

Bentonville Parks and Recreation Youth Softball League

League Rules and Procedures



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BPR LEAGUE RULES

The Bentonville Parks and Recreation Youth Softball League is sanctioned through the United States Specialty Sports Association (USSSA) and will follow the official rulebook of USSSA. The USSSA rules allow for rule amendments and the following rules have been adopted in order to better serve the participants in our league.

FOOTWEAR

When playing on dirt or natural turf surfaces, rubber molded cleats or tennis shoes are permitted. When playing on artificial turf surfaces, turf shoes or tennis shoes are recommended. Rubber molded cleats are also permitted. **Metal cleats are prohibited at all times.**

INJURED PLAYER:

If a player becomes injured during a game, pinch hitting is not permitted, and the players turn in the lineup is skipped. If there are less than 9 players remaining in the lineup an out will be charged. If a player is already on base and is injured during a play, then a substitute may pinch run to complete the inning.

LENGTH OF GAME:

6U/8U League games will be 60-minutes, regardless of innings played or the completion of the batting lineup. If a player is at bat when time expires, they will finish batting and the game will be over.

10U League games will be 70-minutes, regardless of innings played or the completion of the batting lineup. If a player is at bat when time expires, they will finish batting and the game will be over.

12U/14U/16U League games will be 70-minutes.

The following rules apply after 70-minutes has expired:

- If either team is ahead by more than 6 runs the game will be over. Otherwise, the inning will be played until a winner is determined.
- If, at the end of the inning, the game is tied there will be a 1 inning tiebreaker played. The USSSA Tie Breaker rule will be enforced with the exception that teams will only be allowed to score a maximum of 3 runs in their half inning. If the game is tied at the end of the tie-breaker inning, the game will remain tied for standings purposes.

BPR PARK RULES

Please enjoy using the Bentonville Parks and Trails System. To ensure that it is a pleasant experience for all our users, please follow these rules and guidelines, adopted by city ordinance, in all Bentonville Parks and Trails.

- Bentonville Parks are open from sunrise to 11 p.m.
- No soliciting, vending, or peddling
- Fireworks and other explosive devices are prohibited
- Parking in designated areas only
- Alcohol and drugs are strictly prohibited
- **Smoking is permitted only in parking lots**
- Fires are only permitted in fireplaces or on grills with hinged lids
- Overnight camping is prohibited
- **Please keep all pets on a leash and off the baseball/softball fields**
- Pet waste must be disposed of in trash receptacles
- Please do not litter
- Tampering with park property without written consent from Bentonville Parks and Recreation is prohibited

Report suspicious activity to local authorities. For emergencies dial 9-1-1. Non-emergencies dial 479-271-3170.

See a maintenance issue in our parks? Visit Bentonville311.com to report it.

EJECTION POLICY

Coaches or players who are ejected from a game will not be allowed to participate in the next scheduled league game.

Coaches or players who are ejected from a game multiple times within a season are subject to removal from the league.

Anyone who is ejected from the park by an umpire or is asked to leave the park by a BPR employee will not be allowed to attend the next game. A second offense may result in the person being banned from the park for the remainder of the season.

TIE BREAKERS FOR END OF SEASON

- (1) Winning Percentage
- (2) Winner of head-to-head game(s)
- (3) Fewest runs allowed head-to-head
- (4) Fewest runs allowed in all games
- (5) Most runs scored head-to-head
- (6) Most runs scored in all games

In case of a three-way tie, tie breakers will be used until one team is out, and then the two remaining teams go back to tie breaker #1 and start over, in order to break their tie.

AGE GROUPS

USSSA follows the academic calendar (meaning their “new” year begins in August – following all World Series events – and the year completes in July once all World Series events have concluded). Therefore, August is the date all players will move up to their proper age groups for that upcoming year (see below for age groups).

The age calculation date is December 31 of the current USSSA calendar year. Therefore, if the date is August 31, 2017... the Age calculation date would be December 31, 2017. Also, if the date is February 24, 2018... the age calculation date is December 31, 2017. This is due to December 31 being the age calculation date for the entire season (starting in August and running through July).

An age calculation date is the date that determined the player's age for that given year. For example, a player may be 10 but must play in 12U during the fall due to turning 11 prior to December 31. Conversely, a player may play 12U in the spring if they're 13 (as long as they were 12 on December 31, due to turning 13 afterwards).

