

MBSA Softball Spring 2025

Rules of Play

Last revised 4/24/25

Monroeville Baseball & Softball Association (MBSA) Girls Fastpitch Softball In-house will follow current-year ASA/USA Softball rules except as modified herein.

GENERAL RULES

1. ROSTERS

Team rosters will be shared between commissioners of both leagues, with birth dates noted on the rosters.

2. SPORTSMANSHIP

For the health and promotion of league play, individual player and/or coach activity and team activity must be controlled and limited to encouragement, cheering, and good sportsmanship. BE SUPPORTIVE! THE UMPIRES SHALL CONTROL SPECTATOR ACTIVITY.

3. PERMITTED INDIVIDUALS

Only team members, coaches, managers, bench coaches/parents, and official scorekeepers for the team are permitted on the team bench and in the playing area. There is to be NO use of tobacco products on any team bench. Monroeville Community Park (turf fields) will also prohibit gum and sunflower seeds of any kind.

If a team is seen to be using gum/seeds the team will be given a warning and must clean all remnants of the gum/seeds from all surfaces. A second infraction will result in automatic elimination from the tournament and no refund will be given. Each manager is expected to make this rule clear with their spectators and fans. These infractions will be enforced with all players, coaches, and fans.

4. DECISION OF THE UMPIRE

The decision of the umpire is final. Umpires may eject players, coaches, spectators, and managers from the game for unsportsmanlike conduct, foul language, continuous arguing and/or harassment of the umpire. All in attendance must always conduct themselves in a civil manner. Violation of this rule may result in game forfeiture, tournament forfeiture and/or disciplinary action. Any ejected manager, coach, spectator and/or player from a game will be suspended from the next game played. The ejected person(s) may also be subject to disciplinary actions by the MBSA or FRAA Disciplinary Committees and risk forfeiture of the game as well as suspension from coaching.

5. SCORE BOOKS and TEAM COMMUNICATION

Paper or digital score books are final. MBSA strongly recommends that coaches assign a parent the duty of scorekeeping, and that teams use GameChanger to keep score in 8U, 10U and 12U games. The home team shall report the score to the MBSA Softball Commissioners at the conclusion of each game via text message.

MBSA requires coaches use the GAMECHANGER app for ALL team communication.

6. GAME TIME LIMIT

Game time limits will be noted under each individual age group notes.

7. BATS

MBSA in-house players should use USA Softball Bats only. All bats must have the USA or ASA certification mark. Bat throwing is dangerous and can cause injury. Each TEAM will receive 1 warning for throwing the bat. For all subsequent offenses, the batter will be called out and dead ball will be called. (ie. no base runner can advance)

8. GAME BALLS

The home team provides the game ball.

9. FIELD PREP AND CLEANUP

The home team shall prepare the field for play. This includes applying the foul lines and other markings, installing the bases, and treating the trouble spots on the field. Coaches may choose before the game starts to place halfway markers between the bases to determine the runner's half way point. After the game, the home team shall store field equipment, turn the lights off if necessary, and lock equipment closets. The visiting team is encouraged to assist. Both teams shall clean up the field and dugout areas.

GENERAL PLAYING RULES

1. The umpire shall notify each coach/manager at the top of the inning that it is the last inning of play based on time.
2. Teams will be comprised of up to 15 players. Girls may only be rostered for one team regardless of age category. Call-ups from a lower age group are permitted on a game-by-game basis and must follow the CALL UP PROTOCOL provided to coaches at the beginning of the season.
3. COURTESY RUNNER - a courtesy runner (the last out made) may be used for the pitcher or catcher at any time during the game. Other position players may use a pinch runner only once and must notify the umpire and other manager/coach.
4. Continuous Batting Order will be used for all age groups. If a player becomes injured during the game and does not play the rest of the game no out will be recorded in her spot in the batting order however, she cannot reenter the game unless an out was taken in her spot in the batting order. If the girl leaves a game for any other reason than injury, when it is her turn to bat, an out will be taken (unless her departure was discussed and agreed by opposing coaches prior to the games start).

