



Chapel Hill Department of Parks and Recreation 8U Girl's Softball Local Rules

The primary goal of the 8U Softball Division is to teach softball fundamentals and build player confidence with the understanding that most girls are entering the sport at this level. The 8U division is a division for girls who are 8 years old or younger on January 1st of the current year. The 8U division utilizes coaches pitch to enhance player experience at the plate and on the field.

The following local rules apply to the Chapel Hill Parks and Recreation 8U Division. Any rule, topic, or situation not specifically covered in this document will automatically defer to the Babe Ruth League Softball Rule Book. The league commissioner will have final ruling on any and all disputes.

Uniform/Protective Gear

1. Playing uniform is defined as team jersey and softball pants. Visors are optional. Shirts must be tucked in and visors must be facing forward.
2. Players must be in full uniform when playing a league game (regular season or post season). Uniforms are NOT required for practices.
3. No player will be allowed to wear watches or jewelry during practices or games.
4. The catcher is required to wear all protective gear, including shin guards, chest protector, and catcher's helmet.
5. Catchers may use any glove they choose.
6. The players that play the pitcher, 1st base and 3rd base positions are REQUIRED to wear a protective face mask. All other infield positions are NOT required to wear protective facemasks.
7. All offensive players are required to wear batting helmets with a face mask when anywhere on the field of play or in the batting cage. Runners are not to remove their helmet until fully in the dugout area.

Equipment and Field

1. Bat Rules. Only metal or composite softball bats with a maximum barrel diameter of 2.25 inches are permitted for use. Tee ball bats designed for baseball are not permitted. All bats will bear a stamp of approval by a national softball governing body (I.E. USSSA, ASA, NSF, etc).
2. Field Dimensions. 8U games will be played on ASA 10U level field dimensions. The pitcher's plate will be located at 35ft from the back of home plate, the pitcher's circle will be 12ft in diameter and all base paths will be 60ft in length.

Pre-Game

1. Players are not permitted on the field until their coach arrives and it's time for warm-ups. Only players, coaches, and adult volunteers are permitted in the field and/or in the dugout.
2. Pre-game warm-up will be conducted in the outfield area of the assigned dugout.
3. Coaches must provide their batting order to the opposing team and town representative at least five (5) minutes before game time. A team's batting order will consist of every player that is on the roster and present for the game.



4. Games must start on time. Up to ten (10) minutes grace is allotted to prevent a forfeit; however, the time limit begins at the scheduled game time. The extra time waiting for extra players comes out of the scheduled play time.
5. Each team will keep a score book, however the official scorebook will be kept by the Parks and Rec department representative present at the game.
6. A team may begin a game with no less than seven (7) players in uniform. If seven (7) players are not available at game time then that team must forfeit.
7. Practices are scheduled by the team's coach in conjunction with the league commissioner.

General Game Play

1. Before the first pitch occurs, coaches will agree on the game start time and the home team scorekeeper will record it. The games can be delayed or suspended due to darkness or adverse weather conditions. On the rescheduled game date, the game will resume exactly where play left off, including outs already recorded, runners on base, and with the batter who was at bat when the game was called. No game can officially end due to darkness or weather.
2. All games will be six innings. Regular season games cannot commence a new inning after **75** minutes, regardless of the number of innings that have been completed. A new inning is considered "started" at the same instant that the 3rd out of the previous inning is recorded. The home team shall be entitled to complete any inning started regardless of score, in order to enhance player experience.
3. In cases of rain, a game will be complete if three (3) innings have been completed (2.5 innings if the home team has the lead). Rained out games will be played as specified by the league commissioner. Rained out games will generally be made up in practice slots, when available.
4. The Parks and Rec game rep will provide new 11" softballs for each game. Both teams will bat the same game ball during play. If a ball becomes unusable or is hit out of play a new, approved ball can enter the game.
5. Each team will be allowed one timeout per inning with a time limit of 60 seconds.
6. A five (5) run rule will be in effect for every inning.
7. Players must complete one (1) full inning in the field before they can be substituted, unless there is an injury.
8. Any player may re-enter the game as long as the player being replaced has played one (1) complete inning.
9. If a batted ball hits the coach pitcher prior to a fielder touching the ball, the play will be called dead, the batter will receive a re-pitch, and the pitch does not count against the batter. **No runners may advance.**
10. The coach pitcher is not allowed to interfere with the defensive teams' ability to play the ball. The coach pitcher must make an attempt to get out of the way of the defensive player, including the line of sight and the throwing lane. **If no attempt is made by the coach pitcher, then the batter will be called out and no runners may advance.**
11. The transition between dirt and grass will be used for determining infield vs. outfield hits, and whether a player is in possession of the ball in the infield or in the outfield.

Offensive Game Play

1. Offensive coaching will be limited to coaches at first and third base.
2. A continuous batting order will be used. All players on the team roster (that are present) will bat, regardless of their play defensively. If a player is unable to continue playing in the game, due to illness or injury, their batting spot will be skipped without penalty.



