



# PLAYING RULES

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## About this Manual

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### Revision History

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Consistent with the Roseville Girls Softball Operating Policy, this document was reviewed in July 2024 for the annual review by the Policy Committee.

## Section I: Administration of Rules

### USA Softball Rules

In accordance with our affiliation with USA softball, Roseville Girls Softball (RGS) will adhere to the rules set forth in the current version of the USA softball "Official Rules of Softball". The managers and coaches are expected to read and be familiar with the rules and definitions in this book. Umpires are expected to enforce these rules unless superseded by a "League Adopted Rule".

### League Adopted Rules

As a recreational league, Roseville Girls Softball has adopted a set of league specific rules for the purpose of:

1. Instilling league pride and cohesiveness.
2. Balancing instruction with competition.
3. Providing equitable opportunities for players with varying skill levels.

*Important:* League adopted rules supersede rules from the USA softball rule book.

### **Tournament Specific Rules**

Special rules may be put into effect for mid-season tournament or postseason tournament play. All such rules will be announced and posted prior to the start of the tournament.

### **Interleague Play and Fall Ball**

At any time in which Roseville Girls Softball plays interleague with another recreational league program, the NorCal Girls Softball Rule Set will be used. A copy of those league rules can be found on the NorCal girls softball website.

Exception: During spring interleague games hosted by RGS, only a female staff member may speak to an umpire during a game.

## **Section II: General Rules- All Divisions**

### **Part A: Uniforms and Gear**

Uniform: Wearing of the complete uniform is required. These items include the League issued uniform shirt (worn tucked in) and required pants. If a visor is to be worn, it shall be the one provided by the League.

Additional Clothing: Defensive players and base runners may wear sweatshirts or jackets in any color except for yellow. They must be zipped or buttoned if applicable. Batters may wear sweatshirts or jackets provided their uniform number is displayed. Undershirts may be worn at any time if the sleeves are not yellow, and it is tucked into their pants. All additional clothing must be appropriately sized to the player for gameplay.

Exception: T-ball and 6u are not required to have numbers on their sweatshirts or jackets.

Helmets: Batters, on-deck batters, and base runners must wear batting helmets. USA Softball requires batting helmets be fitted with an approved NOCSAE face mask. Helmets are to be worn properly which includes a snug fit. Chinstraps are optional, if worn, they must fit snug against the chin.

Bats: All bats must have the USA Softball certification stamp to be approved for play.

Exception: T-ball and 6u divisions will be allowed to use t-ball bats and/or bats that only have "Official Softball" on the bat. A certification stamp is not required.

Jewelry: No jewelry will be allowed. Earrings must be removed and may not be taped down. Exception:

Exception: A medical alert bracelet or necklace are allowed if wrapped or taped.

Team Staff Attire: All staff in the dugout or on the field, must wear closed toed shoes. No flip flops, sandals, or slides. All team staff must dress appropriately for youth sports.

## **Part B: Pre-Game**

Dugout Assignment: The home team shall occupy the 3<sup>rd</sup> base dugout. The visiting team shall occupy the 1<sup>st</sup> base dugout.

Field Set-Up: The home team shall be responsible for setting up the field.

Warm-Up Area: Teams are allowed to warm-up on their side of the field using both grass and dirt. When games are back-to-back, teams should warm-up in the far part of the outfield or another open area making sure not to encroach upon either a game in progress or pedestrian traffic.

Exception: The umpire has the authority to reduce warm-ups to start a game on time.

Line Up Cards: Each team must present a lineup card to the opposing team scorekeeper 15 minutes prior to game time.

Exception: T-ball, 6u and 8u divisions.

Team Equipment Check: Teams must display their team gear outside of the dugout for an inspection by the umpire 10 minutes prior to the scheduled game time or when instructed by the umpire.

Pre-Game Meeting: The umpire will call a pre-game meeting at least 5 minutes prior to game time. The pre-game meeting shall include the umpires plus a female representative and head coach from each team. The team representatives will show their USA Softball badges and confirm all members of their staff participating in the game are badged members of the League. All adults must be able to provide a copy of their badge upon request. If a badge is not available that person will not be allowed to participate with the team.

