

# City of Fayetteville Parks and Recreation

## Youth Softball League Rules – 2019



Thank you for choosing to play youth softball in Fayetteville!

### 6U (Coach Pitch/Tee Ball) League Rules

#### Field Dimensions

- *Distances and Field Dimensions*
  - All bases are set at 55’.
  - The pitching rubber is set at 35’. The pitcher’s circle has an 8’ diameter.
    - There is a 25’ pitcher’s line marked by a single, white chalk line.
  - There is a 3’ semi-circle in front of home plate.

#### Equipment

- *Bats*
  - Parks and Recreation provides each team with bats, but players may choose to use their own.
    - A 25-26” bat is recommended.
- *Cleats*
  - No metal spikes are allowed on cleats.
- *Game Ball*
  - Parks and Recreation shall provide an official 10” RIF (Reduced Injury Factor) game ball.
- *Jewelry*
  - Players may not wear any jewelry during the game. If a player forgets to remove any jewelry, then she must remove it before she bats or takes the field.
- *Uniform*
  - Players must wear provided uniforms in each game.

#### Game Play

- *Length of Game*
  - Each game shall last seven (7) innings or 50 minutes, whichever happens first concludes the game.
    - If the time limit is met, then the game shall end when the inning the time expired in is finished.
    - If the inning limit is met, then the game shall end before 50 minutes are played.
    - No inning shall start within 5 minutes of the end of the game.
- *Innings*
  - Each team bats all players on the line-up each inning.
  - Each half-inning ends immediately after the last player on the batting team’s line-up completes her “at-bat.”
  - Coaches must rotate their batting order each game so that players are able to experience different batting positions.
- *Home Team*
  - The home team shall be determined by a coin flip.
  - During the coin flip, each coach should be present and has the option to bring out two different players each game to be present as well.
- *Score*

- No score is kept in the 6U league.

## **Batting**

- *Coaches*
  - A coach from the batter's team shall pitch to the batter from the 25' hash mark or a reasonable distance in front of the player. This distance shall be approved by the umpire before any pitches are thrown.
    - To initiate a pitch, a coach shall:
      - Present the ball to the batter, then
      - Throw the ball underhand (using reasonable speed).
- *Players*
  - Each player on each team's line-up shall bat each inning.
    - Each player must wear a protective batting helmet; a helmet with facemask is optional.
  - A batter must stand wholly inside the batter's box when batting.
  - A batter is allowed three (3) pitches from her coach.
    - If a player does not hit a fair ball from the first three pitches, then she shall be allowed two (2) swings at a ball resting on a batting tee.
- *Foul Balls*
  - A batted ball that does not leave the 3' semi-circle around home plate shall be ruled a foul.
  - If a player hits a foul ball on her second swing at the batting tee, then she shall be ruled out.

## **Base Running**

- *Coaches*
  - In addition to the coach at the pitcher's hash mark, one (1) coach from the batting team may coach runners from first base, and one (1) coach from the batting team may coach runners from third base.
- *Players*
  - A player may run as many bases as the play allows. Coaches shall not 'send' girls to another base after the play has reasonably ended.
    - The umpire shall aggressively call "time" when the play reasonably ends so that as many players may bat as possible.
  - If a defensive player accidentally overthrows a ball to a base, then all players may only advance to the next base.
  - If a runner leaves a base before the ball is batted, then the ball is declared dead, and all runners return to their original position. This is not counted toward the batter's swing count.
- *Double First Base (Rule 8, Sec. 19. 51.)*
  - First base shall contain a white portion of the base that is in fair territory and a red portion of the base that is in foul territory.
  - When a play is being made on the batter-runner, the fielding team shall use the white portion of the base, and the batter-runner shall use the red portion of the base.
    - When no play is being made on the batter-runner at first base, she may use either the red or white portion of the bag.
    - After the batter-runner reaches first base, and uses the red portion of the base, then she may use either the red or white portion of the base.
- **Restrictions**
  - If a play is being made to the right of the first base foul line because of an errant throw or any other cause, then the batter-runner may use the white portion of the bag.

- **Penalties Concerning the Double First Base**
  - If either the fielding team or the batter-runner uses the incorrect portion of the base when attempting to make a play a first base, then it shall be treated as if either player “missed the base.”

