

Bollinger 8U Softball League Rule Book

League Philosophy:

The purpose of the 8U Softball League is to provide a fun, positive, and instructional environment where players can develop fundamental softball skills while learning teamwork, sportsmanship, and a love for the game. Player development will always take priority over the outcome of the game.

Game Format:

- Games will consist of **6 innings** or a **1 hour and 15 minute** time limit, whichever comes first.
- **No new inning** may begin after the **1 hour and 15 minute** time limit has expired.
- An inning officially begins immediately after the final out of the previous inning is recorded.
- Games that are tied at the end of regulation may end in a tie unless otherwise determined by the league.

Umpire Fees:

- League will assign umpires for each contest
- The **home and visiting teams will split the cost of the umpire equally.**
- **Both teams must pay their portion of the umpire fee at the plate during the pregame meeting** before the game begins.
- If an umpire is unavailable, both head coaches may agree to play the game with a mutually agreed-upon substitute or reschedule the game if necessary.

Pitching Format:

First Half of the Season:

- All batters will hit using **coach pitch**.

Second Half of the Season:

- Players will begin pitching to batters.
 - The pitching rubber will be set at **35 feet** from the back point of home plate.

- All player pitchers must begin each pitch with at least one foot in contact with or directly behind the pitching rubber.
- The **35-foot pitching distance** will be used for all games during the player-pitch portion of the season.
- **No walks** will be awarded.
- If a batter receives four balls, a coach from the offensive team will step in and finish the at-bat using coach pitch.
- When the coach enters, the **strike count stays the same**. For example, if the count is **2 balls and 2 strikes**, the coach begins pitching with a **2 strike count**

Strikeout & At-Bat Rules:

- A batter is **out after three strikes**.
- There is **no dropped third strike**. The batter is out and may not run to first base.
- A **foul ball with two strikes is not a strikeout**. The batter continues hitting until they:
 - Put the ball in play,
 - Swing and miss for strike three, or
 - Take a called third strike.
- There is **no infield fly rule**.
- The at-bat continues until the batter either **puts the ball in play or strikes out**.

Batting:

- Teams will **roster bat**, meaning every player present will bat in the lineup regardless of their defensive position.
- Players arriving late may be added to the bottom of the batting order.

Defensive Alignment:

- Teams will play with **10 defensive players**:
 - **6 Infielders**
 - **4 Outfielders**
- Outfielders should begin each play on the grass or at an appropriate depth determined by the umpire or league officials.

Inning & Run Rules:

- Games are scheduled for **6 innings**.
- Each half inning ends when either:
 - **3 outs are recorded**, or
 - The **offensive team scores 6 runs**, whichever occurs first.
- The **maximum number of runs an offensive team may score in any half inning is 6 runs**.
- No new inning may begin after the **1 hour and 15 minute** time limit has expired.
- Run Rules are as follows:
 - **12 runs after 3 innings**
 - **10 runs after 4 innings**
 - **8 runs after 5 innings**

Sportsmanship:

- Coaches are responsible for promoting good sportsmanship among players, parents, and spectators.
- Only the head coach may respectfully discuss rule interpretations with the umpire.
- Umpire decisions are final.
- Unsportsmanlike conduct by players, coaches, or spectators may result in warnings or removal from the game.

End-of-Season Tournament:

- The league will conclude with a **double-elimination tournament**.
- **Tournament seeding will be determined by each team's regular season record.**
- In the event of identical regular season records, tiebreakers will be determined by the league using head-to-head results.
- Tournament games will follow the league rules unless otherwise communicated by the league before the tournament begins.
- The tournament champion will be crowned at the conclusion of the double-elimination bracket.

League Goal:

The goal of this league is to teach the fundamentals of softball while creating a positive experience for every player. Coaches are encouraged to provide equal learning opportunities, emphasize effort and improvement, and help players build confidence throughout the season.