pre-game conference will be held five minutes before the start of the game or during the game time if the clock starts but teams are not ready. Games that start before the scheduled time will still end within the established time limits and not at the time they would have ended if the games started at the scheduled time.
- The last inning is the inning being played at the time the 90-minute time limit is reached. All regular season games will have a 105-minute maximum time limit. The time limit begins from the start time of the game declared by the umpire.
- If a batter is up at the 105-minute time limit, the batter will finish her at bat.
- If the last inning cannot be completed, the score reverts to the end of the previously completed inning. (Home team always has the final at bats, away team runs can't count)
- On Saturdays, all teams must quickly clear the field and dugouts at the 105-minute time limit so the next game can start on schedule. As they approach the 105-minute time limit, teams are highly encouraged to begin to pack up and organize gear (team and personal gear) to facilitate a speedy exit from the field and respective dugouts.

## UMPIRES AND FIELD COACHES

	Rookie - 8U	Minors - 11U	Majors - 14U
Umpires	Coaches <sup>2</sup>	Provided by CASO	Provided by CASO
Field Coaches	Offensive and Defensive <sup>2</sup> (see below)	1st and 3rd base Coach	1st and 3rd base Coach

### 2. Umpires – Rookie – 8U Division:

- The defensive team is allowed to have two coaches behind the infield to help instruct the defensive players.
- The offensive team is allowed to have three coaches, the Coach Pitcher, 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base coaches.
- The first base coach makes all calls at first base and fair/foul balls on the first base side of the infield.
- The third base coach makes all calls at third base and fair/foul balls on the third base side of the infield.
- The Coach Pitcher makes all calls for plays at second base, at the plate, determining the ten-foot rule, strikeouts and determining when play stops on defensive plays. The Coach Pitcher also makes the final call in all plays where there are disputes.
- The base coaches must be outside the baselines. Coaches assisting in the defense should be behind the infield or in a position that does not obstruct play. Coaches must consult pre-game on coaching positions to ensure agreement and avoid potential disputes.

## RUN RULES

	Rookie - 8U	Minors - 11U	Majors - 14U
Runs allowed per inning	3 Runs All Innings	4 Runs 1st, 2nd and 3rd inning	5 Runs 1st, 2nd and 3rd inning
Continuation <sup>3</sup>	No	No	No
Mercy Rule <sup>4</sup>	No	10 Runs after 5 innings	10 Runs after 5 innings

### 3. Continuation:

- There is no continuation. The runs allowed per inning apply to innings 1-3. The runs allowed per inning are capped even if runs are accumulated beyond the limit during a play in the field. For the Minors and Majors Divisions runs are unlimited beginning in the 4<sup>th</sup> inning.

### 4. Mercy Rule:

- There is no mercy rule for the Rookie - 8U Division. Mercy rules will apply to the Minor and Major Divisions.

## PITCHING RULES

	Rookie - 8U	Minors - 11U	Majors - 14U
Pitcher <sup>5</sup>	Coach Pitcher	Player / Coach Pitcher	Player
Hit By Pitch Limit (Above the Knee)	N/A	3 Max.	3 Max.
Hit By Pitch <sup>6</sup>	No	Yes	Yes
Intentional Walks	N/A	N/A	Not Allowed

### 5. Coach Pitch – Rookie – 8U Division

- Coaches will pitch to their own teams and will not interfere with the ball if they are hit into play. If the coach or a bucket is hit by a ball, "dead ball" will be called. Players will advance one base as required.
- Coaches will pitch up to 6 pitches to each batter. Foul balls on the 6<sup>th</sup> or additional pitches will not be an out and will result in an additional pitch.
- Coaches may take one extra pitch beyond the 6-pitch limit to account for one bad pitch. A pitching coach must verbalize or communicate which pitch is the bad pitch before adding the seventh pitch.
- Coaches should pitch from 35 feet but can move closer to home plate and adjust the arc as needed (No closer than 30 feet).