Official Scorekeeper/Timekeeper: The home team scorekeeper is the official scorekeeper of the game. The game time begins at the first warm up pitch. Umpires will keep the official time. It is recommended the visiting team also keep a scorebook for discrepancies (example: batting out of order).

## Part C: During Game

Interaction with Umpires: One (1) badged female representative will be designated as the point person and this person will be the only one that can interact with the umpire during the game. Shadowing the female representative is not permitted. When the female representative approaches the umpire, all other staff members must be in the dugout or in their appropriate coaches' box. The representative will report the outcome of the discussion to the remaining staff. **IMPORTANT:** Any attempt to argue with and/or intimidate an umpire will result in the offending adult being ejected from the game. Flagrant acts or repeated violations will be reported to the board for further action.

Umpiring: It is the home team's responsibility that if no umpire is present, a badge individual umpires the game.

Playing Time: All eligible players attending a game will be included in the lineup and batting order. A player cannot sit two consecutive defensive innings.

Substitutions: Unlimited defensive substitutions are allowed. No player shall be a starting substitute for two consecutive games. A player who sits the bench for the first inning of one game must play defense in the first inning of the next game.

Injury/Illness Rule: If a player is unable to complete her at bat due to an injury or illness, that player will be unable to reenter the game in any capacity. If a player becomes injured or ill while running the bases and cannot continue as a base runner, the last out may run for the injured or ill player. The injured or ill player will not be removed from the game unless she is unable to complete her next at bat.

- If the player who was removed from the game due to injury or illness leaves the playing field to go to a doctor or medical facility for immediate treatment, she will be scratched from the game. In this event, an out will not be recorded when it is her turn to bat.
- If the player who was removed from the game due to injury or illness remains at the playing field, either in the dugout, in the bleachers, or in the general game area, an out will be recorded when it is her turn to bat. In addition, the manager or head coach must notify the Chief Player Agent and complete an injury form within 24 hours of the injury or incident. Injury forms can be found on the RGS website.
- If the injury requires a visit to the doctor, a medical release must be obtained and delivered to the Chief Player Agent before the player may return to practice or play in a game.
- If a player sustains an injury outside of softball which prohibits them from participating in League activities (practices and games included), a medical release must be obtained and delivered to the Chief Player Agent before the player may return to practice or play in a game.

## **Part D: Post Game**

Field Tear Down: The visiting team shall be responsible for tearing down the field and securing all equipment in boxes. If it is the last game of the day on the field, the visiting team is responsible for dragging the field.

Trash Control: The Core Four are responsible for ensuring that the dugout and bleacher area is properly cleaned up.

Submission of Scores: Each team (10u, 12u, 14u, 16u) is responsible for entering the official game score into TeamSideline within 24 hours.

## **Section III: T-Ball Division Specific**

The rules outlined below are to be used in addition to the general league rules found in Section II of this document.

Time Limit: All T-Ball games will be played as 60 minutes finish the line-up limit.

Number of Players: For safety reasons, each team should have a minimum of five players for the game to be played. Everyone bats and everyone plays defense.

Pitching: A tee will be used for all at bats. At the halfway point of the season the coach will be permitted to pitch up to three pitches to each batter prior to the tee being used. If the third pitch is a foul ball the coach will get an additional pitch. If the batter is unable to bat the ball into play on the three coach pitches, the tee will be brought out. The coach pitcher must pitch with one foot inside the pitcher circle and may not obstruct a play nor can they become a base coach during the play that he or she has pitched. No strikeouts will be called in this division.

Offensive Restrictions: Each team will have their entire lineup hit during their half inning regardless of how many outs are made.

Baserunning: Runners can only advance one base on a batted ball. No extra bases on an overthrow. No sliding and no stealing. If a player is put out they must leave the base and return to their team dugout. Exception: The last batter of the inning will be permitted to hit a home run and run all four bases.

Defensive Restrictions: Up to six players are allowed in the infield. All other defensive players must be a minimum of 10 feet behind the baseline. Up to four (4) badged adults can be on the field to assist their players with defensive positioning.