FIELD REQUIREMENTS

1. Measurements of field:
 - a) Pitching mound distances listed under each age group
 - b) Bases: 60 feet distance apart w/Running Lane for 1st Base
 - f) Batter's box shall measure 3 feet by 7 feet, inside line shall be 6 inches from home plate. The front line shall be 4 feet to the front and the rear line shall be 3 feet to the back of the obtuse corner of home plate.
2. All ground rules should be clearly defined and agreed upon (by umpires and coaches/managers) prior to the start of each game.

LEAGUE STANDINGS TIE BREAKER RULES

1. Head-to-Head play
2. Runs Against
3. Runs Scored
4. Coin Toss

MBSA Softball Spring 2025

Rules of Play

6 & Under League

EQUIPMENT

1. The official softball to be used in the 6 & under division will be any approved USA Softball 10-inch squishy softball
2. Shoes with rubber cleats may be worn, no metal or hard cleats will be allowed.
3. Batting helmets with faceguard must be always worn by batters and base runners.
4. All players must have a heart-guard on when at the pitching position
5. All players in the field must wear a fielding mask while playing in the field.

LENGTH OF THE GAME

1. There will be no forfeits in the Instructional League. If there are not enough players to have a game the original game will be rescheduled as per field availability.
2. Games will be rescheduled by the MBSA Commissioners based on field availability and input from the affected coaches.
3. Games will be no more than 3 full innings. Games will have a drop-dead time limit of 1 hour and 15 minutes.
4. The MBSA Commissioners (Executive and Softball) can call or suspend a game due to the weather or darkness. Suspended games will not be rescheduled if at least 1 inning was played.

DISPUTES/DISAGREEMENTS

1. A team shall consist of all the players present for that game.
2. The HOME team is listed second on the schedule.
3. The playing teams should make every effort to hold the game on the day it is scheduled.
4. All pitchers must wear protective equipment when playing the position. MBSA will provide all teams with a helmet equipped with a face mask and chest guard.
5. There will not be catcher equipment provided, therefore, MBSA suggests teams have the pitcher cover plays at the plate. Coaches are not permitted to position a player as a catcher.

OFFENSIVE RULES:

1. Players must bat from the batting box located at home plate every inning of every game.
2. A combination of coach pitch and a tee will be used for batting.
3. The batter must demonstrate sufficient effort in swinging. Incomplete swings or a lack of effort to pitched balls would result in the tee being used. There will be no bunting or half swings permitted.
4. Base runners are not allowed to steal or leave the base they occupy until the ball is hit.
5. No infield fly rule will be enforced; however, all other baseball rules should be taught in preparation for future divisions including tagging up.
6. Base runners may NOT advance on overthrows. Play shall cease and the base runners will go back to the base they last occupied if advancement after an overthrow occurs.
7. Balls that reach the outfield as a result of the hit allow the batter/runners to advance to a 2nd base. Once the ball is in possession of an outfielder play will cease and the runners will be allowed to the base they are advancing to.
 - a. This rule allows coaches to teach the player to listen to their coaches when running the bases. Situational baseball is something that should be focused on at this Instructional Level.
 - b. If the ball travels to the outfield because of an error or redirection by an infield player no 2nd base will be allowed.
8. Batters and base runners must always wear helmets while inside the fencing.
9. On any play at the plate the batting tee will be removed by a coach/volunteer.