### Coach/Pitcher – Minors – 11U Division

- There are NO walks. Once the Player Pitcher has thrown ball 4, the offensive team's coach steps in and throws a maximum of 5 pitches. A foul tip on the fifth or subsequent pitches results in another pitch.
- The strike counts carry over from where the player pitcher left off. The batter will either get a hit, strike out, or be called out after the 5th pitch from the Coach Pitcher. Only foul balls can extend the number of pitches beyond the 5-pitch maximum.
- Base runners are not permitted to steal when the coach is pitching. Leading is permitted if done legally. The umpire(s) will enforce the rule for leaving early. If runner leaves early a team warning will be given in the first instance and an out for any subsequent violations.
- Pitches should be thrown with as little arc as possible. The coach pitch ball should not go above the pitcher's head. If a pitching coach is struck by a hit, "dead ball" is declared, the batter is awarded first base, and runners advance a base only if forced to advance.
- The coach can pitch from the pitcher's mound, the Distance to Pitcher (General Information), or distance in between but no closer than 30 feet.

### 6. Hit by Pitch – Majors – 14U and Minors – 11U Divisions

- Any ball that hits a batter inside the batter's box is considered hit-by-pitch; the batter does not have to attempt to move out of the way from being struck by the pitch.
- In the Minors – 10U – Division, coaches and umpires can agree that batters are not considered hit-by-pitch if the pitch hits the ground first.

## BATTING RULES

	Rookie - 8U	Minors - 11U	Majors - 14U
Batting Lineup <sup>7</sup>	Coach Pitcher	Player / Coach Pitcher	Player
Balls and Strikes <sup>8</sup>	No (6-Pitch Limit)	Yes (No Walks)	Yes
Foul Ball on Last Pitch	Continue at-bat	Continue at-bat	Continue at-bat
Intentional Bunt <sup>9</sup>	N/A	2 attempts (PA) per inning	Yes
10-Foot Rule <sup>10</sup>	Yes (Line drawn before game)	N/A	N/A
Deadball - Ball hits Coach Pitcher	Batter Awarded 1st base	Batter Awarded 1st base	N/A
Thrown Bat	One Warning per Team. Next thrown bat is an immediate dead ball and batter is declared out	One Warning per Team. Next thrown bat is an immediate dead ball and batter is declared out	One Warning per Team. Next thrown bat is an immediate dead ball and batter is declared out

### 7. Batting Lineups – ALL Divisions

- Players who arrive after the first pitch of the game will be added to the end of the lineup. If a player leaves the game and/or is unable to bat, her place in the lineup is skipped and an automatic out is NOT taken. The only exception is player ejection by the umpire, and an automatic out will be taken (see 20 below).

### 8. Balls and Strikes – Minors – 11U Division

- There are NO walks. Once the Player Pitcher has thrown ball 4, the offensive Coach Pitcher steps in and throws a maximum of 5 pitches. The strike count will continue from where the Player Pitcher left off. The batter will either get a hit, strike out, or be called out after the 5th pitch from the coach. If the fifth pitch is a foul tip, it is a strike and the batter is out if it is the third strike.

### 9. Bunting Rule – Majors – 11U Division

- Batters may only be able to bunt from Player Pitchers and not Coach Pitchers. Only a maximum of two plate appearances per inning may show a sacrifice bunt, whether a successful bunt is laid down or not. The batter must square around and show bunt before or as the pitcher begins her pitching motion for her bunt attempt to be legal. If the batter squares after the pitch is released, no pitch shall be declared, and the count will be unchanged from what it was before the pitch was released. Other bunting techniques including, but not limited to, slapping, drag bunting and fake bunting are not allowed within the Minors – 10U Division.

### 10. Ten Foot Rule – 8U Division

- A batted ball must go forward at least ten feet on the ground in fair territory to be a fair ball. If the batted fair ball does not go beyond 10 feet then it is an immediate dead ball and the batter returns to the box. Defensive players can make plays on all foul balls, including popups behind the and if the ball is caught, the batter is declared out. Teams must use this rule unless otherwise agreed to by both coaches at the pre-game meeting.

## 11. Bats – ALL Divisions

- All players in all divisions must use approved fastpitch softball bats; baseball bats and slow pitch softball bats are not authorized. The umpire shall remove an illegal bat and have it replaced with a legal bat. The batter will not be declared out but will remain at-bat. There are no ejections due to an illegal bat in our RBBA rules. Bats must have one of the logos shown below.