## Fielding

- *Coaches*
  - Two (2) defensive coaches are allowed to be on the field with their players.
  - Coaches should encourage their players and sometimes guide them through a play. Coaches shall not physically move players during the play.
- *Players*
  - A team shall use six (6) infielders and four (4) outfielders.
  - Outfield players must remain on the edge of the grass in the outfield.
  - The pitcher must stay inside the pitcher’s circle until the ball is hit.
  - Players must be rotated through different positions in the field each game so that they gain experience in most of the positions throughout the season.
- *Dead Ball*
  - A ball shall be able to be declared dead when any player has control of the ball on the infield and the umpire declares “time,” which suspends play.
    - The umpire shall use his or her judgment to determine when to call “time.”

## Notes

- *Sportsmanship and Game Management*
  - Coaches must encourage their players to act kindly to all other players.
  - Coaches must involve each player that is present at the game.
- *Parks and Recreation Staff*
  - A Parks and Recreation staff member shall be present at each game on the field to serve as an “umpire,” but is present to help manage the game and answer any questions from coaches and parents.
  - The recreation program manager reserves the right to change the rules to better all teams, but must notify all coaches when changes have been made.



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# 8U (Pitching Machine) League Rules

## Field Dimensions

- *Distances*
  - All bases are set at 60’.
  - The pitching rubber is set at 35’.
  - There is a 16’ diameter circle around the pitching rubber.

## Equipment

- *Bats*
  - Parks and Recreation provides each team with bats, but players may choose to use their own.
    - A 27-29” bat is recommended.
    - A USSSA “thumb print” is not required on bats.
- *Cleats*
  - No metal spikes are allowed on cleats.
- *Game Ball*
  - Parks and Recreation shall provide an official game ball.
    - In 8U, the game ball shall be an 11” RIF (Reduced Injury Factor) ball.
- *Jewelry*
  - Players may not wear any jewelry during the game. If a player forgets to remove any jewelry, then she must remove it before she bats or takes the field.
- *Uniform*
  - Players must wear provided uniforms in each game.

## Game Play

- *Length of Game*
  - Each game shall last seven (7) innings or 60 minutes, whichever happens first shall conclude the game.
    - If the time limit is met, then the game shall end when the inning the time expired in is finished.
      - If the home team is winning and time expires, then the game shall immediately end.
    - If the inning limit is met, then the game shall end before 60 minutes are played.
    - No inning shall start within three (3) minutes of the end of the game.
    - Regular season games shall end as a tie if seven (7) innings are played or the time limit is reached, and the score is tied.
      - Tournament games shall not end in a tie. With exceptions stated below, the USSSA tiebreaker rule shall be used to break any ties (Rule 4, Sec. 5. 26.).
        - The USSSA tiebreaker rule shall be used to break any ties.
          - The player whom completed the last at-bat shall begin the inning on second base.
          - No substitute shall be used in the batting line-up.
          - Tiebreaker procedures shall continue until a winner is determined.
  - *Innings*
    - Each half-inning ends after:
      - There are three outs made, or
      - The team batting scores six (6) runs.
    - Coaches must rotate their batting order each game so that girls are able to experience different batting positions.

- *Home Team*
  - The home team shall be determined by a coin flip.
  - During the coin flip, each coach should be present and may bring out one different player each game to be present as well.
  - The home team **must** designate a parent to keep the official game score. Parks and Recreation staff shall be present to help train parents how to use the scoreboard.
- *Score*
  - Score is kept and displayed on the field scoreboard. No scorebook is maintained.
  - A game immediately ends if a team is winning by:
    - Twelve (12) runs after three (3) innings, or
    - Ten (10) runs after four (4) innings, or
    - Eight (8) runs after five (5) innings.