The Child's age as of <u>December 31</u> in current USSSA year			
Age	Division	Pitching Method	Can they Play Up?
6	T-Ball	Tee	YES
7	8U	Coach Pitch	YES
8	8U	Coach Pitch	YES
9	10U	Kid Pitch	YES
10	10U	Kid Pitch	YES
11	12U	Kid Pitch	YES
12	12U	Kid Pitch	YES
13	14U	Kid Pitch	YES
14	14U	Kid Pitch	YES
15	16U	Kid Pitch	Highest Level
16	16U	Kid Pitch	Highest Level
17	Ineligible	Kid Pitch	N/A

DRAFT-UP PROCEDURES

If a team is in a situation that they will not have enough players (8) to play a game, below will be the guidelines. The reasoning here is participation, insuring we do our best to play games, so a forfeit's does not take place.

- If a team only has 7 players for a game, coaches must notify the Program Supervisor 48 hours in advance – if there is an issue. If it is a need for a catcher – let your programmer know – as they will need to make arrangements for this specific position, ensuring safety of the player and game time (innings) to be played for the day.
- Program Supervisor will contact the coaches of other same age group league teams, to see if any players are available and willing to play an additional game. Coaches are not allowed to find their own substitute players or call other coaches to arrange for players based upon a skill set or position need. Again, the goal here is to play – not to insure equity or a competitive advantage. If a coach puts any unauthorized players on the field, it will be a forfeit and a one game suspension.
 - Players drafted to the 8U League **must** come from the 8U or 6U League.
 - Players drafted to the 10U League **must** come from the 10U or 8U League.
 - Players drafted to the 12U League **must** come from the 12U or 10U League.
 - Players drafted to the 14U/16U League **must** come from the 14U/16U or 12U League.
- **Player Live Arm Pitching Only:** Substitute player is not allowed to pitch. This is for the safety of the player's arms and not to affect their pitching status.
- Substitute Player must go into the back of the lineup (batting the 8th position).
- **The goal is to get enough players to play an official game, so you can only have one substitute player to get you to 8 players for a game**
- Only league age and league rostered players will be allowed as substitutes.
- You may not draft a player and then bench one of your own for any reason.
- If you are going to have less than 7 players able to attend – the game will be a forfeit and no substitutes will be requested from other teams.

A player being drafted up cannot have a game with her own team immediately following the game she is being drafted for.

A draft up player can only play one game as a drafted player in the post season, then she is no longer eligible to draft up for any team in post season play.

Any coach that violates these procedures WILL FORFEIT the game that the illegal player participates in.

6U LEAGUE RULES

(5 & 6 YEAR OLDS)

USSSA Fastpitch rules will be used along with the following:

- Game time limit is 60-minutes, regardless of innings played or the completion of the batting lineup. If a player is at bat when time expires, they will finish batting and the game will be over.
- No score will be kept.
- All players will bat from a tee. After 3 attempts, the coach may help with 1 additional swing. **ALL** batters must wear helmets with approved facemasks attached.
- Bunting is NOT allowed.
- Catchers must wear helmets with approved facemasks attached when playing on defense.
- The entire team will bat through their roster, and then the teams will switch offense and defense.
- An inning is over when the team has gone thru the lineup. However, players that are out are to go back to the dugout. It is the initial stage of teaching the "out" rules of the game.
- Coaches will be allowed to demonstrate corrections for player on offense and defense. Demonstrations must not be excessive to the point it disrupts or delays the game.
- All players play defense regardless of the number of players. Normal positions will be filled (pitcher, catcher, 1st base, 2nd base, 3rd base, short stop, left field, center field, and right field). The remaining players **must** be in the grass.
- Coaches will go out to the field with their teams to help coach but must stay back unless they are demonstrating a correct play.
- The play will end when the ball is thrown into the circle around the pitcher's mound. If a runner is halfway to the next base, they will advance to that base. If they are not halfway, they must return to the previous base.
- If a player stops advancing, the play will end even if the ball has not yet reached the circle. A runner may not steal bases or lead off until the ball is hit off the Tee.

Please keep in mind that this league is to introduce the girls to softball and should be fun and instructional - not competitive.