Special Rules: A badged adult from either team shall act as an umpire for all games. Bunting is not allowed. Drop 3<sup>rd</sup> Strike and Infield Fly rules are not in effect.

Scorekeeping: Scores and standings are not kept in T-Ball.

## Section IV: 6u Division Specific Rules

The rules outlined below are to be used in addition to the general league rules found in Section II of this document.

Time Limit: All games are played within 60 minutes, finish the lineup limit.

Number of Players: For safety reasons, each team must have a minimum of five players for the game to be played. Everyone bats and everyone plays defense. Failure to meet the minimum player threshold will result in a forfeit.

Pitching: All games will be coach pitch. The coach pitcher must pitch with one foot inside the pitcher circle and may not obstruct a play nor can they become a base coach during the play that he or she has pitched. Each batter will get three coach pitches, however, if the last pitch is a foul ball the batter will receive one extra pitch. If the batter is unable to put the ball into play the tee must be used. No strikeouts will be called in this division.

Offensive Restrictions: Each team will have their entire lineup hit during their half inning regardless of how many outs are made.

Baserunning: Runners can only advance one base on a batted ball. No extra bases on an overthrow. No sliding and no stealing. If a player is put out, they must leave the base and return to the dugout.

Exception: The last batter of the inning will be permitted to hit a homerun and run all four bases.

Defensive Restrictions: Up to six players are allowed in the infield. All other defensive players must be a minimum of 10 feet behind the baseline. Up to four (4) badged adults can be on the field to assist their players with defensive positioning. If a coach is situated behind the catcher, the coach must stand behind the catcher and let the catcher throw the ball back to the pitcher.

Special Rules: Bunting is not allowed. Drop 3<sup>rd</sup> Strike and Infield Fly rules are not in effect.

Scorekeeping: Scores and standings are not kept in 6u.

## Section V: 8u Division Specific Rules



The rules outlined below are to be used in addition to the general league rules found in Section II of this document.

Time Limit: All games are played with a 90 minute, finish the batter time limit. Once time has expired, the current batter will be declared the last batter, and the game will end at the completion of the batters at bat.

Number of Players: For safety reasons, each team must have a minimum of eight players for the game to be played. Everyone bats and a maximum of 10 players will play defensively on the field. Failure to meet the minimum player threshold will result in a forfeit. No automatic outs will be recorded if playing only eight players.

Pitching: Pitching distance is 30 feet. Any player may pitch up to two innings per game. There will be no walks. If a pitcher throws 4 balls to the batter, the coach will pitch. The coach pitcher must have one foot on the pitching rubber. The coach will assume the count that the player pitcher had on the batter and each coach pitch will count as a strike. An at-bat cannot end on a foul ball, therefore if the last pitch is a foul ball, the batter will continue to receive an additional pitch until the batter strikes out or puts the ball into play. The illegal pitch will not be enforced unless it presents a distinct advantage. If the batted ball strikes the coach pitcher, the play is dead with the batter awarded first base and all other runners advance only if forced. The coach pitchers may not obstruct a play nor can they become a base coach during the play that he or she has pitched.

Offensive Restrictions: Each team will be allowed a maximum of three outs or four runs per half inning, whichever comes first.

Baserunning: Runners can only advance one base on a batted ball being fielded in the infield that has not crossed the 10 foot outfield line. Runners and batter/runner may advance extra bases while a hit ball remains in the outfield and must stop at the next base once the ball is in control in the infield. Control will be a ball caught in the glove or hand or an attempt to catch and within reach. Runners and batter/runner may be put out if they advance beyond the base they are entitled.

- No extra bases on an overthrow.
- No stealing.
- Baserunner may lead off 15 feet maximum; allowed on the release of the pitch.

Defensive Restrictions: Up to six players are allowed in the infield. All other players must be at least 10 feet past the baseline or in the grass. No coaches are allowed on the field to help defensively. Any pitch that is not put into play by the batter will be a dead ball. No back picks allowed on base runners.

Hit by Pitch: If hit by pitch by the player pitcher the batter will walk to first base. If hit by coach pitcher, the batter will receive another pitch (does not count). A pitch that hits the ground first is still considered a hit by pitch.

