

# PROVO PARKS & RECREATION GIRL'S SOFTBALL RULES



## TEAM AND PLAYER ASSIGNMENTS

1. Organization of teams will be under the direction of the League Coordinator. The selection and assignments of players will be on a fair and equitable basis.
2. Players who may automatically be placed on a team without going through the normal player assignment process will be the daughters of both the head & any assistant coach.
3. It is suggested that each team have 12 /13 players on their rosters. Each team roster must be filed with the grade and uniform number of each person during the past school year.
4. Flagrant behavior of a player will result in her temporary dismissal from participation in the league. Length of suspension will be determined by the League Coordinator.
5. All teams must be in matching jerseys. It is suggested that pants or shorts should be the same style and color. Uniform issues will not be grounds for protest.
  - A. No metal spikes.
  - B. No jewelry.

## SCHEDULES AND GAMES

1. Teams are given an eight-game guarantee for their season. **7-9 Grade: This season will consist of a "Sandlot Style" play. Tuesday's will be skills and a scrimmage in the scheduled time; Thursday's will be an actual game. Games with outside teams may occur and you will be notified if so.**
2. During the tournament when a game is tied at the end of regulation innings or the expiration of the time limit, the game will be decided by an international tie-breaker, with the last out starting on second base.
3. Time limits will be as follows:  
  
3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Grade - 1 hour or 6 innings  
5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Grade - 1 hour 15 minutes or 6 innings  
7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> Grade - 1 hour 15 minutes or 7 innings
4. **Teams will have 5 minutes before the game time is forfeited. The game will still be played and players divided evenly between both teams, but the team with not enough players will forfeit that win.**

No new inning should start after 11:00 p.m.

5. All 5<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> games will play a six run offensive limit during each inning. The play where the sixth run is scored is live and all runs will be counted until the play is complete. All 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> games will play a 4 run offensive limit during each inning. The play where the fourth run is scored is live and all runs will be counted until the play is complete.

6. In all leagues if a team is leading its opponent by at least 15 runs after three innings, 12 runs after 4 innings, or 8 runs after five innings, the team in the lead will be declared the winner.

Mercy Rule Innings/time	Runs Ahead	Visiting Team Innings Played	Home Team Innings Played
At 3 Innings	15	3	2.5
At 4 Innings	12	4	3.5
At 5 Innings	8	5	4.5

7. If the game is called for weather or other reasons, the team ahead is declared the winner if 2 or more equal innings have been completed in the 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> grade and 3 or more equal innings have been completed in 5<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grade leagues. It is suggested that suspended games due to weather, that have not met legal game standards (explained above), will resume at the point where the game was stopped.

8. There will be no designated hitter.

9. Intentional walks are not allowed. NO WALKS are allowed in 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> grade.

10. In 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade leagues, a batter may not advance on a dropped third strike.

11. The infield fly rule will not apply in 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade leagues.

12. The catcher must remain silent as soon as the batter steps into the batter's box.

13. Only positive comments will be allowed from both teams. No negative comments or cheers toward the other team will be tolerated.

14. In 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> grade, bunting will not be allowed. If a bunt is attempted, play is dead and the pitch will be counted as a strike.

15. Tie Games: In the case of a tie ball game we will have one extra inning in the regular season and games can end in a tie. For all post season games we will play till a winner is declared. All extra innings will start with a runner on 2nd base. This runner should be the last out of the previous inning.

## PROTESTS AND PENALTIES

1. No less than 8 uniformed players should be fielded.

2. The playing of illegal players shall result in the forfeiture of games in which players have participated illegally. The game must be protested by the opposing team's coach within 24 hours of the game in question. An illegal player is anyone who is not legally a member of the team because she does not meet the grade requirement or the registration requirements.

3. Penalty for the use of an ineligible player shall be the removal of the player from the line-up upon appeal by the opposing manager, notification by the official scorer or league official, providing the official scorebook or other league records verify the ineligibility of the player concerned. Such players may also be declared ineligible to play in the team's next game if such violation is determined to be deliberate on the part of the player or her manager. An ineligible player is one who is legally a member of the league, but who is ineligible because of the rule violation or has been declared ineligible for other justifiable cause. For the purpose of interpreting this rule, a player shall not be considered in violation of the rules until at least one legal pitch has been thrown after the violation has occurred.

4. In the event that a manager of an ineligible player refuses to remove the player in question from the line-up when the appeal is made and verified, the game is subject to a forfeit when it is protested properly.