8U LEAGUE RULES

(7 & 8 YEAR OLDS)

USSSA Fastpitch rules will be used along with the following:

- 8U is strictly coach pitch.
- Game time limit is 60-minutes, regardless of innings played or the completion of the batting lineup. If a player is at bat when time expires, they will finish batting and the game will be over.
- Scores will be recorded in spring season. Scores will not be recorded for fall season.
- There will be a limit of 6 runs per inning with **NO** continuation.
- NO bunting in coach pitch.
- NO stealing bases – a player may **ONLY** advance one base with an overthrown ball. A runner cannot steal home. If they advance home, they are liable to be put out.
 - A batter runner, who has received a base on balls, cannot attempt to steal second base.
- The ball may be ruled “dead” and “**TIME**” called when it is clear that a player in the infield has secured the ball, and base runners cannot advance. When all defensive players are in proper position, the umpire shall call “**PLAY BALL**”, and the next player takes her turn at bat.
- The infield fly rule will NOT be in effect.
- All players play defense regardless of the number of players. Normal positions will be filled (pitcher, catcher, 1st base, 2nd base, 3rd base, short stop, left field, center field, and right field). The remaining players **must** be in the grass.
- Free substitutions may be made, and any player may re-enter the game more than once.
- Each player must play 6 outs on defense if the game lasts 5 innings. If the game lasts less than 5 innings and a player does not get their 6 defensive outs in, that player must start the next game.
- Coach Pitching – the coach pitching may take one big 4' step in front of the 35' mound to meet 31'. One foot must be on the rubber while pitching.

- The coach pitching may coach their player while coming up to bat. Once the ball is hit and in play, the coach may no longer “coach” that player. The coach will need to squat down and stay out of the way of the play.
- If the ball hits the coach, while pitching, the following rules go into effect:
 - If, in the umpire’s judgment, the coach, while pitching, could not get out of the way of the batted ball the ball is dead and the batter is awarded 1st base. All other base runners are only allowed to advance, if forced.
 - If, in the umpires judgment, the coach, while pitching, could have gotten out of the way of the batted ball, the ball is dead, the batter is out, all other base runners must return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch

10U LEAGUE RULES

(9 & 10 YEAR OLDS)

USSSA Fastpitch rules will be used along with the following:

- Games will be 70-minutes, regardless of innings played or the completion of the batting lineup. If a player is at bat when time expires, they will finish batting and the game will be over.
- Scores will be recorded in spring season. Scores will not be recorded for fall season.
- There will be a limit of 6 runs per inning with NO continuation.
- A team shall consist of at least 9 players, whose positions shall be designated as (pitcher, catcher, 1st base, 2nd base, 3rd base, short stop, left field, center field, and right field).
 - A team shall be allowed to play with one batting position unfilled, provided they have a minimum of 8 batters present. The vacant batting position will be designated as the absent player. Whenever the absent player is scheduled to bat, an out shall be declared. If a team falls below 8 batters, a forfeit will be declared. (Please see "Draft Up Procedures").
- The infield fly rule will NOT be in effect.
- Each player must play 6 outs on defense if the game lasts 5 innings. If the game lasts less than 5 innings and a player does not get their 6 defensive outs in, that player must start the next game.
- ALL defensive substitutions MUST be reported to the umpire the inning the substitution is made.
- Free substitutions may be made, and any player may re-enter the game more than once.
- NO dropped 3rd strike
- A player may only advance 1 base on an overthrow.
 - If attempt to advance more than 1 base on an overthrow, they can be put out. After play ends, umpires will send them back to the base allowed.
- NO stealing bases.
 - Batter-runner who reaches 1st base by walk or HBP (hit-by-pitch) is not allowed to advance to 2nd base.
 - Runners who attempt to steal, and get out, the out stands. When play ends they will be returned to the base prior to the play.
 - A player may not leave a base until the ball crosses home plate.