DEFENSIVE RULES:

1. All balls traveling more than 6 feet from the back of home plate are in play. Balls played on between home plate and the 6-foot line are judgment calls by the coaches as to whether the ball would have passed over the line. A pitched ball is in play even if it doesn't travel 6 feet.
2. All players present at the game will play the entire game unless ill or injured.
3. All players at the game will be in the field at once. Those players that exceed the normal infield positions of pitcher, 1st, 2nd, SS, 3rd, will be placed a minimum of 15 feet beyond each base. No outfielders may advance inside this line until the ball is hit. All players must play their position in a reasonable vicinity of that position. Players will stay within 3 feet of the baseline in the infield and the pitcher will play on the 46-foot line at the mound.
4. Coaches should determine positions for each player in each game. At their discretion coaches can either position players at the same position during one game or rotate each player between innings. If deemed necessary due to safety concerns the head coach can reposition any player at any time during play.
5. A continuous batting order is used. 3 outs will clear the bases; however, the team continues to bat until the last batter bats. An inning is over when every player in the batting order has batted. 6. This is an instructional league; therefore, we do not keep score or track wins and losses during the regular season.

PITCHING RULES

1. Players will hit from a tee for the first three (3) games of their season to be sure and build the proper mechanics of a swing. Upon moving to the coach pitching, coaches will begin each game pitching from a distance that they deem appropriate for each batter to ensure their success based on the current batter's ability to hit the ball. Each player will get 5 pitches. If the ball is not put into play the tee will be used.
 - a. **5 pitches must be strictly enforced for length of game restrictions**
 - b. The goal for the coach pitching to each batter should be to move the distance back a bit with each game and as the player's batting improves.
 - c. MBSA strongly encourages coaches to pitch the ball with no drastic arc to the batter to encourage the players to learn early on to hit a "flat pitch".
2. Coaches may decide to use the tee immediately throughout the season if the current batter does not possess the skills yet to swing safely at a pitched ball. These decisions will be left to the player's head coach or parent/guardian decision.

BENCH RULES

1. On deck batters are permitted to use the practice area adjacent to the dugouts only when they are next up. All other players should be kept clear of that area until their turn to warm up by coaches
2. An Instructional League Bench Assistant will be responsible for controlling the bench during game play and assure that they players are ready for them at bat with the proper equipment. Parents/guardians are advised to use discretion before sending their child into game play.
 - a. No throwing balls on the sidelines or in the dugouts
 - b. All players must be under control of the coaches/bench volunteers at all times.

MBSA Softball Spring 2025

Rules of Play

8 & Under League

EQUIPMENT

1. The official softball to be used in the 8 & under division will be any approved USA Softball 11-inch softball. The home team will provide the game balls.
2. Shoes with rubber cleats may be worn, no metal or hard cleats will be allowed.
3. Batting helmets with faceguards must be always worn by batters and base runners.
4. Catchers must wear a helmet with a faceguard.
5. All players must have a heart-guard on when at the pitching position.
6. All players in the field must wear a fielding mask while playing in the field.

PITCHING

1. Pitching distance will be at a distance of at least 30 feet, marked by a piece of tape measured out by the coaches before the game
2. Team coaches will be utilized as pitchers but may not make any defensive plays.
3. The player-pitcher in the 8u division must be set at a distance 35-feet from the plate and within 3-feet left or right of the pitching circle.
4. Batters will get a maximum of 7 pitches to hit a fair ball. If on the 7th pitch and subsequent pitches, the batter continues to hit foul balls, that batter remains at bat until a swing-and-miss or no-swing. There are no walks in this division and after the final pitch if the batter has not hit a fair ball, the batter will take an out. **Three (3) swinging strikes and the batter is out.**

