



Champaign Park District Fast Pitch Softball Rules

**ASA Rules apply with the following exceptions/additions.*

GO UP 'SWINGING'

Please remember that we are trying to provide an atmosphere of fun and instruction for the players. The game is the most enjoyable for the players when they go up to bat swinging and the ball is put into play. Umpires are encouraged to use a 'large' strike zone. So go ahead and take a swing!

WEATHER POLICY FOR GAMES AT DODDS SOFTBALL COMPLEX

1. Game cancellations ahead of time due to weather or field conditions will be determined by Champaign Park District. Game status will be announced on the Champaign Park District Leisure Line at 217-398-2589 or online at champaignparkdistrict.com/leisureline. Game status will be updated 1 hour before game time.
2. Once games have begun, umpires and staff will determine if play continues. Any stoppage due to lightning requires a minimum 10 minute of "clear skies" before returning to play. During that time teams should see shelter under the pavilion.

AGE GUIDELINES

1. Following ASA guidelines, the age of a player is determined by their age on December 31 in the year immediately preceding the playing season.
 - a. For example, a player that turns 11 years old on January 1, 2011 can still play 10U in the 2011 season because they were 10 years old on December 31, 2010. However, a player who turns 11 years old on December 31, 2010 cannot play 10U in the 2011 season.
 - b. The Champaign Park District will allow players to 'play up'. Parents should realize that playing up means the participant will play against players three or more years older.

RULES OF CONDUCT

1. Players, managers, and fans must follow these accepted rules of conduct. Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated at any time before, during or after games. Violators may be ejected by umpires or staff for unsportsmanlike behavior including, but not limited to:
 - a. Physically touching or verbally harassing an umpire in a threatening manner.
 - b. Physically or verbally assaulting another player or coach.
 - c. Use of obscene or abusive language, whether directed at someone or not.
 - d. Throwing a bat, helmet or other equipment in a gesture of anger.
 - e. Any base runner intentionally colliding with another player with malicious intent.
 - f. Smoking or chewing tobacco are not allowed near the playing field or dugouts.
2. All ejections result in a minimum one game suspension. This applies to coaches, players and parents.
3. Once ejected that person must exit the facility immediately or risk extended suspension and possible game forfeiture.
4. Anyone ejected twice during the season will be suspended for one full year from all Champaign Park District Youth Sports Leagues.



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EQUIPMENT

1. Players may not wear jewelry or watches during the game.
 - a. Exceptions will be made to allow players to wear medical or religious jewelry. Such items must be taped down.
2. Tennis (athletic) shoes or cleats with rubber cleats are acceptable. Metals cleats are not allowed.
3. Helmets with face masks must be worn by all base runners, batters (at the plate and on deck), and any player coaching from the coach's box. All helmets must have a NOCSAE stamp.
4. Any player warming up a pitcher, on or off the field, must wear a catcher's mask and helmet. No exceptions.
5. Pitchers may wear face shields.

BATTING ORDER/SUBSTITUTION

1. All players in attendance will be placed in the batting order.
 - a. Any player showing up late will be placed last in the batting line-up.
2. Free (unlimited) substitution.
3. All players present should play at least 3 innings defensively.
 - a. No player should (defensively) sit two innings in a row.
4. A team shall defensively field **10** players during a game.
 - a. **In the 10&U and 12&U Leagues** if both coaches are in agreement teams may play **11** players.
 - b. **In the 10&U League the 10th fielder may be stationed at second base.**
5. If a player leaves a game due to an ejection, that position in the batting order will be recorded as an out every time that position comes up to bat. If a player leaves a game due to injury, that position in the batting order will simply be skipped.

GAME BEGINS

1. Lineups should be exchanged with the other team at least 10 minutes before game time. Lineups may be changed up until game time.
2. The team listed in the schedule first is 'Home' team.
 - a. The Home team is asked to provide a volunteer to run the scoreboard.
 - b. Traditionally the Home team takes the third base dugout.
3. Each team may take infield practice (warm-up time) for 10 minutes before game as long as this does not cause the game to start late or the game is already starting late due to the previous game. Visiting team will take infield practice first.

Game Time:	Visiting Team Infield:	Home Team Infield:
5:45pm	5:25pm	5:35pm
8:00pm	7:40pm	7:50pm

4. Start time for the first game slot of the evening is 5:45 pm. Start time for the second game slot of the evening will be 8:00 pm or in the case the first game runs late, immediately following the first game.
5. Game time is forfeit time. A team must have at least 7 players to begin and continue the game or the team forfeits.
 - a. If there are not 7 eligible players for a particular team, that team may use substitutes from the opposing team if this is acceptable to both teams. The team borrowing players forfeits the game.



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PITCHING GUIDELINES

ASA pitching regulations apply with the following additions or exceptions:

1. No pitcher may pitch more than 3 innings during the first 6 innings of a game. 1 pitched ball in an inning is counted as 1 inning pitched. Innings need not be in succession.
 - a. In the 7th inning and/or extra innings, any pitcher may pitch any amount desired including a pitcher who has already pitched her 3 inning limit during the first 6 innings.
2. 'Slow Pitch' style pitching is allowed.
3. Defensive conferences are limited to 1 per inning.
4. Point of emphasis on pitching mechanics: The pitcher shall take a position with both feet in contact with the rubber. Both feet must remain in contact with the rubber at all times prior to the forward step.