## Batting

- *Players*
  - Each player shall be included in the batting order.
  - A batter must stand wholly inside the batter's box when batting.
  - The following procedures are used for pitching delivery:
    - Batters are allowed **three (3) pitches from the pitching machine within the batter's strike zone, which is determined by the umpire "behind the plate."**
      - If the batter does not hit a fair ball after three pitches from the pitching machine, then the batter shall be allowed **two (2) pitches from the batter's coach.**
    - To initiate a pitch, a coach shall:
      - Present the ball to the batter; then,
      - Throw the ball underhand (using reasonable speed).
        - The batter's coach stands no closer at or a few steps in front of the edge of the chalk line closest to the batter. The umpire on each field will ensure that coach pitching is consistent between both coaches in a game and throughout the season.
    - A coach cannot pitch a "ball;" a ball pitched by the batter's coach must be hit fair or foul, or the ball shall be called a "strike."
  - Each player must wear a protective batting helmet with a facemask.

### *Infield Fly Rule*

- The softball infield fly rule shall not be used.

## Base Running

- *Coaches*
  - In addition to the coach at the pitcher's plate, one (1) coach from the batting team may coach runners from first base, and (one) 1 coach from the batting team may coach runners from third base.
- *Players*
  - The batter-runner and players on base may run as many bases as the play allows. Coaches shall not 'send' girls to another base after the play has reasonably ended.
    - The umpire shall aggressively call "time" when the play reasonably ends so that as many players may bat as possible.

- If a defensive player accidentally overthrows a ball to a base, all players may only advance to the next base.
- No player shall steal a base. Runners are allowed to take a 2-3' lead off once the ball is released from the pitcher's hand.
- If a player attempts to steal a base or leads too far off a base, then the play will be called dead, and all runners must return to original position. This infraction is not counted toward the batter's swing count.
- *Double First Base* (Rule 8, Sec. 19. 51.)
  - First base shall contain a white portion of the base that is in fair territory and a red portion of the base that is in foul territory.
  - When a play is being made on the batter-runner, the fielding team shall use the white portion of the base, and the batter-runner shall use the red portion of the base.
    - When no play is being made on the batter-runner at first base, she may use either the red or white portion of the bag.
    - After the batter-runner reaches first base, and uses the red portion of the base, she may use either the red or white portion of the base.
  - **Restrictions**
    - If a play is being made to the right of the first base foul line because of an errant throw or any other cause, then the batter-runner may use the white portion of the bag.
  - **Penalties Concerning the Double First Base**
    - If either the fielding team or the batter-runner uses the incorrect portion of the base when attempting to make a play a first base, then it shall be treated as if either player "missed the base."
- *Look-Back Rule*
  - The USSSA Fast Pitch Softball "look-back rule" shall not be used.

## Fielding

- *Coaches*
  - One (1) coach from the fielding team is allowed to be in the outfield to help direct the play. Coaches may not physically move a player while coaching.
- *Players*
  - A team shall use six (6) infielders and three (3) outfielders.
  - Outfield players must remain in the grass until the ball is hit.
  - The pitcher must stay inside the pitcher's circle until the ball is hit.
  - All other players must remain reasonably in their position until the ball is hit.
  - Players must be rotated through different field positions in each game so that they gain experience in most of the positions throughout the season.
- *Dead Ball*
  - A ball shall be able to be declared dead when:
    - Any player has control of the ball on the infield and umpire declares "time," which suspends play.
    - The umpire shall use her or his judgment to determine when to call "time."

## Notes

- *Umpire*
  - A trained, certified umpire shall be provided.
- *Sportsmanship and Game Management*

- Coaches must encourage their players to act kindly to all other players.
- Coaches **must maintain a civil fan base**. No fan shall address any player, coach, or umpire on the field. Fans are encouraged to ask any questions to their coach during a game or an umpire after the game.
- Coaches must involve each player present at the game.
- *Parks and Recreation Staff*
  - A Parks and Recreation staff member shall be present at each game is available to address any issue related to the program or facility.
  - The recreation program manager reserves the right to change the rules to better all teams, but must notify all coaches when changes have been made.
- *USSSA*
  - Unless a league rule conflicts, our league operates according to USSSA Youth Fast Pitch Softball rules.



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With any questions or concerns, please contact recreation program manager Dean Rawlings through email ([drawlings@fayetteville-ar.gov](mailto:drawlings@fayetteville-ar.gov)) or at (479) 444-3474.

## 10U (Fast Pitch) League Rules

### Field Dimensions

- *Distances*
  - All bases are set at 60’.
  - The pitching rubber is set at 35’.
  - There is a 16’ diameter circle around the pitching rubber.