GAME RULES

1. Teams field 10 players only and one player is allowed in each of following positions: P, C, 1B, 2B, SS, 3B. All other players must be positioned in the outfield. No shifts are allowed.
2. **NO BUNTING - No bunting allowed in 8U division.**
3. Games are 5 innings. If a game is terminated for darkness, weather, field conditions, or umpire calls the game (not including time limit stoppage), 3 complete innings (2 1/2 where applicable) will determine a regulation game.
 1. Games with a tie-score after 5 full innings of play will end as a tie.
 2. No new inning will start after 1 hour 20 minutes. Time limit is 1 hour 30 minutes no new inning started, and 1 hour 45 minutes drop dead, the score of the game reverts to the score at the end of the last completed inning.
 3. The game ends under Mercy Rule if a team leads by 10 runs after 4 complete innings.
4. Runs per inning shall be limited to (4) four. The run limit will be waived in the last inning of play, which is announced by the umpire before the inning begins. The inning will end when 3 outs have been recorded.
5. The infield fly rule **does not** apply.
6. On a ball hit in the infield (ie. does not get to the grass or an infielder picks up the ball before it gets to the grass) the runners may **NOT** advance a base on an overthrow.
7. A player will be positioned beside the pitcher/coach for fielding but may not interfere with the delivery of the pitch.
8. If a pitcher-coach is struck by a batted ball, the ball becomes an immediate dead ball and is considered no pitch, and all runners return to their base. The pitch count resets at zero(0) with zero(0) strikes and a limit of 7 pitches.
9. **Play stops once an infielder has possession of the ball with both feet in the infield. Coaches should be teaching the players to finish the play in the pitching circle (two feet).** This will be the umpire's discretion. Base runners may advance to the base they were advancing to prior to infield possession, at their own risk and will be returned to the previous base if they were not halfway once player-possession is obtained
10. The position of the infielder may not be more than 10 feet in front of or behind the base, but not directly on the baseline.
11. The position of the outfielder must start with both feet in the grass at least 10 feet from the turf at MPW.
12. **NO STEALING.** A baserunner is not permitted to leave any base (during the pitch), prior to the batter hitting the ball. A team warning will be given on the first offense, on the second offense, the baserunner will be called out.

13. Players CAN tag up on a caught fly ball at their own risk.
14. The infield fly rule does NOT apply.
15. All players must play the infield positions of P, C, 1B, 2B, 3B or SS at least 2 of the first 4 innings. The only exception is a player deemed a safety risk by the coaches before the game. A letter from a parent/guardian can excuse players from being required to play Pitcher and 1st base at this age group.
16. Teams with less than 8 players on the field at the start of the game will forfeit the game and will be considered to have lost the game, but the game can still be played with sub players from the other team as agreed upon by both Head Coaches in advance of the start of the game.
17. All players in attendance, including those on the bench, must bat in a continuous lineup.
18. All batters and base runners must wear a batting helmet with face guard.

MBSA Softball Spring 2025

Rules of Play

10 & Under League

PITCHING

1. Pitching distance will be 35 feet with the mound being measured by the coaches before the start of every game.
2. Pitchers must use the windmill technique to pitch, start on the mound with both hands apart, and once their hands are brought together, they can't come back apart until they begin pitching with forward motion.
3. Pitchers are permitted to pitch a maximum of 4 innings per game. One pitch constitutes an inning pitched.
4. Once the pitcher is removed from the pitching circle, she may not re-enter the pitching position for the remainder of that inning. Re-entry is allowed the following inning if that pitcher's inning limit has not been reached.
5. A pitcher can be forced to be removed from the pitcher position at the discretion of the umpire based on their assessment of intention and danger to the batters. If removed, they will be allowed to start the next inning as a pitcher if they have not reached their inning limit. The umpire can remove permanently upon multiple removals at their discretion.
6. Upon walking the 3rd consecutive batter, the third batter stays in the batter's box and the batter's coach comes in to pitch. Standing on the mound at 35 feet, the coach has 4 pitches to the batter. The at bat ends with either a ball in play, strikeout, or completion of 4 pitches without the ball in play - in all cases but for a foul ball – batter gets another pitch until they do not foul the ball off. The coach must do their best to pitch the ball without an arc, with a flat pitch to the batter.