COACH-PITCH GUIDELINES (10&U ONLY)

The 10&U League will use Coach-Pitch innings for all even numbered innings. Below are some guidelines for those innings.

1. During a coach-pitch inning a coach from the team at bat will pitch to their own players.
2. They are allowed 5 pitches to each batter. There are no walks. \ **EXCEPTION: If the batter fouls off the 5th pitch (or the 5th and 6th pitch etc, etc) the at-bat will continue—As soon as they don't foul off the pitch or put the ball into fair play the at-bat is over.** **CLARIFICATION: Even if the batter has swung and missed the first 4 pitches they will still be allowed to receive the 5th pitch.**
3. If a batted ball hits the coach-pitcher or the coach interferes with a play the batter/runner is out and the play is immediately dead.
4. A 'pitcher' from the defensive team will take a defensive position next to the 'coach-pitcher'. They will be there for defensive purposes. This includes: during a live play fielders will return the ball to the defensive (player) pitcher.

SPECIFIC GAMETIME RULES

1. The ball is no longer in play when it reaches the pitcher's control in the pitcher's circle. If there is a runner on base that is between bases when the pitcher receives the ball in the pitcher's circle, the runner must immediately make a decision to advance to the next base or return to the previous base. If the base runner hesitates, the runner is out. If the pitcher makes any attempt to make a play on a runner once the pitcher is in the circle with the ball, the ball becomes live until the runner reaches a base.
 - a. The spirit of the rule is to prevent runners from attempting to "bait" pitchers into throwing in order to get them out.
2. 'Slide Rule': Base runners are not required to slide but should attempt to avoid contact. Malicious contact **as determined by the Umpire's judgment** will result in the runner being called out and the runner being ejected.
3. Outfielders may not be positioned in the infield area.
4. A courtesy runner may be used for pitchers and catchers. The same courtesy runner may not run more than once an inning. Whenever possible the courtesy runner should not be a player that is likely to bat before the end of the inning.



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GAME ENDS

1. A game is seven innings.
2. No new inning may begin after 1 hour 45 minutes from start time.

Start Time:	Unlimited runs for any inning BEGUN after:	No new inning may begin after:
5:45pm	7:05pm	7:30pm
8:00pm	9:20pm	9:45pm

3. A half inning ends when either of these things happen:
 - a. 3 outs are recorded.
 - b. A total of 5 runs have scored, whether by walks or runs batted in. No runs scored after the 5th run of the half inning will count.
EXCEPTION: Any inning begun after 1 hour 20 minutes from start time will have unlimited runs.
4. 'Mercy Rule': A game is complete if a team is 10 or more runs ahead after 5 innings (4 ½ if the home team is ahead) or 8 or more runs ahead after 6 innings (5 ½ if home is ahead).
5. After seven innings have been played if the score is still tied extra innings may be played as long as no new innings begin after 1 hour 45 minutes from start time. If still tied at that point the game is complete and is officially a tie. Any extra innings will be played using the Junior Olympic Girls Fast Pitch tie breaker rules:
 - a. The team at bat starts with a base-runner on second base—the base-runner should be the player who is the last available to bat in the batting order. In other words, the batter who was last in batter's box the previous inning.
6. If the game is halted due to weather before completing the 4th inning the game will be resumed at the point at which it was stopped.
7. If the game is halted due to weather after the 4th inning the game is complete. At that point the score will be recorded using the last full inning of play.



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LEAGUE SPECIFIC RULES

	10&U LEAGUE	12&U LEAGUE	15&U LEAGUE
Ages *See Age Guidelines.	8 to 10 years old	10 to 12 years old	12 to 15 years old
Pitching distance	35'	40'	40'
Base distance	60'	60'	60'
Ball	11"	12"	12"
Bunting	Bunting is not permitted.	Bunting is allowed.	Bunting is allowed.
Stealing	Base stealing is not permitted.	Base stealing is not permitted.	Stealing is allowed.
Leaving the base	Base runners may not leave the base until the ball crosses the plate.	Base runners may not leave the base until the ball crosses the plate.	Base runners may not leave the base until the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
Dropped third strike	Batters may not run on a dropped third strike. The batter is out. The ball is considered dead.	Batters may not run on a dropped third strike. The batter is out. The ball is considered dead.	A batter may attempt to reach first base on a dropped third strike when there are fewer than 2 outs and first base is unoccupied, or anytime there are 2 outs.
Coaching Assistance: Coach-Pitch *See Coach-Pitch Guidelines.	Coach-Pitch for all even numbered innings.		
Coaching Assistance: Backstop Retriever	A coach from the defensive team should stand at the back at the backstop to retrieve passed balls and return them to the pitcher. This will greatly speed up the game.	A coach from the defensive team should stand at the back at the backstop to retrieve passed balls and return them to the pitcher. This will greatly speed up the game.	