### Equipment

- *Bats*
  - Parks and Recreation provides each team with bats, but players may choose to use their own.
    - A 27-30” bat is recommended.
    - A USSSA “thumb print” is not required on bats.
- *Cleats*
  - No metal spikes are allowed on cleats.
- *Game Ball*
  - Parks and Recreation shall provide an official game ball.
    - The game ball shall be an 11” RIF USSSA DreamSeam softball.
- *Jewelry*
  - Players may not wear any jewelry during the game. If a player forgets to remove any jewelry, then she must remove it before she bats or takes the field.
- *Uniform*
  - Players must wear provided uniforms in each game.

### Game Play

- *Forfeits*
  - At least six (6) players are required by the scheduled game time on each team for a game to begin.
    - If there are fewer than six (6) players present on at least one (1) team, then the team with fewer than six players shall forfeit the game.
    - If neither team has at least six (6) players present by the scheduled game time, then the game shall be ruled a double-forfeit.
- *Length of Game*
  - Each game shall last seven (7) innings or 60 minutes, whichever comes first concludes the game.
    - If the time limit is met, then the game shall end when the inning the time expired in finishes.
      - If the home team is winning and time expires, then the game shall immediately end.
    - If the inning limit is met, then the game shall end before 60 minutes.
    - No inning shall start within three (3) minutes of the end of the game.
    - Regular season games shall end as a tie if seven (7) innings are played or the time limit is reached, and the score is tied.
      - Tournament games shall not end in a tie. With exceptions stated below, the USSSA tiebreaker rule shall be used to break any ties (Rule 4, Sec. 5. 26.).
        - The USSSA tiebreaker rule
          - The player whom completed the last at-bat shall begin the inning on second base.



- No substitute shall be used in the batting line-up.
- Tiebreaker procedures shall continue until a winner is determined.
- *Innings*
  - Each half-inning ends after:
    - There are three outs made, or
    - The team batting scores six (6) runs.
  - Coaches must rotate their batting order each game so that girls are able to experience different batting positions.
- *Home Team*
  - The home team shall be determined by a coin flip.
  - During the coin flip, each coach should be present and may bring out one different player each game to be present as well.
  - The home team **must** designate a parent to keep the official game score. Parks and Recreation staff shall be present to help train parents how to use the scoreboard.
- *Score*
  - Score is kept and displayed on the field scoreboard. No scorebook is maintained.
  - A game immediately ends if a team is winning by:
    - Twelve (12) runs after three (3) innings, or
    - Ten (10) runs after four (4) innings, or
    - Eight (8) runs after five (5) innings.

## Batting

- *Players*
  - Each player shall be included in the batting order.
  - A batter must stand wholly inside the batter's box when batting.
  - Each player must wear a protective batting helmet with a facemask.
- *The Count*
  - **If "the count" on the batter ever becomes 3-0, 3-1, or 3-2, then the coach of the batter shall deliver the number of pitches required for the batter to hit a fair ball or strike out.**
    - To initiate a pitch, a coach shall:
      - Present the ball to the batter; then,
      - Throw the ball underhand (using reasonable speed).
        - The batter's coach stands no closer at or a few steps in front of the edge of the chalk line closest to the batter. The umpire on each field will ensure that coach pitching is consistent between both coaches in a game and throughout the season.
    - A coach cannot pitch a "ball;" a ball pitched by the batter's coach must be hit fair or foul, or the ball shall be called a "strike."
- *The Pitch (USSSA Rule 6, Sec. 1. 33-36.)*
  - To initiate a pitch, a player shall:
    - Position herself so that both feet are in contact with the pitcher's plate, and
    - Position herself so that her pivot foot is on top of the pitching plate, and
    - Position herself so that both hands are apart, then

