**NPYL 8U Softball Rules**

**8 and UNDER**

**Revised January 2021**

The governing rules of play will be officially recognized **Babe Ruth softball rules** (available to purchase online). Below are highlighted rules and exceptions to the official rules. This document supersedes the rule book when the 2 are in conflict.

**Game Preliminaries**

1. All weekday games will have a scheduled starting time of 6:00 pm with a grace period of 10 minutes for any team-related delay. The pledge will be 5 minutes before each game. No formal infield practice will occur before any game. For delays not attributable to either team, the appropriate action to be taken will be determined by the league director. His assistant or the officer of the day will determine action if it is not possible to contact league director. All games under the lights will have a scheduled starting time of 8:00pm.
2. No games will start after 9:00pm.
3. All Saturday games will start at scheduled time with no grace period.
4. Offensive half of the inning will continue until three (3) outs are made or five (5) runs are scored, including last inning.
5. No inning may begin after 1 hour and 45 minutes from the start of the game. The inning begins with the last out (or 5th run scoring) of the previous inning. If the home team is batting and winning when time expires, the game ends immediately. Otherwise, an inning started will be completed. Umpire will give start time when game begins.
6. If still tied at the end of the 6th inning (or time limit), game will be scored as a tie. When time permits, additional inning(s) will be played under Softball Tie Breaker Rules. There will be no ties during tournament play. No inning will start after 8:00 pm during the school year and after 10:00 PM on weekdays when school is out.
7. Games will end if a team is leading by ten (10) or more runs after four (4) or more complete innings. Games will also end when one team cannot mathematically come back given the run limit (5) per inning. Examples:
	1. A team is up by 6 runs after the 5th inning
	2. The home team is up by 6 runs when time expires (even if visiting team is batting)
8. Home teams prepare the field for play, such as lining the diamonds. Home team will also be responsible for the official scorebook. Home team will be in the third base dugout. The visiting team is responsible for raking the field after play.
9. Home team will be responsible for chalking the 16ft circles and hash marks between bases (except between home and first)
10. An 11 inch softball will be used
11. The distance from home plate to pitching rubber will be thirty-five (35) feet.
12. Two defensive coaches may be stationed in the outfield and must remain in the outfield during a live ball. Failure to stay in outfield could result in umpire removing coach from the field to the dugout. Base coaches and defensive coaches are not permitted to contact any players during a live ball. Only 4 adults are permitted in the dugout.

**Participation Rules**

1. Ages- Players shall be 7 or 8 years old. Player age is based on the child’s age on **December 31st** of previous year unless exception approved by league.
2. All players on the official team roster will assume a position in the batting order and bat the entire game
3. Each player will play a minimum of 1 inning in the infield and 1 inning in the outfield before the end of the 4th inning. During the tournament this rule will NOT apply
4. All players on the official team roster will assume a position on the field during the defensive half of the inning. The infield will consist of 6 players with all other players assuming defensive position on the outfield grass. All outfielders must be positioned as close as possible to the natural outfield positions (LF, LC, C, RC, RF) and must be stationed at relatively the same depth. No 7th infielder (Rover) will be permitted to be positioned at the edge of the dirt. All players must be behind a 38’ arc until ball is hit.
5. Failure of either or both teams to field and maintain (8) players throughout the game will constitute a “forfeit” for the violating team. If injuries occur during the game which causes a team to have fewer than eight players, the game shall be rescheduled from the point it was stopped. Any attempt to abuse this rule will result in the suspension of the manager. The missing 9th player is an automatic out. Players who arrive late must be inserted at bottom of lineup.
6. If a player leaves the game due to injury, her spot in the lineup will be skipped without penalty (assuming team still has 9 or more players). The injured player can return later in the game assuming her spot in the lineup. If a player leaves due to an ejection, that spot in the lineup will be considered an out when passed.
7. One 7 year old and one 8 year old will pitch to the first 4 batters (or three outs) of the first 2 innings. Coaches are strongly encouraged to use multiple pitchers throughout the season.
8. During the tournament, it will be played coach pitch only. No player pitching.
9. A pitcher will be required to be replaced if she hits **three batters**. She cannot return to pitching in the same game.