5. A protest based on a play that involves the umpire's judgment is not permitted.

6. During the season, the objecting manager must notify the umpire, the official scorekeeper, and the opposing manager of a protest of violation or rules at the time of the violation. If an immediate decision cannot be reached, the game will continue in protest status and the objecting manager must file in writing with the League Coordinator within 24 hours. The following information is necessary:

- A. What inning it is.
- B. The score at the time of protest.
- C. How many outs.
- D. How many base runners and on what bases.
- E. The count on the batter.
- F. Who was pitching.
- G. What happened and what rule was violated. If the protest is upheld by the League Coordinator, the game in concern shall be played from the point of protest.

7. Protests should be discouraged on technicalities and it should be observed that, unless an illegal player is being used or commits some unusual or major violation, a game forfeiture should not be involved.

8. If a manager, coach, or player has been removed from the game and refuses to leave the playing field or ballpark, the game will be deemed a forfeit.

## **MANAGING AND COACHING**

1. Two adult coaches may be used on the baseline. Only eligible players in uniform may be used as base coaches or coaches if an adult is not used. Players occupying coach's boxes must wear a protective helmet.
2. Coaches cannot switch coaching boxes during an inning. Players, managers, and coaches must remain in the dugout, on the bench, or in the prescribed coaching box areas throughout the game.
3. The use of tobacco, chew, smoking, alcohol, or un-prescribed drugs in any form by players, coaches, or adult leaders in the dugout, on the bench, on the playing field, or any time during the game is not permitted and such offenders are ineligible for further participation in the league for that year.
4. Flagrant behavior of any manager or coach will not be tolerated. If he or she is removed from the game, he or she will leave the ballpark without exception. Depending on the behavior, the person will be asked to meet with his or her League Coordinator. Coaches are responsible for their own crowd control during a game.
5. It is the responsibility of the umpire to keep the game moving along and not allow any delay of game tactics.

## **CONFERENCES**

1. Offensively, only one time out can be taken in a ½ inning. Coaches must give signs to all batters in a timely manner. Coaching players in between innings does not constitute a time out.
2. Defensive Conferences: The defensive team will be allowed a total of three conferences without penalty during a game. After three charged conferences in a game, or for any charged conference, in excess of one in each extra inning, the pitcher shall be removed as the pitcher. A conference is not charged when a pitching change is made.

## **PITCHING**

1. The pitcher must start with the pivot foot in contact with the plate. UPDATE FROM UHSAA RULES 2024:::A pitcher may step backward from the pitching plate with the non-pivot foot while delivering the ball. 3<sup>rd</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grade: The pitcher may now have both feet off the ground at the same time as long as both feet remain within the 24-inch width of the pitching plate and the pitcher does not replant the pivot foot. See NFHS.org Rule 6-1-2c, 2-47 for further explanation.
2. The pitcher must start pitching from inside the width of the pitching rubber. A staggered starting stance is allowed when starting to pitch.
3. 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> grade: There are NO walks. If a batter receives four called balls, a coach will enter the game to pitch to his own team's batter. The coach gets to pitch FOUR minus the number of strikes pitches, or until the batter hits the ball, or strikes out. The pitcher must remain in the pitcher's circle to play defense if a ball is hit. If the coach is needed to step in and pitch, they must do their best to stay out of the play when it becomes live. Any ball accidentally hitting the coach is live and playable.

**Scenario:**

--Batter receives a count of four balls and one strike. Coach enters game and pitches maximum of three pitches. The first two pitches are called strikes—the batter is out, even though the third pitch has not been thrown.

--Batter receives a count of four balls and zero strikes. Coach enters game and pitches maximum of four pitches. The coach throws four poor pitches that the girl cannot hit—the batter is out.

--Batter receives a count of four balls and two strikes. Coach enters game and pitches maximum of two pitches. The first pitch is hit for a single—the batter is on base.

--Batter receives a count of four balls and one strike. Coach enters game and pitches maximum of three pitches. The first two pitches are balls, and the girl hits the third pitch foul. The batter receives another pitch until she either: hits the ball, strikes out, or receives another ball..i.e. a foul ball on the “last” pitch (no matter how many “last” pitches) results in another pitch to her.

**BASE RUNNING**

1. 5<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grade only- When a pitcher is within the 8-foot radius or on the pitcher's plate with the ball in her possession (and not making a play on the runner), the base runner must immediately attempt to advance to the next base or return to the previous base.

2. 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> grade only- All play must stop (Dead Ball) when the pitcher is standing within the pitching 8-foot radius circle and the ball enters or passes through the circle— regardless of whether the pitcher catches it or not, or the pitcher carries the ball into the circle. Base runners must go to the nearest base. Clarification- This only applies to the ball being thrown to the pitcher, not if the thrown ball passes through the circle when trying to make a play on a base runner.