- The pitcher shall simulate taking a call from the catcher and bring both hands together in front of the pitcher's body with control of the ball, and
    - The pitching must bring both hands together in front of her body for no more than 10 seconds.
      - A pitcher may cease initiating the pitch by stepping backwards with both feet.
  - To pitch, a player shall:
    - Take exactly one (1) step toward home plate in line of the pitcher's plate, and
    - May use her pivot foot to push off of the pitcher's plate or drag the foot through the pitch so long as the pivot foot remains in contact with the ground throughout the pitch; and
    - Release the ball below her hip so that her wrist is not farther away from the body than her elbow; and
    - Follow through the pitch with her throwing arm by continuing her arm's motion past the vertical plane of her body.
  - **Restrictions**
    - The pitcher may "wind up" using any method desired by the pitcher, but she may not continue to "wind up" after the ball is released (this shall be interpreted to mean that the throwing arm may not revolve around the shoulder after the ball is released).
    - The pitcher may not "crow hop," or, "leap."
    - The pitcher may use one and one-half (1.5) revolutions to release the ball. The ball does not necessarily have to be released once it moves past the pitcher's hip the first time.
    - The pitcher may not use more than 20 seconds to pitch after the umpire calls, "Play!"
      - "PENALTY: Dead ball; a ball on the batter."
  - **Penalties Concerning Pitching**
    - An illegal pitch shall be called whenever a pitcher or catcher violates the pitching rules.
      - The penalty shall be a delayed dead ball, which means that "players are awarded one base without the liability of being put out."
        - If the batter-runner arrives safely at first base and "all other runners advance at least one base, the play stands, and the illegal pitch is cancelled."
        - In any other case, the coach shall have the option of taking the results of the play or accepting the penalty effect for an illegal pitch.
        - If a player is hit by an illegal pitch or there is a base on balls because of an illegal pitch, then the player shall be awarded first base, and each runner shall advance one base.
        - If requested, the umpire shall explain any illegal pitch to the pitcher and her coach.
- *Infield Fly Rule (Rule 8. Sec 17. 47.)*
  - The softball infield fly rule shall be used. These conditions must be met for the rule to apply:
    - There must be runners on first and second base (or first, second, and third base).
    - There must be fewer than two (2) outs.
    - A batter must hit a fly ball into fair territory that can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort.
    - The umpire must call, "Infield fly!" or, "Infield fly, batter out!"
  - If all these conditions are met, then batter is out, and no runner is forced to advance to the next base.
  - If runners do not "tag up" until a defensive player makes contact with the ball, and the ball is caught, then runners are still liable to be put out.
- *Dropped Third Strike (USSSA Rule 7, Sec. 14. 38-39.)*

- **If the ball was pitched by a player and not the batter's coach**, then a batter may run if a catcher drops the batter's third strike and:
  - First base is not occupied, or
  - There are two outs and first base is occupied.

## Base Running

- *Coaches*
  - One (1) coach from the batting team may coach runners from first base, and (one) 1 coach from the batting team may coach runners from third base.
- *Players*
  - The batter-runner and players on base may run as many bases as the play allows. Coaches shall not 'send' girls to another base after the play has reasonably ended.
    - The umpire shall aggressively call "time" when the play reasonably ends so that as many players may bat as possible.
  - If a defensive player accidentally overthrows a ball to a base, all players may only advance to the next base.
  - **No player shall steal a base** including on a "wild pitch" or passed ball. Runners are allowed to take a 2-3' lead off once the ball is released from the pitcher's hand.
  - If a player attempts to steal a base or leads too far off a base, the play will be called dead and all runners must return to original position. This infraction is not counted toward the batter's swing count.
- *Double First Base (Rule 8, Sec. 19. 51.)*
  - First base shall contain a white portion of the base that is in fair territory and a red portion of the base that is in foul territory.
  - When a play is being made on the batter-runner, the fielding team shall use the white portion of the base, and the batter-runner shall use the red portion of the base.
    - When no play is being made on the batter-runner at first base, she may use either the red or white portion of the bag.
    - After the batter-runner reaches first base, and uses the red portion of the base, she may use either the red or white portion of the base.
  - **Restrictions**
    - If a play is being made to the right of the first base foul line because of an errant throw or any other cause, then the batter-runner may use the white portion of the bag.
  - **Penalties Concerning the Double First Base**
    - If either the fielding team or the batter-runner uses the incorrect portion of the base when attempting to make a play a first base, then it shall be treated as if either team "missed the base."
- *Look-Back Rule (USSSA Rule 8, Sec 2. 39-40.)*
  - The softball look-back rule shall be used. These conditions must be met for the rule to apply:
    - The batter-runner has arrived safely at first base or has been declared out, and
    - The pitcher has possession of the ball wholly inside or with her feet touching the chalk lines of the pitcher's circle.
  - If all of these conditions are met, then any runners in between bases are still liable to be put out and:
    - Must continue running to the base to that seek to occupy, or
    - May return to the last touched base.

