

**GRAPEVINE GIRLS SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION
SOFTBALL GENERAL RULES FOR ALL LEAGUES**

A. CONDUCT OF PLAYERS, COACHES, PARENTS AND UMPIRES

1. All players, coaches, parent and umpires will conduct themselves in a sportsmanship manner at all times. Coaches are responsible for ensuring their team's compliance.
2. Arguing with and/or badgering of the umpire(s) **WILL NOT** be tolerated and will result in forfeiture for the violating team.
3. No alcoholic beverages will be allowed on the premises at any time.
4. No smoking will be allowed in or around the playing fields, or bleacher areas. Smoking will only be allowed in the parking area. Parents and other spectators shall refrain from the use of tobacco products when in these areas and in the presence of players.
5. "Chatter and chants **will** be allowed as long as it is neither profane or directly targeted at any individual players in a negative manner. Any abuse of this rule will result in the "no chatter" rule being reinstated.
6. Players, coaches, parents and umpires will refrain from using profane language.
7. Any violation of the above rules will be subject to disciplinary action from the **GGSA Board**.

B. MANAGERIAL RULES

1. All team managers, coaches and assistant coaches are subject to annual criminal background investigations.
2. If a team fails to appear within 15 minutes after the official start time or availability of the playing field, forfeiture will be declared.
3. All players shall wear a consistent uniform jersey and pants (or shorts). Blue jeans and cut-offs are **NOT** permitted. Jerseys must be tucked in at all times during games.
4. The home team shall utilize the first base dugout.
5. No more than three coaches will be allowed in the dugout.
6. Umpire(s) will call the game in case of inclement weather.

7. All teams shall clean up their dugouts of all trash and dispose of it properly at the end of each game. Coaches will also be responsible for making sure parents clean up the bleacher area at the end of the game.
8. Each team shall have a first aid kit in possession at all times. The first aid kit will be the sole responsibility of the coaches to provide.

C. PLAYING RULES

1. All catchers and batters are required to wear protective helmets with face guards. Catchers also must wear throat guards, chest protectors, shin guards, (except for 6U). Pelvic protectors are strongly recommended, but are not provided by GGSA. Additionally, chest protectors for all defensive players are recommended, but not provided by GGSA. (Contact a league official for source information about obtaining the above personal items.)
2. Coaches are responsible for having their team on the playing field at the time of the scheduled game time.
3. Any conflicts with a scheduled game other than weather-related delays must have approval from the GGSA President to be rescheduled. All requests must be submitted at least ten (10) days **prior** to scheduled game time in order to be considered.
4. No new inning will start after the league's time limit laws have expired. If the game is tied after time has expired or the maximum innings have been played, then a tie breaker inning will be played using the "International Tie Breaker Rule" (3/2 ITB). This will consist of one full inning where the offensive team begins its' turn at bat with the last batter from the previous inning being placed on second base. Each batter will start with a full count (three balls and two strikes). If the game is still tied after the inning is completed, then each team will record the tie as a half-win for their league's standings.
5. If a team cannot field enough players from their roster for a regular game, the coach may "promote" a player(s) from the age group directly below their own (i.e. 12U coach may choose a player from the 10U league). The following procedures are also in effect:
 - a) The coach must obtain permission from the player's parent(s).
 - b) The promoted player cannot be used as a pitcher or catcher under any circumstances.

- c) The coach may promote enough players to fill a roster of (10) players, however, all regular players must play on defense at all times. A promoted player cannot play defense while a regular player is benched.

D. PROTESTS

1. Protests can be made only in regards to interpretation of rules, **NOT** judgment calls.
2. Protests will be handled at the time of the protest call by a meeting of the umpire and coaches. If unable to reach an agreement, a protest must be indicated in the official score book and a written protest must be submitted to the appropriate league commissioner within 48 hours after the game in question ends, who in turn will submit it to either the GGSA Board, or an inter-city grievance committee with inter-city games.
3. A \$50.00 fee made payable to GGSA must be attached to the written protest. If the protest is upheld, this fee is returned. If not, the fee will be forfeited and placed in the trophy fund.
4. If the protest is upheld, the game will be rescheduled and replayed starting at the point of protest.
5. It is each coach's responsibility to have a current A.S.A. rulebook and league standing rules in his/her possession as a point of reference.

E. COACH SELECTION

1. The GGSA Board will select coaches. All coaches must complete a coach's application and submit a background check authorization form. Coaches must also provide at least three (3) references. Final approval of coaches will be at the sole discretion of the GGSA President. Head coaches must also attend the NYSCA certification class provided by the City of Grapevine. Failure to do so will result in loss of status of head coach.
2. All coaches must attend all coaches' clinics. Failure to do so will result in their dismissal.
3. All coaches are expected to cooperate and support all activities scheduled by the GGSA Board. Failure to do so will result in their dismissal.

EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS

EQUIPMENT:

One of the key responsibilities of the coach is to ensure that your team has the proper equipment to make softball safe and enjoyable.

You will be assigned a bag of equipment that must be turned in after the last game you play. The equipment will be inventoried when checked out to the coach and must be turned in with the same items in it. **GGSA** will provide most of the equipment that you will need to play a fun and safe game:

- *catcher's helmet
- *catcher's mask
- *catcher's chest protector and shin guards
- *bats
- *batting helmet with face guards
- *chin straps
- *practice balls and game balls

After each game, you should inspect your equipment for damage or excessive dirt.

Any repairs needed should be reported to a board member immediately following your game to ensure adequate time for repairs.

To clean your equipment, any excessive dirt or mud can generally be cleaned with a brush or soap and water. Try to avoid perfumed soaps and chemicals, as more kids have allergies to these.

UNIFORMS:

This spring, through registration fees, the league will provide each player with:

- *visor (excluding 6U)
- *jersey
- *socks

Coaches will be provided with a complimentary jersey.

Players need only provide their own glove and remainder of the uniform. All players must have the same color pants and socks. Cleats are optional, as are other accessories such as sliding shorts, shin guards, bats, bat bags, etc.

6 and Under League (T-Ball)

A. GOVERNING RULES

1. 6 and under regular season games shall be played using the most recent rules listed below in order of precedence:
 - a) These GGSA Standing Rules for the 6 & Under league (highest priority).
 - b) ASA rules and/or Pony Softball regulations for the Shetland league.

B. LENGTH OF GAME

1. Five (5) innings or 1 hour, whichever takes place first. No new inning will start after time limit has expired.

C. INNING PLAY

1. A half inning consists of a team's full batting order.

D. FIELD

1. Pitching distance will be 35 feet and base distance is 55 feet.
2. A line will be drawn equally between 1st and 2nd base, beginning just outside of home plate.

E. EQUIPMENT

1. The softball shall be a safety or reduced injury-type ball, either 9" or 10".
2. League-approved helmets with face mask and chin straps must be worn when an offensive player steps into any area of the playing field and must remain on until player is inside the dugout.
3. Metal cleats may not be worn.
4. Aluminum and wooden bats are both acceptable.
5. Catchers are required to wear a mask.
6. The home team shall provide the game balls and batting tee.
7. Score shall not be kept.

F. UMPIRES

1. GGSA does not provide an umpire for this division.
2. Visiting team will provide a parent to act as umpire. The umpire is responsible for making calls on the base runners and calling time out when a play is stopped.
3. Offensive coach shall keep track of his or her batting order and notify the umpire when everyone in the order has batted.

G. GAME PLAY

1. All players will play in the field and bat. Two (2) defensive coaches will be allowed in the outfield to direct and coach their defensive players.
2. Any extra defensive players must be placed in outfield positions, (i.e., only one (1) player at the pitcher's position, etc....).
3. The batting tee will be placed in back of home plate with the point of the tee touching the point of home plate.
4. Each batter shall receive five (5) swings. Each player will receive three (3) coach pitches. If batter is unable to hit coach pitch then player may use the tee. At both coaches' discretion, decided before the game, additional swings may be given. Batter may not foul out.
5. Batters will be warned about throwing the bat. Coaches must remind batters to lay the bat down.
6. When a ball is field on the 2nd base side of the line drawn between 1st and 2nd, and a play is made at first base, the ball must be **thrown** to first base. Likewise, when a ball is field on the 1st base side of the line, the ball may be "run over" to 1st base by the fielder.
7. Base runner shall remain in contact with the base until the ball is hit.
8. If ball is overthrown at any base, the base runner may advance by one base, however, a play may still be made to throw the runner out.
9. When the ball is in the possession of an infielder, and all play on the runners has ceased, the umpire shall call time.
10. Courtesy runners will not be allowed except in the event of injury or illness. The courtesy runner shall be the player who made the last out.

11. The pitcher must stay within the 16' diameter of the pitcher's circle until the ball is hit.
12. The catcher must be positioned behind home plate, in line with the plate.
13. NO jewelry may be worn while game is in play.
14. Any player, coach, or umpire who is bleeding or has blood on clothing MUST leave the playing field immediately.

H. RULE CHANGES

1. The GGSA Executive Board may add, amend or delete any or all of these standing rules for regular and/or post-season games if necessary.