GAME RULES

1. Games are 6 innings.
 - a. If a game is terminated for darkness, weather, field conditions, or umpire calls the game (not including the time limit rule), 4 complete innings (3 1/2 where applicable) will determine a regulation game.
 - b. Games with a tie-score after 6 full innings of play will end as a tie.
 - c. Time limit is 1 hour 30 minutes no new inning started, and 1 hour 45 minutes drop dead, the score of the game reverts back to the score at the end of the last completed inning.
 - d. The game is ended under Mercy Rule if a team leads by 15 runs after 3 complete innings or 10 runs after 4 or more complete innings.
2. Teams field 10 players. Only one player is permitted in the following positions: P, C, 1B, 2B, SS, 3B. All other players must be positioned in the outfield.
3. BUNTING is permitted, including SLAP bunting.
4. Players CAN tag up on a caught fly ball at their own risk.
5. The infield fly rule does NOT apply.
6. The dropped 3rd (third) strike rule is NOT in effect.
7. In league play, runs per inning shall be limited to (5) five. The 5-run rule is waived in the final inning that will be indicated by the umpire.
8. The position of the outfielder must start with both feet in the grass at least 10 feet from the turf at MPW
9. Stealing
 - a. Base runners can leave the base upon the release of the ball from the pitcher's hand. This will be based on umpire discretion.
 - b. Base runners starting at 1st or 2nd base are entitled to advance or steal only one base per pitch, with liability to be put out (no advancement on an overthrow to 2nd on a steal from 1st to 2nd). There is NO stealing of home base.
10. A runner attempting to advance beyond the one base they are entitled to advance or steal, may be put out while between bases.
11. After all play ceases and the ball becomes dead, if a runner occupies a base beyond the one the runner was entitled to, the runner will be returned to the correct base without liability to be put out.
12. Play stops once the pitcher has possession in the pitching circle (two feet). This will be the umpire's discretion. Base runners may advance to the base they were advancing to prior to possession being called at their own risk.
13. Teams with less than 8 players on the field at the start of the game will forfeit the game and will be considered to have lost the game, but the game can still be played with sub players from the other team as agreed upon by both Head Coaches in advance of the start of the game.

MBSA Softball Spring 2025

Rules of Play

12 & Under League

PITCHING

1. Pitching distance will be 40 feet with the mound being measured by the coaches before the start of every game.
2. Pitchers must use the windmill technique to pitch, start on the mound with both hands apart, and once their hands are brought together, they can't come back apart until they begin pitching with forward motion.
3. Pitchers are permitted to pitch a maximum of 5 innings per game. One pitch constitutes an inning pitched. A pitcher's inning-count does not reset in extra innings.
4. Once the pitcher is removed from the pitching circle, she may not re-enter the pitching position for the remainder of that inning. Re-entry is allowed the following inning as long as that pitcher's inning limit has not been reached.
5. A pitcher can be forced to be removed from the pitcher position at the discretion of the umpire based on their assessment of intention and danger to the batters. If removed, they will be allowed to start the next inning as a pitcher if they have not reached their inning limit. The umpire can remove permanently upon multiple removals at their discretion.

GAME RULES

1. A regulation game will be 7 innings.
 - a. A regulation game can be called by the umpire after 5 or more complete innings because of rain, darkness etc.
 - b. Time limit is 1 hour 30 minutes no new inning started, and 1 hour 45 minutes drop dead, the score of the game reverts to the score at the end of the last completed inning.
 - c. The game ends under Mercy Rule if a team leads by 15 runs after 3 complete innings, 10 runs after 4 innings and 8 runs after 5 or more complete innings.
2. Runs per inning shall be limited to (5) five runs with a continuation on the play where the 5th run scores (ie if the 5th run scores on a play where the 6th and 7th runs score on the same play, those runs count). The five-run rule is waived in the final inning.
3. Teams field 9 players. Only one player is permitted in the following positions: P, C, 1B, 2B, SS, 3B. All other players must be positioned in the outfield.
4. **BUNTING** is permitted, including SLAP bunting.