A. Any 5<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grade player, who receives a base on balls, may advance beyond first base at her own risk. They will be declared out, however, if they stop between bases while the pitcher is holding the ball within the 8-ft. radius circle.

B. Any 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> grade player, who receives a base on balls, may not advance past first base.

3. The violation by one base runner shall affect all other base runners. If a base runner is out for leaving too soon, all other base runners must return to their bases occupied at the time of the dead ball call.

4. In 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade, the base runners shall not leave their bases until the pitched ball has reached the batter. The ball will be considered as having reached the batter when it reaches home plate. If the base runner leaves the base before the ball reaches the batter, the base runner is out. The pitched ball then becomes a dead ball. 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> grade players will not be allowed to steal home when leading by 12 or more runs.

5. In 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grade, the base runners shall not leave their bases until the pitcher releases the ball to the batter. Any runners that leave too early will be called out. The pitched ball then becomes a dead ball.

6. We encourage all players to slide to avoid collisions and contact. If a player does not slide and the umpire feels that interference occurred as a result of such conduct, the runner is out. If the umpire believes that a player intentionally bulldozes or runs over another player, the offending player will be ejected. Any player ejected from a game will be suspended for the following game. All other base runners will return to the base last occupied at the time of the infraction. Be smart and slide!

7. 90 Second Rule: 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grade only: Teams are asked to take no more than 90 seconds from the point when the last out occurs to when the first pitch is to be thrown to start the new half-inning. This rule is to help pick up the pace of the game. Coaches are to teach players to hustle on and off the field, this will allow for more playing time and complete games.

A. Speed-up runner for the catcher only, and must be last out.

B. If the pitcher is not ready at the end of 90 seconds, a ball will be called.

C. If the batter is not ready at the end of 90 seconds, a strike will be called.

D. In cold weather situations, the umpire should use good judgment in enforcing this rule and error on the side of safety for the player's arms.

E. If either the offense or defense waives their right to 90 seconds, the opposing team still has the option to utilize their time.

## **PLAYERS IN THE LINE-UP**

1. All leagues will play with ten defensive players (if that many are available). It is recommended that ALL players bat during league, with 10 defensive positions and free defensive substitutions. The extra defensive player will be in the outfield. The four defensive outfielders must be arranged in an evenly spaced (umbrella type) position with each player being approximately the same distance from home plate. All outfielders must be in position in the grass of the outfield (if there is a dirt infield) if not, then they must maintain at least a 20-foot distance from the baseline. No rovers will be permitted.

## **EQUIPMENT AND PLAYING FIELD REGULATIONS**

1. All teams must be in matching jerseys. It is suggested that pants or shorts should be the same style and color. Uniform issues will not be grounds for protest.

2. In all ages, bats will be official fastpitch softball bats as approved by the League Coordinator. Baseball bats are illegal and may not be used.

3. The use of metal cleats will not be allowed by any player, in any age group.

4. It is required that a catcher must wear a chest protector, face mask, throat protector, and shin guards. Catchers should be ready to take the field when the last out occurs of their team's offensive inning. If the catcher cannot warm up the pitcher, the coach should.

5. A helmet MUST be worn by the batter, the on-deck batter, and by all base runners. If a youth player is being used as a base coach, then she MUST also wear the protective batting helmet. Helmets must remain on the head until the person reaches the dugout.

6.

LEAGUE REGULATIONS		3 <sup>RD</sup> /4 <sup>TH</sup>	5 <sup>TH</sup> /6 <sup>TH</sup>	7 <sup>TH</sup> -9 <sup>TH</sup>
PLAYING FIELD	BASE LINE DISTANCE	60'		
	PITCHING DISTANCE	35'	35'	43'
	MINIMUM HOME RUN	175'		
	HOME PLATE TO BACKSTOP	30'		
REGULATION GAMES	# OF INNINGS	6		7
BATS	MAXIMUM LENGTH/ DIAMETER	32" / 2¼		34" / 2¼
SOFTBALLS	SIZE	11"	12"	

7. All helmets must have a face mask that meets national safety standards.

8. Teams should do their pre-game warm-ups outside the foul lines, especially if the field has just been prepared.

9. Bats must be wrapped with dull tape or have a handgrip that isn't torn, ragged, or loose. No duct tape or electrical tape will be allowed.

10. All bats must be one solid unit. No pieces may disconnect.

13. Coaches are to remain in their respective dugouts or coaching boxes. No coach at any time is allowed to stand behind the backstop to gain an advantage in coaching their players or criticizing umpires.