3. The batter must have both feet in the batter's box when the ball is hit. If one (1) foot is out of the box, the batter will be called out.
4. Any player throwing a bat will receive a team warning on the first occasion. The second time a batter throws a bat the batter will be called out.
5. Each batter will receive five (5) pitches or three (3) strikes, whichever comes first, unless the third strike or fifth pitch is a foul ball. In this case the batter will receive another pitch until she fails to make contact or puts it in play.
6. No bunting will be allowed. A full swing must be taken and the ball must travel beyond the ten (10) foot circle from home plate to be a fair ball. A ball remaining in the ten (10) foot home plate circle will be called foul.
7. Baserunning rules:
 - a. Base runners are allowed up to one (1) base on an infield hit (ball does not travel into the outfield grass). If the ball travels to the outfield grass, even if touched by an infielder from the defensive team, it will be considered an outfield hit.
 - b. Base runners are not allowed to advance on an overthrow of any base by a defensive player throwing from within the infield.
 - c. On an outfield hit, time is called when the ball makes contact with the infield dirt or is in the possession of a player who is standing in the infield. The ball should be thrown to a player, but it is not a requirement. The half-way point, which is drawn in chalk between the bases (1st to 2nd, 2nd to 3rd, and 3rd to home) will determine what base the runner is granted. If the player is past the line when the ball hits the infield dirt or players glove they receive the next base, if not, they return to the prior base. If multiple runners are on base they can only advance as far as the lead runner. For example, if the runner between 3rd and home DOES NOT reach the line and the runner between 2nd and 3rd DOES, both runners must go back since two (2) runners can't occupy the same base.
 - d. Base runners leaving before the ball is hit will be called out. Runners missing a base will also be called out.
 - e. Base runners are encouraged to slide feet first on all close plays, except when running through first base.
 - f. Base coaches can not touch the base runners while the ball is in play. If a coach touches the runner, they are called out. If this is the 3rd out, any runs scored during this play do not count.
 - g. If a base runner makes contact with a fielder on or around a base or in the base paths without having the ball that impedes their progress to advance to another base, defensive interference will be called. As a result the runner will be awarded the next base, unless they reach that base already in the process of the play.
8. The coach or adult volunteer of the batting team will be responsible for pitching. The coach pitcher can pitch from anywhere inside of the circle, they do NOT have to be standing on the rubber. However, they do have to stay inside of the circle upon completing the pitch.
9. Pitching before the defense is ready will result in a "no pitch" and a warning from the umpire, if it continues the coach or adult volunteer may be removed from the mound and not allowed to return for that game.
10. The catcher must have a pinch runner if on base with two (2) outs. The pinch runner will be the player who made the last out. If less than two (2) outs the catcher must run for herself.

Defensive Game Play



1. Each player must play a minimum of one (1) inning of defense in the infield at a position other than catcher. No player can sit out a second inning of defense until all players have sat out an inning of defense.
2. The defensive team is allowed two (2) coaches on the field. The coaches must be in the outfield grass behind first base and third base in foul territory. Defensive coaches are not permitted in fair territory.
3. No chatter will be allowed towards the batter at any time. Tasteful cheers are permitted at all times.
4. There is NO infield fly rule in 8U softball.
5. Any ball hit out of play is live until the defensive player holds up their hands signaling the ball is out of play.
6. Each team can field ten (10) players on defense. The 10th player can be placed on any position outside of the infield. Only six (6) players are allowed in the infield, including the catcher.
7. Players in infield positions may not cross the plane of the coach pitcher until the ball is batted.
8. The player pitcher's position will be with at least one (1) foot in the twelve (12) foot pitcher's circle surrounding the pitching rubber. The player cannot be in front of the coach pitcher until the ball is batted. The pitcher's circle is an established safe area in an attempt to protect players from possibly becoming injured. Defensive players may field a batted ball in the pitcher's circle.

Officiating/Sportsmanship

1. All games will have one (1) umpire. The umpire does not have to stand behind home plate. They will be in a position where they can keep track of the number of strikes and/or pitches while also being in position to make calls on batted balls in the infield. The umpire has authority over the field of play, and has the authority to eject coaches, assistant coaches, players and spectators at any time while at the field of play. The league representative may be consulted to interpret local rules; however, the umpire's ruling is final.
2. Only head coaches are allowed on the field to discuss any call with the umpire. If needed, scorekeepers, assistant coaches, or the league representative may be called in.
3. Any coach, player, or spectator showing unsportsmanlike behavior (verbal or physical) or throwing any piece of equipment in an unsportsmanlike manner will be ejected.

Weather Policy

1. Coaches will decide the adverse weather policy for their own practices. For games, the coaches will communicate and let the commissioner know over two (2) hours before game time, to allow adequate time to notify parents and umpires. Umpires need to be cancelled no later than two (2) hours prior to game time.
2. When there is any lightning visible in the area, play will immediately stop and players will seek the nearest shelter. After a minimum of fifteen (15) minutes from the last lightning strike, play may resume at the umpires' discretion, keeping the safety of all the children and spectators at the highest priority.