Special Rules: Drop 3<sup>rd</sup> Strike and Infield Fly rules are not in effect. Bunting and slapping are allowed off a player pitch; no bunting or slapping off the coach pitcher. If a batter has two strikes and bunts the ball foul, the batter will be called out.

Scorekeeping: Scores and standings are not kept in 8u.

## **Section VI: 10u Division Specific Rules**

The rules outlined below are to be used in addition to the general league rules found in Section II of this document.

Time Limit: All games are played with a 90 minute, finish the inning time limit. When time expires, if the trailing team cannot tie or take the lead due to maximum runs, the game will end once the current batter completes her at bat.

Complete Game: The maximum number of innings is six.

Run Rule: A Game will be called as complete if a team is ahead by 15 runs after the completion of three innings, 12 runs at the completion of four innings, or 8 runs at the completion of five innings.

Number of Players: For safety reasons, each team must have a minimum of eight players for the game to be played. Everyone bats and a maximum of 10 players will play defensively on the field. Failure to meet the minimum player threshold will result in a forfeit. If playing with only eight players, and out will be recorded for the ninth player's spot in the lineup.

Players Arriving Late: A player who arrives late but prior to the top of the third inning may play at the manager and/or head coach's discretion. They must be listed as the last batter on the team's lineup card and the umpire, official scorekeeper, and the other manager should be notified at the pregame conference. Important: If the player is not present when they are called to bat, and out will be recorded. The manager does have a last chance to pull the players name from the lineup at her first turn at bat, thus cancelling the out penalty, but which also forfeits the players opportunity to play. If the manager chooses not to use this option and the player never arrives, the team will continue to take an out each time that batting position is called to the plate for the rest of the game.

Players Leaving Early: A player may leave a game early, but the team will have to take an out each time she's called to bat for the remainder of the game. If the departure of this player leaves the team with less than 8 eligible players, the game will be forfeited to the non-offending team with a winning score of 7 to 0.

Pitching: Player pitch only. Pitching distance is 35 feet. No pitcher can pitch more than three innings per game. The three innings do not have to be consecutive. Any player who was an unranked pitcher during pitching evaluations may pitch up to 1 inning per game.

Offensive Restrictions: Each team will be allowed a maximum of 3 outs or 5 runs per half inning, whichever comes first. The 5-run rule will be waived after the completion of the fourth inning.

Baserunning: Baserunners may lead off after the ball has left the pitcher's hand. Stealing is allowed at one base per pitch including overthrows. Home is open (meaning you can steal home). Once the pitcher has possession of the ball in the pitcher circle, runner(s) must immediately proceed to a base. Any hesitation may result in the umpire declaring the runner out (refer to the Lookback rule in USA Softball rule book). A courtesy runner may be utilized if there are two outs and only for the catcher. The player who was the last out will be the courtesy runner.

Defensive Restrictions: Up to 6 players are allowed in the infield. All other players must be at least 10 feet past the baseline or in the grass. No coaches are allowed on the field to help defensively.

Hit by Pitch: If a batter is hit by a pitch, she shall be awarded first base. A pitch that hits the ground first is still considered a hit by pitch.

Special Rules: Drop 3<sup>rd</sup> Strike is in effect and operates as a stolen base (only one base can be taken).

Scorekeeping: Scores and standings will be kept.

Protests: The female representative may protest a game only in the instance that the rule was misapplied. Judgment calls **cannot** be protested. The female representative should notify the umpire of the protest and it should be marked in the scorebook prior to the next pitch. Play should then continue. A protest form should be filled out and forwarded to the UIC immediately following the game. The UIC will review it with the player agent for that division and make a ruling. If it is determined that the umpires call was incorrect and it affected the win or loss of the team in question, the league will reschedule the game from the time of the protest. No video replay will be accepted when determining protest.

## **Section VII: 12u Division Specific Rules**

The rules outlined below are to be used in addition to the general league rules found in Section II of this document.

Time Limit: All games are played with a 90 minute, finish the inning time limit. When time expires, if the trailing team cannot tie or take the lead due to maximum runs, the game will end. Finish the batter.