## 12. Warming Up Batters – ALL Divisions

- Batting warm-ups must take place in an area that is out-of-play and away from spectators. The on-deck batter may warm-up in the batter's circle but must be alone. Only one on-deck batter is always permitted on the field. Because a player is not considered a batter until she steps in the batter's box, only one on-deck batter is permitted at the start of any half inning. All warm-ups with toss, tees, hitting sticks, bat sleeves or any other equipment other than the player's bat, must take place in an area out of play and away from spectators.



## BASE RUNNING RULES

	Rookie - 8U	Minors - 11U	Majors - 14U
Courtesy Runner <sup>13</sup>	No	Yes	Yes
Infield Fly Rule <sup>14</sup>	No	Yes	Yes
Stealing / Advance on passed ball <sup>15</sup>	No	Yes (Cannot Advance Home)	Yes
Sliding <sup>16</sup>	Yes (Feet First Only)	Yes (Feet First Only)	Yes
Diving Back to Base	N/A	Yes	Yes
Advance on Overthrow to 1st Base <sup>17</sup>	No	Yes (Max. 1 base)	Yes
Advance on Overthrow to 2nd or 3rd Base <sup>17</sup>	No	Yes (Max. 1 base except on attempted steal)	Yes
Dropped 3rd Strike <sup>18</sup>	No	No	Yes
Stealing 2nd Walk <sup>19</sup>	No	No	Yes
Collision Rule <sup>20</sup>	N/A	Called by Umpire	Called by Umpire

### **13. Courtesy Runner – Majors – 14U and Minors – 11U Divisions**

- A courtesy runner may be used for the player who is currently listed as the catcher or pitcher of record. Pitchers and Catcher of record are declared at the start of the game and can be changed on defense. The courtesy runner cannot run for a future change at Pitcher or Catcher.
- The courtesy runner will be the last completed at bat. If there is no completed at-bat in the first inning, then the courtesy runner is the last batter in the batting order.

### **14. Infield Fly – Majors – 14U and Minors – 11U Divisions**

- An infield fly is a fly ball (not including a line drive or an attempted bunt) which can be caught by a fielder with ordinary effort. The rule applies when first and second bases (or when first, second and third bases) are occupied with less than 2 outs.

### **15. Taking Leads when Stealing – Minors – 11U Division**

- The umpire will give one team warning for a player leaving a base early on a steal. After that team warning, the umpire will call players out for leaving the base early.

### **16. Penalty for Not Sliding – Majors – 14U and Minors – 11U Divisions**

- If a play is being made at the base to which a runner is going, other than first, and she does not slide, a team warning shall be given. If another player on the same team does not slide under similar circumstances, she shall be declared out.

## 17. Overthrows – Minors – 11U Division

- During defensive play, a batter-runner advancing to first or a base runner who was initially on first base CAN advance to second base on an overthrow to 1<sup>st</sup> base that remains in play. They cannot proceed any further if the ball remains in play. This limitation applies only to the runner at first base. All other runners on base at the time of the overthrow are not limited to one base. If the ball is still in play on an overthrow to first, the defense can attempt to make a play on a runner going to second base after an overthrow without liability of giving up any additional bases to that runner (i.e., runner limited to one base).
- A base runner on first base CAN advance to 2<sup>nd</sup> base on an overthrow as the result of a pickoff attempt of that base runner by the catcher. Any base runner on or going to first base that chooses to advance on an overthrow will run at their own risk of being thrown out at second base (unless the umpire awards second base to the runner), and cannot continue past second base in that series of play, even if the ball is overthrown at second base in a sequential throw during the same play.
- A base runner at 3<sup>rd</sup> base CANNOT advance home on an overthrow on a pickoff attempt of that base runner by the catcher. A base runner stealing 3<sup>rd</sup> base CANNOT continue to advance past 3<sup>rd</sup> base on an overthrow by the catcher. If a runner advances to home, the umpire shall declare time, and return the runner to third base.
- For a ball thrown out of play on an attempted play at 1<sup>st</sup> base or on a pickoff attempt, the umpire will award two bases from the base occupied when the throw left the player's hand. The base occupied by a batter runner is home, so the award is 2<sup>nd</sup> base. For a pickoff play at first base, the base occupied is first base, so the award is third base. Home will not be awarded for a throw going out of play on a play at third base.