- Restrictions
  - Runners in between **bases may stop one (1) time to change direction or continue** to the sought base.
  - If a runner stops at a base for any reason, then that runner may not move off that base.
  - The **rule ceases to apply** if: the pitcher attempts to throw the runner out, makes a fake throw, loses possession of the ball, or steps outside the pitcher's circle.
- **Penalties Concerning the Look-Back Rule**
  - Any runner that violates the look-back rule shall be called out, and
  - The ball shall be declared dead.

## Fielding

- *Players*
  - A team shall use six (6) infielders and three (3) outfielders.
  - Outfield players must remain in the grass until the ball is hit.
  - The pitcher must stay inside the pitcher's circle until the ball is hit.
  - All other players must remain reasonably in their position until the ball is hit.
  - Players must be rotated through different field positions in each game so that they gain experience in most of the positions throughout the season.
- *Dead Ball*
  - A ball shall be able to be declared dead when:
    - Any player has control of the ball on the infield and no other out can be made by the defense, and the umpire declares "time," which suspends play.
    - The umpire shall use her or his judgment to determine when to call "time."

## Notes

- *Umpire*
  - A trained, certified umpire shall be provided.
- *Sportsmanship and Game Management*
  - Coaches must encourage their players to act kindly to all other players.
  - Coaches **must maintain a civil fan base**. No fan shall address any player, coach, or umpire on the field. Fans are encouraged to ask any questions to their coach during a game or an umpire after the game.
  - Coaches must involve each player present at the game.
- *Parks and Recreation Staff*
  - A Parks and Recreation staff member shall be present at each game is available to address any issue related to the game or facility.
  - The recreation program manager reserves the right to change the rules to better all teams, but must notify all coaches when changes have been made.
- *USSSA*
  - Unless a league rule conflicts, our league operates according to USSSA Youth Fast Pitch Softball rules.

## 12U, 14U, and 18U League Rules (Fast Pitch)

### Field Dimensions

- *Distances*
  - All bases are set at 60’.
  - The pitching rubber is set at 43’.
  - **Effective in 12U only**
    - The pitching rubber is set at 40’.
  - There is a 16’ diameter circle around the pitching rubber.

### Equipment

- *Bats*
  - Parks and Recreation provides each team with bats, but players may choose to use their own.
    - For 12U play, a 28-30” bat is recommended.
    - For 14U play, a 28-31” bat is recommended.
    - For 18U play, a 29-32” bat is recommended.
    - A USSSA “thumb print” is not required on bats.
- *Cleats*
  - No metal spikes are allowed on cleats.
- *Game Ball*
  - Parks and Recreation shall provide an official game ball.
    - A 12” USSSA DreamSeam softball shall be used.
- *Jewelry*
  - Players may not wear any jewelry during the game. If a player forgets to remove any jewelry, then she must remove it before she bats or takes the field.
- *Uniform*
  - Players must wear provided uniforms in each game.

### Game Play

- *Forfeits*
  - At least six (6) players are required by the scheduled game time on each team for a game to begin.
    - If there are fewer than six (6) players present on at least one (1) team, then the team with fewer than six players shall forfeit the game.
    - If neither team has at least six (6) players present by the scheduled game time, then the game shall be ruled a double-forfeit.
- *Length of Game*
  - Each game shall last seven (7) innings or 75 minutes, whichever comes first concludes the game.
    - If the time limit is met, then the game shall end when the inning the time expired in finishes.
    - If the inning limit is met, the game ends before 75 minutes.
    - No inning shall start within three (3) minutes of the end of the game.
    - Regular season games shall end as a tie if seven (7) innings are played or the time limit is reached, and the score is tied.
      - Tournament games shall not end in a tie. With exceptions stated below, the USSSA tiebreaker rule shall be used to break any ties (Rule 4, Sec. 5. 26.).
        - The USSSA tiebreaker rule shall be used to break any ties.