Complete Game: The maximum number of innings is seven.

Run Rule: A game will be called as complete if a team is ahead by 15 runs after the completion of three innings, 12 runs at the completion of four innings, or 8 runs at the completion of five innings.

Number of Players: For safety reasons, each team must have a minimum of eight players for the game to be played. Everyone bats and a maximum of nine players will play defensively on the field. Failure to meet the minimum player threshold will result in a forfeit. If playing with only eight players, and out will be recorded for the ninth player spot in the lineup.

Players Arriving Late: A player who arrives late but prior to the top of the third inning may play at the managers discretion. They must be listed as the last batter on the team's lineup card and the umpire, official scorekeeper, and the other manager should be notified at the pregame conference. Important: If the player is not present when they are called to bat, and out will be recorded. The manager does have a last chance to pull the players name from the lineup at her first turn at bat, thus cancelling the out penalty, but which also forfeits the players opportunity to play. If the manager chooses not to use this option and the player never arrives, the team will continue to take an out each time that batting position is called to the plate for the rest of the game.

Players Leaving Early: A player may leave a game early, but the team will have to take an out each time she's called to bat for the remainder of the game. If the departure of this player leaves the team with less than 8 eligible players, the game will be forfeited to the non-offending team with a winning score of 7 to 0.

Pitching: Player pitch only. The 12u division pitching distance is 40 feet. No pitcher can pitch more than three innings per game. The three innings do not have to be consecutive. Any player who was an unranked pitcher during pitching evaluations may pitch up to 1 inning per game.

Offensive Restrictions: Each team will be allowed a maximum of 3 outs or 5 runs per half inning, whichever comes first. The 5-run rule will be waived after the completion of the fifth inning.

Baserunning: Baserunners may lead off after the ball has left the pitcher's hand. Stealing is allowed. Home is open (meaning you can steal home). Once the pitcher has possession of the ball in the pitcher circle, runner(s) must immediately proceed to a base. Any hesitation may result in the umpire declaring the runner out (refer to the Lookback rule in USA Softball rule book). A courtesy runner may be utilized if there are

two outs and only for the catcher. The player who was the last out will be the courtesy runner.

Defensive Restrictions: Up to 6 players are allowed in the infield. All other players must be at least 10 feet past the baseline or in the grass. No coaches are allowed on the field to help defensively.

Protests: The female representative may protest a game only in the instance that the rule was misapplied. Judgment calls **cannot** be protested. The female representative should notify the umpire of the protest and it should be marked in the scorebook prior to the next pitch. Play should then continue. A protest form should be filled out and forwarded to the UIC immediately following the game. The UIC will review it with the player agent for that division and make a ruling. If it is determined that the umpires call was incorrect and it affected the win or loss of the team in question, the league will reschedule the game from the time of the protest. No video replay will be accepted when determining protest.

## **Section VIII: 14u and 16u Division Specific Rules**

The 14u and 16u divisions will interleague with other neighboring leagues and will follow NorCal Softball rules. A copy of the NorCal Softball rules can be located at:

<https://www.norcalsoftball.org/downloads>

## **Section VIII: Completed Games**

Definition of a Completed Game: All games will be considered complete as played in the 6u and 8u divisions. In the 10u, 12u, 14u, and 16u divisions, the games will be determined as follows:

Weather or Darkness: If a game is called due to rain, inclement weather, or darkness, and two full innings were completed, it will be considered an official game and will not be rescheduled at a later date.

If a game is called due to rain, inclement weather, or darkness, and less than two full innings were completed, the game will be rescheduled in its entirety at a later date.

Instances where two full innings were completed the score will not revert regardless if the home team got equal at bats.

## **Appendix: Common Rules**

<https://www.usasoftball.com/official-rulebook/>

All rules clarified below can be found in the USA Softball Rulebook online. Further questions regarding rule clarification should go to your player agent or the Roseville UIC.

### **Part A: Bunt Rule**

Rule 1: A pitched ball that is intentionally tapped with the bat, slowly, within the infield.