NOTE: This is recommended so the umpires and coaches know that the rule for an out-of-play ball is different than for the items related to a ball that remains in play.

## 18. Dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> Strike – Majors – 14U Division

- When the catcher fails to catch the **third strike** before the ball touches the ground and there are fewer than two outs and first base is not occupied at the time of the pitch or any time there are two outs, the batter may advance to first base with liability to be put out.

## 19. Stealing 2<sup>nd</sup> Base on a Walk – Majors – 14U Division

- A runner who was walked can attempt to steal 2<sup>nd</sup> base if it is a continuous motion and they **do** not stop or pause after touching first base. Runners at 3<sup>rd</sup> base may advance home if a play is attempted on the runner advancing to second base.

## 20. Collision Rule

- If during a play at the base where a runner is advancing, there is a collision with a defensive player, either from not sliding or just base running, the umpire shall determine if the collision was incidental or malicious. If the collision was incidental and did not result in interference, a team warning shall be given. If a second baserunner collides with a defensive player, either from failing to slide on or just base running, she shall be declared out.
- If the umpire determines the collusion was malicious, the player shall be pronounced out if she has not yet scored and then be ejected from the game. If she has scored, she is a retired runner and can only be ejected. If a player is ejected, that team will take an out for that player's position in the batting line up when it comes up each time after an ejection.
- Players ejected should not leave the dugout, unless accompanied by a parent/guardian to leave the field complex.

## 21. Other Equipment and General Game Notes

- **Jewelry:** All jewelry, other than stud earrings, must be removed prior to the game. Hard adornments to control a player's hair, including beads, are permitted and do not need to be removed prior to or during a game. Jewelry worn for religious purposes, such as string on the wrist, does not have to be removed. Ornamental religious jewelry such as necklaces and bracelets with crosses or the Star of David do not fall under the religious exemption and must be removed.
- **Headwear:** Headwear worn for religious purposes must be made of non-abrasive, soft material and fit securely such that it is not likely to come off during play. If, in the judgement of the umpire, the headwear inhibits a helmet from being worn properly, the player cannot bat or coach a base. An out will be taken for her lineup position. Headwear worn for medical reasons and not religious reasons must be identified to the umpire at the pregame conference.
- **Cleats:** If players wear cleats, metal cleats are not authorized in any division. All players who wear cleats must wear rubber-mold cleats; cleats, however, are not mandatory. If a player is found to be wearing metal cleats during a game, the cleats shall be removed and replaced with acceptable footwear. If acceptable footwear is not available, the player shall be declared out and restricted to the bench for the remainder of the game with an out taken in her lineup position.
- **Helmets:** All batting helmets worn at 10U and 13U must be NOSCAE approved and have a permanently attached classic caged face protector. The "C flap" is not allowed.
- **Warming up Pitchers:** If Anyone under the age of 18 who is warming up a pitcher prior to or during a game must wear a catcher's mask. This applies to both players and non-players.
- **Base Coach:** Any player under the age of 18 coaching a base must wear an approved batting helmet with a classic caged face protector. Youth under 18 not affiliated with the team are not covered by insurance and cannot coach a base.

## DEFENSIVE PLAYER RULES

	Rookie - 8U	Minors - 11U	Majors - 14U
Minimum Players to start a game	6	7	7
Maximum Players <sup>22</sup>	10	10	9
Outfielders	4 outfielders - must begin play behind all infielders and bases	4 outfielders - must begin play in the outfield grass	3 outfielders - must begin play in the outfield grass
Defensive Inn. Min. <sup>23</sup>	3 Innings Min (1 inning infield)	3 Innings Min (1 inning infield)	3 Innings Min (1 inning infield)
Defensive Inn. Max. <sup>24</sup>	3 Innings Max. at one position	3 Innings Max. at one position	3 Innings Max. at one position
Pitcher Inn. Max. <sup>24</sup>	N/A	3 Innings Max. until 6th inning and beyond	3 Innings Max. until 6th inning and beyond
Stopping Play (Defense)	Player with possession within a baseline as called by Coach Pitcher	Umpire Time	Umpire Time

### **22. Maximum Players on the Field – Rookie – 8U and Minors – 11U Divisions**

- Teams may use up to 4 outfielders in the Rookie and Minors Divisions. If teams have less than 10 players, they may borrow players from the opposing team to play in their outfield if teams agree at the pre-game meeting. Teams must have the minimum number of players to start a game, or the Umpire will be required to leave the field.