- The player whom completed the last at-bat shall begin the inning on second base.
  - No substitute shall be used in the batting line-up.
  - Tiebreaker procedures shall continue until a winner is determined.
- *Innings*
  - Each half-inning ends after:
    - There are three outs made, or
    - The team batting scores six (6) runs.
- *Home Team*
  - The home team shall be determined by a coin flip.
  - During the coin flip, each coach should be present and may bring out one different player each game to be present as well.
  - The home team **must** designate a parent to keep the official game score. Parks and Recreation staff shall be present to help train parents how to use the scoreboard.
- *Score*
  - Score is kept and displayed on the field scoreboard. No scorebook is maintained.
  - A game immediately ends if a team is winning by:
    - Twelve (12) runs after three (3) innings, or
    - Ten (10) runs after four (4) innings,
    - Eight (8) runs after five (5) innings.

## Batting

- *Players*
  - Each player shall be included in the batting order.
  - A batter must stand wholly inside the batter's box when batting.
  - Each player must wear a protective batting helmet with a facemask.
  - A batter
    - begins with a 0-0 count and is ruled out on strike three (3) or takes a base on ball four (4), and
    - is allowed unlimited foul balls unless the player bunts with two strikes and the ball rolls foul. In this case, the batter is out.
  - Each player must wear a protective batting helmet with a facemask.
- *The Pitch (USSSA Rule 6, Sec. 1. 33-36.)*
  - To initiate a pitch, a player shall:
    - Position herself so that both feet are in contact with the pitcher's plate, and
    - Position herself so that her pivot foot is on top of the pitching plate, and
    - Position herself so that both hands are apart, then
    - The pitcher shall simulate taking a call from the catcher and bring both hands together in front of the pitcher's body with control of the ball, and
    - The pitching must bring both hands together in front of her body for no more than 10 seconds.
      - A pitcher may cease initiating the pitch by stepping backwards with both feet.
  - To pitch, a player shall:
    - Take exactly one (1) step toward home plate in line of the pitcher's plate, and
    - May use her pivot foot to push off of the pitcher's plate or drag the foot through the pitch so long as the pivot foot remains in contact with the ground throughout the pitch; and
    - Release the ball below her hip so that her wrist is not farther away from the body than her elbow; and

- Follow through the pitch with her throwing arm by continuing her arm’s motion past the vertical plane of her body.
  - **Restrictions**
    - The pitcher may “wind up” using any method desired by the pitcher, but she may not continue to “wind up” after the ball is released (this shall be interpreted to mean that the throwing arm may not revolve around the shoulder after the ball is released).
    - The pitcher may not “crow hop,” or, “leap.”
    - The pitcher may use one and one-half (1.5) revolutions to release the ball. The ball does not necessarily have to be released once it moves past the pitcher’s hip the first time.
    - The pitcher may not use more than 20 seconds to pitch after the umpire calls, “Play!”
      - “PENALTY: Dead ball; a ball on the batter.”
  - **Penalties Concerning Pitching**
    - An illegal pitch shall be called whenever a pitch or catcher violates the pitching rules.
      - The penalty shall be a delayed dead ball, which means that “players are awarded one base without the liability of being put out.”
        - If the batter-runner arrives safely at first base and “all other runners advance at least one base, the play stands, and the illegal pitch is cancelled.”
        - In any other case, the coach shall have the option of taking the results of the play or accepting the penalty effect for an illegal pitch.
        - If a player is hit by an illegal pitch or there is a base on balls because of an illegal pitch, then the player shall be awarded first base, and each runner shall advance one base.
        - If requested, the umpire shall explain any illegal pitch to the pitcher and her coach.
- *Infield Fly Rule (Rule 8. Sec 17. 47.)*
  - The softball infield fly rule shall be used. These conditions must be met for the rule to apply:
    - There must be runners on first and second base (or first, second, and third base).
    - There must be fewer than two (2) outs.
    - A batter must hit a fly ball into fair territory that can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort.
    - The umpire must call, “Infield fly!” or, “Infield fly, batter out!”
  - If all these conditions are met, then batter is out, and no runner is forced to advance to the next base.
  - If runners do not “tag up” until a defensive player makes contact with the ball, and the ball is caught, then runners are still liable to be put out.
- *Dropped Third Strike (USSSA Rule 7, Sec. 14. 38-39.)*
  - A batter may run if a catcher drops the batter’s third strike and:
    - First base is not occupied, or
    - There are two outs and first base is occupied.