Rule Supplement: On A bunt attempt where the batter puts the bat across the plate and the pitched ball is out of the strike zone, a ball should be called unless the batter moves the bat toward the ball. In each of the above situations, the umpire should think in terms of priorities. First, was the pitch in the strike zone? If so, it is simply a strike. Second, did the batter swing at the pitched ball, or, in the case of a bunt attempt, did the batter move the bat toward the pitched ball? In either case, it is the plate umpire's call. If in doubt, or if blocked out, the umpire should call the pitch a ball. If the umpire calls the pitch a ball and the catcher requests the umpire to go for help, the plate umpire should only ask for help if there is doubt in their mind as to whether the batter swung at the pitched ball (Section 10- Check Swing/Bunt Strike). Missed bunt attempt with two strikes the drop 3rd strike rule applies (Rule 8, Section 1B).

Roseville UIC Comments: A batter does not have to pull a shown bunt back on a ball pitched outside of the strike zone. It is up to the umpire's judgment to determine if that batter attempted to bunt the ball by moving the bat. If a coach believes the bunt was attempted, they can have their catcher ask the plate umpire to go for help. If the base umpire says no, the bunt was not attempted- a strike is not called. If the ball was pitched in the strike zone and no attempt was made, the umpire may call it a strike regardless.

### **Part B: Drop 3<sup>rd</sup> Strike**

Rule 8- Batter-Runner/Runner: When the catcher fails to catch the 3rd strike before the ball touches the ground and there are: 1- Fewer than two outs and first base is not occupied at the time of the pitch, or 2- Any time there two outs (Section 1B).

Roseville UIC Comments: For the purposes of 10u, a Drop 3<sup>rd</sup> Strike is a stolen base. Even in the event of an overthrow, the batter-runner may not advance to second base. Doing so is at the risk of the player and should they be tagged out before reaching second base, the out stands. If they do make it to second base safely, they will be placed back on first base with no penalty.

### **Part C: Infield Fly**

Rule 1: A fair fly ball, not including a line drive or an attempted bunt, which can be caught by an infielder, pitcher, or catcher with ordinary effort when first and second base, or first, second, and third are occupied with less than two outs.

Rule 8 Batter-Runner/Runner: When an infield fly is declared and caught runners may tag-up and advance. If the ball is not caught runners may advance at their own risk (Section 4).

Roseville UIC Comments: Infield Fly is called based on the judgement of the umpires.

**Part D: Look Back Rule (Commonly referred to as Hesitation)**

Rule 8- Batter-Runner/Runner: The “Look Back” rule shall be in effect for all runners when: 1- The ball is live, 2- The batter runner has reached first base or has been declared out, and 3- The pitcher has possession and control of the ball within the pitcher’s circle. The pitcher is in the pitcher’s circle when both feet are on or within the lines (Section 7).

Roseville UIC Comments: Once the pitcher has control of the ball in the circle and all runners have stopped running, the play is considered dead. Once the play is considered dead, should a runner be off the base, they must decide to either return to that base or continue to the next base without stopping. A batter-runner is allowed to round first base up to three steps on a walk and may stop one time for not more than three seconds before deciding to stay at first or continue to second base. Should a play be attempted (pitcher raising her hand to show the ball or preparing to throw may be considered an attempted play) the ball is no longer considered dead, and the Look Back Rule is no longer in effect. Calling of the Look Back Rule is up to the judgment of the umpire.

**Part E: Rabbit Rule**

Rule 8- Batter-Runner/Runner: When four balls have been called by the umpire the batter-runner is awarded first base. Effect: 1 (Fast Pitch) The ball is live (Section 1C).

Roseville UIC Comments: The Rabbit Rule allows for a batter-runner awarded first base on four balls to continue to advance to second base. For the purposes of 10u, first base is awarded so continuing to second base would be the one steal allowed per pitch. All other runners, unless they were not forced but stole a base anyway, are allowed to “Rabbit” to the next base on a walk. The Look Back Rule is in effect for any attempted “Rabbit”, but that does not prevent the runner from continuing non-stop to the next base once the ball is in the control of the pitcher inside the pitcher’s circle.