**On-Field Rules**

1. No stealing or advancing on passed balls
2. No bunting
3. No base runners may leave a base until the pitched ball reaches the plate. If the ball is not hit, the base runners must return to the base. Each team will receive one warning per game before the runner is called out for leaving the base early. ‘NO PITCH’ will be declared when a base runner has left early.
4. The batter (or runners) will not be permitted to advance on an uncaught third strike
5. No infield fly rule
6. For player safety, no head first slides unless returning to a base. A team warning will be issued on first offense with the runner immediately called out on subsequent violations. The play will continue so the defense has the opportunity to record more outs
7. For the safety of players at the “pitchers helper” position (when coach is pitching), a mask, or helmets with face masks must be worn along with heart protection. Heart protection must also be worn by the player when pitching.
8. Play will stop when an infielder has the ball in the infield, is making no other play, and is facing the lead runner AND/OR the lead runner has stopped running. At that point, time will be called and no further advancement will be made on the bases. If a runner has stopped or not made a reasonable distance towards his next base (1/4 or less), he will be forced to return to the last occupied base. This is umpire judgement not subject to protest or argument. Umpires will be trained to aggressively call time to limit unwanted advancement. Example plays:
	1. Runner on 2nd base and a ground ball hit to SS. As the SS throws to first, the runner is rounding 3rd and heading home. The 1B catches the ball and looks for the base. By the time he makes the out, the runner is half way home. THE RUN STANDS. EVEN THOUGH BALL NEVER LEFT INFIELD, THE FIELDER NEVER STOPPED THE RUNNER.
	2. Runner on 1st as the batter hits the ball to the OF. OF throws the ball to the SS who runs ball into infield. Runner had stopped at 3rd and now heads home when SS throws ball to pitcher. RUNNER WILL RETURN TO 3RD. SS HAD BALL IN INFIELD AND RUNNER HAD STOPPED.
	3. Runners on 1st and 3rd and ball hit to SS. He throws to the Catcher attempting to get runner and the ball goes to backstop. Catcher cannot find the ball and runner from 1st makes it all the way to 3rd. RUNNER STAYS. RUNNER WOULD ONLY STOP IF C SECURED BALL AND RETUNRED BACK TO THE INFIELD BEFORE RUNNER STARTED FOR THIRD.
9. When an infielder overthrows first base on an attempt to retire a BATTER and the ball stays in play, all baserunners (including batter) are permitted ONLY ONE ADDITIONAL base at their own risk. This is designed to limit “Little League Home Runs”. Any balls thrown out of play will be governed by the appropriate rule.
10. The following table covers the various pitching scenarios:

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| Situation | Player Pitching | Coach Pitching |
| Number of Pitches | N/A | 5 – Extra pitches for foul balls on final pitch |
| Swinging Strike | Counts as a strike | Counts as a strike |
| Ball Thrown | Add ball to count | Counts against 5 pitch limit |
| Ball 4 | Coach comes into pitch. Batter starts with a new count. | N/A |
| Hit Batter | Coach comes into pitch. Batter starts with a new count. | N/A |
| Third strike | Batter is out | Batter is out |
| Does not swing at coaches 5th pitch | N/A | Batter is out |
| Catcher’s Interference | Batter gets 1st | Batter gets 1st |
| Foul Ball | Strike – unless 3rd strike | Strike – unless 3rd strike or final pitch. Batter who fouls off 5th (and subsequent) pitch(es) remains at bat |

1. When a coach is pitching:
	1. A player will field the pitching position and bat her turn. She must position himself within pitching circle no closer to the batter than the rubber.
	2. If the coach unintentionally touches a batted ball, the ball remains alive and in play. They are part of the field.
	3. If a coach intentionally interferes with a batted ball, the umpire will determine whatever resolution they feel resolves the interference up to and including calling outs. The ball is dead immediately.
	4. If the coach accidentally catches a hard, line drive, the batter will remain at bat with no extra pitch added to her count. This is a do-over.
	5. If the coach touches a thrown ball (either unintentionally or intentionally), the ball is dead. The runner being played on is out. If the runner being played on is not obvious, then the runner closest to home is out.
	6. Must maintain a legal pitching position
		1. Penalty – 1st offense warning. 2nd offense dead ball, Pitcher must be replaced, Pitcher will be prohibited to return for the game.
2. Protested games:
	1. Judgment calls by the umpire(s) cannot be protested.
	2. If, in the opinion of the team manager, a rule has been interpreted incorrectly, they must inform the umpire that the game will continue under protest. This notification of intent to protest must be made and recorded in the official score book (HOME TEAM) prior to delivery of the “pitch”, following the said infraction. The official email protest must be delivered to the League and Baseball Directors not more than 24 hours after the game being protested. The specific rule must be stated in the protest. Board decisions on protests are final.

 **Call Up Rules**

* 1. Division Director will compile a list of eligible players.
	2. The list will be composed of the oldest girls in each division.
	3. 8 under League will be a lateral call up. 10 under, 12 under, 14 under and 18 under must only call up players from the Division immediately below, first (Example: 14 under uses player(s) from 12 under). Lateral call-ups may also be used as a last resort.
	4. A team will be eligible for call-ups when the number of players is 8 or fewer. The team may be brought up to a maximum of 9 players.
	5. In order to receive call-up players, a Coach or their representative must call the Division Director or Softball Director, in that order, in advance.
	6. If a call-up situation arises at game time, the Division Director, the Softball Director, or the Officer of the Day, in that order, will try to find a call-up player at the field. If this is not possible, the team will play with the number of players it has unless they decide to forfeit. Coaches are not permitted to find their own call-up players.
	7. Lateral call-ups for 8U must be for a similar ability player to the player being substituted. No player may be a call-up for consecutive games for the same team. The Division Director/Softball Director should ensure that all players have had a chance to play as a lateral call-up prior to using any player as a lateral call-up a second time.
	8. An automatic out will be recorded for each batting position when the offensive team is batting less than 9 batters in the line-up.
	9. All call-up players will play in the outfield only in all Divisions.
	10. All players “called up” must play a minimum of one complete inning. If more than one player is “called up” by a given team for a single game, each must have equal playing time.
	11. If a regular player arrives late, she will be entered into the game at the next half inning.
	12. A call-up player must be placed at the end of the batting order.
	13. In the event four or more players must be called up to fill in for one team, the board will review and make final decision.

***Failure to follow the above rules will result in a warning, forfeit, or suspension of Manager, as the board decides.***