

**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.

8 and Under League

A. GOVERNING RULES

1. 8 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 8 and under league (highest priority). These standing rules override and/or supplement ASA Softball rules.
 - b) ASA Softball Rules and Regulations

B. LENGTH OF GAME

1. Five (5) innings or 1 hour and fifteen minutes, whichever takes place first. No new inning will start after time limit has expired.
2. If the game is tied at the time or inning limit, then the “International Tie Breaker Rule” (3/2 ITB) will be in effect for one full inning. If the game is still tied after the extra inning, then each team will record the tie as a half-win for their league’s standings.

C. INNING PLAY

1. A half-inning consists of five (5) runs or three (3) outs, whichever takes place first.
2. In case of a rainout, an official game will be two (2) innings. The home coach shall contact the league scheduler and visiting coach to reschedule the rained out game.

D. FIELD

1. Pitching distance will be 35 feet and base distance is 55 feet. Circle around pitching machine will be 8’ diameter.

E. EQUIPMENT AND SCOREKEEPER

1. The softball shall be an 11’ safety or reduced injury type ball.
2. League approved helmets with face guards and chinstraps must be worn when a player steps into any area of the playing field and must remain on until returning to the dugout.
3. Metal Cleats may not be worn.

4. The home team shall provide the game balls and designate an official scorekeeper. Batting orders must be delivered to the opposing team's scorekeeper prior to the start of the game.
5. Aluminum and wooden bats are both acceptable.
6. Catchers are required to wear a mask with a throat guard, chest protector, and shin guards. A catcher's mitt is not required.
7. Pitching machine will be utilized at the 35-foot distance for this division.

F. UMPIRES

1. GGSA will provide one umpire for each game.
2. Umpires will keep track of pitch count.
3. In the event the umpire is late or absent, coaches may select a mutually agreed upon individual(s) to umpire the game. A GGSA Board Member **MUST** be advised immediately **AFTER** the game in this event.

G. GAME PLAY

1. Players:
 - a)* Games will be played with no more than eleven (11) players on the field. The tenth and eleventh players shall be placed in the outfield and short field positions. Only one (1) player is allowed to play in the pitcher position. Two (2) defensive coaches will be allowed in the outfield to direct and coach their defensive players.
 - b)* All players must bat (consecutively) whether they are playing defensively at the time or not.
 - c)* All players must appear in a defensive position within the first two (2) innings, and must play a minimum of two (2) defensive innings if the game lasts four or more innings.
 - d)* No player may sit out more than one (1) consecutive inning.
 - e)* If less than nine (9) players are present, the catcher may be replaced by a coach or parent. However, the coach or parent cannot participate in the game other than returning the ball to the pitcher. Any plays at home plate must be made by a regular player.
2. Pitching, Batting and Fielding

- a)* A pitching machine will be utilized for all pitches.
- b)* The pitching machine will be set as to create a no-arc pitch of approximately 30 m.p.h.
- c)* The offensive team shall provide a coach or parent to operate the pitching machine.
- d)* The batter will have a maximum of five (5) balls pitched. Pitches will be counted as a strike whether the batter swings at the pitch or not. The batter cannot strike out prior to five (5) pitches.
- e)* Foul balls are counted as strikes up to the fifth pitch. Batter cannot foul out. Batter must either hit a fair ball or strike out.
- f)* Batter cannot be walked for any reason.
- g)* Only one (1) defensive player at a time may play in the pitcher's position, and she may be no closer to home plate than parallel to the pitching machine.
- h)* Parent/Coach operating the pitching machine may stay on the field once the ball is in play but must make every effort possible to stay out of play.
- i)* Any batted ball that hits the parent/coach operating the pitching machine, or stops in the circle shall be declared a dead ball and the batter shall receive first base. Any base runner will advance only if forced.
- j)* If the ball is overthrown at 1st, 3rd, or home plate, base runners may advance one base. If the ball is overthrown at 2nd base, runners may advance until the umpire calls time.
- k)* Base runner shall remain in contact with the base until the ball is hit.
- l)* When the ball is hit, coach/parent must make reasonable effort to move from the path of the ball or batter may be called out.
- m)* First and third base coach cannot physically touch a runner while the ball is in play or the runner may be called out.
- n)* The Parent/Coach operating the pitching machine may instruct the batter only from inside the pitching circle. Only the coaches at first and third base may instruct the base runners.
- o)* Coaches may not physically touch a batter.

- p*) 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.
- q*) The infield fly rule does not apply.
- r*) At the umpire's discretion, the batter may be called out if the bat is thrown in a negligent manner. (NOTE: A warning from the umpire is not required.)
- s*) NO jewelry may be worn while game is in play.
- t*) Any player, coach or umpire who is bleeding or has blood on clothing must leave playing field immediately.

3. Stealing

Stealing is not permitted.

4. End of Play

Time will be called when outfielder throws the ball into the infield (infield being defined as inside the base path) and a defensive player has the ball under control. If base runner is halfway or more to next base when time is called, she may advance. If she is less than halfway, she must return to the previous base.

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.