## Base Running

- *Coaches*
  - One (1) coach from the batting team may coach runners from first base, and (one) 1 coach from the batting team may coach runners from third base.
- *Players*
  - Players are allowed to steal bases.
- *Double First Base (Rule 8, Sec. 19. 51.)*

- First base shall contain a white portion of the base that is in fair territory and a red portion of the base that is in foul territory.
- When a play is being made on the batter-runner, the fielding team shall use the white portion of the base, and the batter-runner shall use the red portion of the base.
  - When no play is being made on the batter-runner at first base, she may use either the red or white portion of the bag.
  - After the batter-runner reaches first base, and uses the red portion of the base, she may use either the red or white portion of the base.
- **Restrictions**
  - If a play is being made to the right of the first base foul line because of an errant throw or any other cause, then the batter-runner may use the white portion of the bag.
- **Penalties Concerning the Double First Base**
  - If either the fielding team or the batter-runner uses the incorrect portion of the base when attempting to make a play at first base, then it shall be treated as if either player “missed the base.”
- *Look-Back Rule (USSSA Rule 8, Sec 2. 39-40.)*
  - The softball look-back rule shall be used. These conditions must be met for the rule to apply:
    - The batter-runner has arrived safely at first base or has been declared out, and
    - The pitcher has possession of the ball wholly inside or with her feet touching the chalk lines of the pitcher’s circle.
  - If all of these conditions are met, then any runners in between bases are still liable to be put out and:
    - Must continue running to the base to that seek to occupy, or
    - May return to the last touched base.
  - **Restrictions**
    - Runners in between **bases may stop one (1) time to change direction or continue** to the sought base.
    - If a runner stops at a base for any reason, then that runner may not move off that base.
    - The **rule ceases to apply** if: the pitcher attempts to throw the runner out, makes a fake throw, loses possession of the ball, or steps outside the pitcher’s circle.
  - **Penalties Concerning the Look-Back Rule**
    - Any runner that violates the look-back rule shall be called out, and
    - The ball shall be declared dead.

## Fielding

- *Players*
  - A team shall use five (5) infielders and three (3) outfielders.
    - Substitutions may freely take place at the beginning of each half-inning.
    - No player shall sit out for more than one inning.
  - A catcher must wear full protective gear.
  - A pitcher must stay inside the pitcher’s circle until the ball is hit.
  - Players shall be allowed to experience multiple positions, if they wish, throughout the season.
- *Dead Ball*
  - A ball shall be able to be declared dead when:
    - Any player has control of the ball on the infield and no other out can be made by the defense, and the umpire declares “time,” which suspends play.
    - The umpire shall use her or his judgment to determine when to call “time.”



## Notes

- *Games Against Regional Opponents*
  - In any game against a regional opponent, the rules of organization that is hosting the game shall apply to a Fayetteville Parks and Recreation team. These rules shall be provided to each team's coach.
- *Umpire*
  - A trained, certified umpire shall be provided.
- *Sportsmanship and Game Management*
  - Coaches must encourage their players to act kindly to all other players.
  - Coaches **must maintain a civil fan base**. No fan shall address any player, coach, or umpire on the field. Fans are encouraged to ask any questions to their coach during a game or an umpire after the game.
  - Coaches, players, and fans **shall not argue or dispute judgment calls** made by an umpire.
  - Coaches must involve each player present at the game.
- *Parks and Recreation Staff*
  - A Parks and Recreation staff member shall be present at each game is available to address any issue related to the game or facility.
  - The recreation program manager reserves the right to change the rules to better all teams, but must notify all coaches when changes have been made.
- *USSSA*
  - Unless a league rule conflicts, our league operates according to USSSA Youth Fast Pitch Softball rules.



CITY OF  
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**ARKANSAS**