

2026 3rd – 5th Grade Summer Softball League Rules

❖ Teams:

- Teams are to be composed of girls who have just completed 3rd, 4th and 5th grades.
 - No stipulation to the age of the player exists, just grade completed
- If a community has multiple teams, the community is encouraged to make the teams as even as possible
- Parents, players, and coaches are expected to treat the umpires with respect and not scream at, ridicule, or argue with the umpire. If the head coach disagrees with a call, they may discuss it with the umpire, but the umpire will have the final say.
 - Coaches are in charge of maintaining the respect for their team and crowds.
 - If a fan is being disrespectful,
 - ◆ the first offense is to be a warning from the coach
 - ◆ The second offense the fan should be asked to leave the premises.
 - ◆ An umpire or coach reserve the right to request a fan leave without a warning if the fan is causing enough of an issue

❖ Equipment

- Players are required to wear the following:
 - Numbered uniform shirts/jerseys
 - Helmets with facemasks when batting
 - Rubber cleats may be worn, but metal spikes are prohibited
 - Fielders' masks will be required for the pitcher, 1st baseman, and 3rd baseman.
 - Masks are encouraged for all positions within the infield
- Games will be played with an 11" Optic Yellow Ball. At least one is to be provided by the home team
- Home teams are responsible for providing umpires to stand behind the plate
 - Umpires are to be of high school age at least
 - Base umpires are not required
- Wearing Jewelry is prohibited. This includes earrings, rings, watches, bracelets and necklaces
 - Religious and medical pendants are exceptions to this rule. Religious jewelry is to be taped down and won under the uniform. Medical pendants should be taped down but may be visible

❖ Field Set up

- Pitching distance will be 35'
- Bases are to be 60' apart
- 8' pitching circle is required on the field

❖ Scheduling

- All games are to be played as scheduled by the league unless a team is unable to field 8 players

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- If the team can't play on a scheduled night due to not enough players, lack of field availability, uncooperative weather, or unplayable field condition, it will be up to the coaching staffs to contact one another to reschedule the game
 - All schedule changes must be relayed to the league director
- Games are to be 6 innings or a time limit of 1 Hour and 15 Minutes, whichever comes first. This is not a drop-dead time limit. The current inning is to be finished even if the time limit is up.
 - A new inning may be started up until the time limit has been reached.
- If a game is started then shortened due to weather, the game will need to be rescheduled and resumed from the point at which it was stopped. Coaches should note how much time has been played up to that point.
 - If there have been 4 completed innings, the game will be considered complete
- AT THE FIRST SIGHT OF LIGHTNING OR SOUND OF THUNDER THE GAME IS TO BE ENDED!!
- ❖ Line-ups
 - Teams will have 10 players on the field at a time
 - There must be 4 players in the grass as a 5th infielder is not permitted
 - All players must be placed in the batting order
 - Coaches are encouraged to exchange lineups prior to the game start
 - All players must play 2 innings on defense unless 4 full innings were not able to be completed
 - Players can be freely substituted in and out on defense
 - Once the batting order is set, it is not permitted to be changed
 - Courtesy Runners may be utilized for pitchers and catcher
 - Courtesy runners should be the last recorded out
 - Teams are not required to submit a roster prior to the season, but a roster will be required prior to the tournament start.
- ❖ Gameplay
 - A maximum of 5 runs may be scored in an inning for the first 5 innings
 - No run limit exists in the 6th inning
 - There is a run rule of 15 runs after 4 innings
 - Batters will start with a 1 and 1 count
 - If a batter misses strike 3 or the umpire calls strike 3, the batter is out, even if the catcher drops the ball.
 - Sliding is encouraged on all close plays except at first base
 - All batted balls are playable and there will be no infield fly rule
 - When in play, runners may advance one base on an overthrow
 - If a catcher throws the ball back to the pitcher, and it gets past the pitcher, runners are permitted to advance, even Home.
 - Batters are encouraged to make an attempt to get out of the way of pitches.

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- If the batter is hit by a ball in the air, they will be awarded first base
- If the ball hits the ground, then the batter, it will be considered a ball, and the batter will continue the at bat
- A pitcher that hits 3 batters in the same inning must be taken out for the remainder of the inning, but will be permitted to return to pitching
 - If a pitcher hits 5 batters in the same game, they will not be permitted to pitch for the rest of the game
- Base runners are permitted to steal and lead off once the ball crosses the plate.
 - Players are not permitted to steal home on a pitched ball that gets past the catcher
 - If base runners leave early, the team will be given a warning the first time and the player will return to the base they left.
 - any subsequent times, the runner will be called out.
- After the 3rd consecutive walk, the hitting teams coach will come out, and the 3rd walked batter will have 3 pitches from the coach to put the ball in play. If they fail to do so, the batter is out.
 - If the 3rd pitch is fouled, the player will not be out, rather the at bat will continue until they put the ball in play or they strike out
 - If the batted ball hits the coach, it will be considered a dead ball, and all runners will be permitted to advance one base
 - If the 3rd consecutive walk is due to a hit batter, the next batter will be considered the 3rd batter. A hit batter will count as the 1st and 2nd consecutive walks in the set of 3
- Due to time constraints, players are not permitted on the field of play unless they are on defense, hitting, or on deck
 - Any celebrations are to take place in the dugout and should not interfere with the pace of play
- ❖ Standings
 - For standings and tournament seeding, the following tie breakers will be used:
 - Overall record
 - Head-to-Head record
 - Record vs. the highest seed outside of the tie
 - If it's the same, continue to the next highest seed
 - Coin toss/ Random Draw
- ❖ Tournament
 - The end of season tournament will be held at Houston High School Ball Fields June 26th and 27th.
 - Rain date will be provided closer to the actual tournament
 - Additional details about the tournament are to come closer to the tournament date