- The ball may be ruled “**dead**” and “**TIME**” called when it is clear that the ball has reached the “pitchers circle”, pitcher has secured the ball, and base runners cannot advance. The play will then be over. When all defensive players are in proper position, the umpire shall call “**PLAY BALL**”, and the next player takes her turn at bat.
- After 1 walk in an inning, on any subsequent walk the following rules take effect:
 - An offensive Coach will pitch up to 2 pitches to the batter.
 - If the ball is not put in play during the 2 coach pitches the batter is out
 - Exception: If the second coach pitch is fouled off by the batter, the batter will receive only one additional coach pitch.
 - Base runners cannot steal when a coach is pitching
 - Coaches must pitch with 1 foot on the rubber
 - The coach pitching is NOT allowed to coach the batter-runner OR any runners on base if the ball is put in play
 - The coach pitching must get out of the way of the play as quickly as possible once the ball is put in play.

NOTE: Warnings will be removed starting the 2nd Monday in May. This is strictly to allow the coach to adjust to the new process

- If the ball hits the coach, while pitching, the following rules go into effect:
 - If, in the umpire's judgment, the coach, while pitching, could not get out of the way of the batted ball the ball is dead and the batter is awarded 1st base. All other base runners are only allowed to advance, if forced (same as 8u)
 - If, in the umpires judgment, the coach, while pitching, could have gotten out of the way of the batted ball, the ball is dead, the batter is out, all other base runners must return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch

12U LEAGUE RULES

(11 & 12 YEAR OLDS)

USSSA Fastpitch Rules will be used with the following exceptions:

- Game's will be 70 minutes.
 - The following rules apply after 70-minutes has expired:
 - If either team is ahead by more than 6 runs the game will be over. Otherwise, the inning will be played until a winner is determined.
 - If, at the end of the inning, the game is tied there will be a 1 inning tiebreaker played. The USSSA Tie Breaker rule will be enforced with the exception that teams will only be allowed to score a maximum of 3 runs in their half inning. If the game is tied at the end of the tie-breaker inning, the game will remain tied for standings purposes.
- Scores will be recorded in spring season. Scores will not be recorded for fall season.
- There will be a limit of 6 runs per inning with **NO** continuation.
- A team shall consist of at least 9 players, whose positions shall be designated as (pitcher, catcher, 1st base, 2nd base, 3rd base, short stop, left field, center field, and right field).
 - A team shall be allowed to play with one batting position unfilled, provided they have a minimum of 8 batters present. The vacant batting position will be designated as the absent player. Whenever the absent player is scheduled to bat, an out shall be declared. If a team falls below 8 batters, a forfeit will be declared. (Please see "Draft Up Procedures").
- Free substitutions may be made, and any player may re-enter the game more than once.
- Each player must play 6 outs on defense if the game lasts 5 innings. If the game lasts less than 5 innings and a player does not get their 6 defensive outs in, that player **must start** the next game.
- ALL defensive substitutions **MUST** be reported to the umpire the inning the substitution is made.

14U & 16U LEAGUE RULES

(13, 14, 15, & 16 YEAR OLDS)

USSSA Fastpitch Rules will be used with the following exceptions:

- Game's will be 70 minutes.
 - The following rules apply after 70-minutes has expired:
 - If either team is ahead by more than 6 runs the game will be over. Otherwise, the inning will be played until a winner is determined.
 - If, at the end of the inning, the game is tied there will be a 1 inning tiebreaker played. The USSSA Tie Breaker rule will be enforced with the exception that teams will only be allowed to score a maximum of 3 runs in their half inning. If the game is tied at the end of the tie-breaker inning, the game will remain tied for standings purposes.
- Scores will be recorded for spring season. Scores will not be recorded for fall season.
- There will be a limit of 6 runs per inning with **NO** continuation.
- A team shall consist of at least 9 players, whose positions shall be designated as (pitcher, catcher, 1st base, 2nd base, 3rd base, short stop, left field, center field, and right field).
 - A team shall be allowed to play with one batting position unfilled, provided they have a minimum of 8 batters present. The vacant batting position will be designated as the absent player. Whenever the absent player is scheduled to bat, an out shall be declared. If a team falls below 8 batters, a forfeit will be declared. (Please see "Draft Up Procedures").
- Free substitutions may be made, and any player may re-enter the game more than once.
- Each player must play 6 outs on defense if the game lasts 5 innings. If the game lasts less than 5 innings and a player does not get their 6 defensive outs in, that player **must start** the next game.
- ALL defensive substitutions **MUST** be reported to the umpire the inning the substitution is made.