### **23. Defensive Innings Minimum – ALL Divisions**

- Players should play a minimum of 3 innings every game, with one inning at an infield position. During run-capped innings it is essential to make sure that every player plays at an infield position at least once. 3 inning minimums are challenging for games that don't extend beyond 4 innings. Coaches are reminded that these are developmental games and are encouraged to be honest and fair.
- During playoff games it is still important to play everyone on your roster as intended.

### **24. Defensive Innings Maximum – ALL Divisions**

- Players should not play any single position more than 3 times per game, with the exception to specific Player Pitcher and Player Catcher rules. An inning played is counted when a pitch has been thrown.
- Player Pitchers are limited to 3 innings until the start of 6<sup>th</sup> inning. We encourage teams to utilize developing pitchers within the run-capped innings. An inning counts once a pitch is thrown, so if you change pitchers mid-inning, each pitcher that threw a pitch that inning counts as an inning pitched.
- Catchers are the only position players can play more than 3 innings per game. It is still encouraged that you try to utilize more than 1 player at the catcher position.

## ADDITIONAL ROOKIE – 8U DIVISION RULES

- **Unoccupied Outfield Position Rule:** Some 8U teams may not have sufficient players to field 10 players on defense. For those games and with coordination between 8U coaches before the game, if a ball is hit into the outfield and the defensive team does not have a player in an outfield position, offensive runners are permitted to advance no more than two bases.
- **Catchers at 8U:** teams may play with catchers if they wish to do so. One team may choose to use a catcher and the other may not (i.e., both teams do not have to play with catchers). Coaches will discuss catchers prior to the beginning of each game and plan for the safe retrieval of softballs behind batters at the backstop if catchers are not used.
- **8U Batters Hit by Pitch:** a pitch that hits a batter is deemed unhittable and does not count against the batter and her six pitches. At the discretion of the two coaches, a player hit by a pitch may be awarded 1st base, but they may also choose to continue the at bat.
- **Hits to Outfield:** 8U batters who hit the ball that reaches the outfield - whether the defense makes a play on the ball or not - may advance no more than two bases at the discretion of the batter's coach. Coaches may amend this rule during their pre-game meeting if they wish to limit bases available to runners.

## ADDITIONAL MAJORS – 14U AND MINORS – 11U DIVISION RULES

- **Minimum Players:** For the minimum number of players, if coaches agree and ensure appropriate-sized teams for all games, players from another team can fill in positions for the opposing team to avoid a forfeit and ensure enough players. No borrowing other team's players for playoff games.
- **Lightning/Suspended Play:** If at any time lightning is seen or thunder is heard at the field, all play must be stopped immediately and all players, coaches, and fans need to evacuate the area and seek shelter. Play cannot continue until there has been a 30-minute waiting period even if weather conditions appear to have improved. The 30-minute wait period begins anew with each new thunderclap or lightning strike. Lightning can strike from as far as 10 miles away. If a 30-minute wait interval begins with less than 30 minutes remaining in the no new inning time limit, the game is complete. The onus of removing a team or individual from an athletic site in the event of lightning activity is on the coach supervising the activity. The safety of all team members rests with that coach.
- **Concussion Awareness:** If a player has a suspected concussion during a practice or game, that player is to be immediately removed from that activity and is not allowed to participate in a practice or game until they have a note from a doctor allowing them to play. Coaches should report these incidents to the appropriate points of contact within RBBA and CYO if applicable.
- **Coach/Adult Ejections:** Any coach or adult ejected from the game shall be ejected from that game and the next game. The ejected coach or adult must leave the confines of the field and be out of sight and hearing of the umpire. The commissioner for the affected organization will ensure that the second game ejection is completed and provide confirmation to the Softball Assigner before the next game for that team. If a coach or player threatens an umpire, that individual will be suspended for one year from the date of the incident unless a shorter period is agreed upon in writing by both parties. Any individual who is suspended for a year is not allowed at any place in the complex, including the parking lot.
- **Player Ejections:** A player ejected from a game is only ejected for that game. If a player is ejected in a second contest or targets a player with malicious intent they could face additional suspension from play.