



West Nashville Sports League Girls Softball

2024 SPRING Girls Softball Rules

Babe Ruth Official Rule book and this WNSL Supplement will be the guidelines for all league play.

Age Divisions: The playing age will be determined by January 1, 2024. The following divisions will be offered each season; 6 & Under (6U), 8 & Under (8U), 10 & Under (10u), 12 & Under (12U) & 14 & Under (14U).

Playing Time: Each player must play at least two (2) innings.

Base Lengths & Pitching Distances:

Age Group	Base Length	Game Time	Pitching Distance
6 & Under (6U)	50'	55 - 60min	Approximately 32'
8 & Under (8U)	50'	60 - 70min	32' Coach pitch
10 & Under (10U)	55'	70 - 80min	35'
12 & Under (12U)	60'	70 - 80min	40'
14 & Under (14U)	60'	70 - 80min	43'

Equipment: All equipment used by the players must meet the minimum criteria of the Babe Ruth rules. This is to include bats, balls, gloves, batting helmets/face masks, shoes, and catcher's equipment. Any equipment judged to be unsafe or damaged may be removed from play by an umpire.

No metal cleats are allowed for any age division.

EQUIPMENT:

SECTION 1: OFFICIAL BAT

- A. Certified/Approved: the official bat for Babe Ruth must meet all of the ASA/USA Softball specifications and the requirements of rule 3, Section 1 and:
1. The Official bat, made up of the knob, handle, grip, taper, barrel and end cap shall be free of dents, cracks, sharp edges, rattles, and show no signs of excessive wear. The Official bat shall be marked OFFICIAL SOFTBALL by the manufacturer, be no more than 34 inches long nor exceed 38 ounces in weight. The Official bat shall not be more than 2.250 inches in diameter at its largest part, including any tolerance for expansion. **The Official bat must be either the 2000, 2004 or ASA Certification Mark, or the 2020 USA Softball Stamp as shown below and must be not listed on the ASA Non-Approved Bat List with 2000 or 2004 Certification Mark.**



2. Must be included on a list of approved bat models published by [USA Softball](#)
3. Must in the sole opinion and discretion of the umpire, have been manufactured before 2000 and if tested would comply with the ASA Bat Performance Standard. This includes wooden bats.

SECTION 2: OFFICIAL SOFTBALL

- A. Certified/ Approved: Only softballs which bear an ASA/USA approved certification mark signifying compliance with the ball COR and ball compression limitations then in effect, and which satisfy all other applicable provisions in Rule 3, Section 3, will be allowed for use in USA Championship Play.
- B. Cover: the official softball shall have a cover of leather or synthetic leather material. The ball shall be regular, smooth-seamed, and smooth-surfaced.
- C. The 12 inch ball: the official 12 inch softball shall be at least 12.0 inches in circumference when measured across two seams, and shall weigh at least 6.750 ounces.
1. The 12 inch fast pitch ball: the yellow optic cover, red stitch 12 inch ball with a ball COR of .470 or under and a ball compression of 375.0 lbs or under.

NOTE: This ball is used for 12U & 14U

- D. The 11 inch ball: the official 11 inch softball shall be at least 11.0 inches in circumference. It shall weigh at least 6.0 ounces. The smooth-seamed style shall not

have fewer than 80 stitches in each cover sewn by the two-needle method, or with an authentic facsimile of stitching as approved by USA Softball.

1. The 11 inch fast pitch ball: the yellow optic cover, red stitch 11 inch ball with a ball COR of .470 and under, and a ball compression of 375.0 lbs or under.

NOTE: This ball is used for divisions 10U and below.

SECTION 3: CATCHERS EQUIPMENT, FACE MASK/GUARDS & HELMETS

- A. Face mask/guards: Any defensive player or offensive player may wear a face mask/guard or batter's helmet with attached face mask.

NOTE: All batters are required to wear an approved batting helmet. All 10U, 12U and 14U catchers are required to wear an approved helmet with attached facemask, shin guards, and body protector. All 8U catchers should have an approved helmet and chest protector. 6U does not require a catcher.

NOTE: 6U and 8U players in the pitcher position are required to wear a helmet or face mask/guard. For 10U division and up all pitchers and players on the corner positions (1st and 3rd base) are required to wear a protective face mask. WNSL strongly encourages all players to wear a face mask/ guard while playing in the field.

PLAYERS, COACHES, AND FANS:

SECTION 1: COACHES

- A. Coaches will be responsible for clearing the field of all debris after a game at the time set out in the official game schedule of the league.

- B. Teams with the last game of the night are responsible for cleaning up their dugout.

- C. Each Head Coach shall furnish the opposing coach and scorekeeper a copy of the batting order. The batting order shall include and list with reference both to name and uniform number of all team players present before the first ball is pitched.
-

RULE 4 PLAYERS, COACHES, AND FANS:

SECTION 2: SCORE BOOK

A. Each team in the league shall maintain a score book, which reflects the outcome of all its League Games. The score book will be furnished by the league.

1) When a team is designated as the Home Team, it shall provide an official Scorekeeper of at least 16 yrs old, and its score book shall be the Official Score book for that game.

2) The Visiting Team shall provide an official Scoreboard Keeper of at least 16 yrs old for the game.

B. Any protest based on the Official Score book regarding substitution and eligibility shall be verbally made to the Umpire prior to a player coming to bat. Decisions of the umpire will be final if the decision is based solely on League rules.

SECTION 3: PLAYERS

A. 6U: All players in the field. Six players may play in the infield and all other players will play in the outfield. 8U & 10U: A team shall consist of ten (10) players in the following positions: Pitcher, catcher, first base, second base, short stop, third base, left fielder, left-center fielder, right-center fielder, right fielder. 12U and 14U shall consist of (9) players in normal softball positions.

NOTE: This will remain throughout the entire season to include the end of season tournament: If a team chooses to play with a nine player defensive field that is allowed. The minimum playing time for all players must be adhered to.

NOTE: All age groups will bat the entire roster.

NOTE: Except for 6U, Eight players must be present to start and complete a game. If 8 players are not present for a team, a 10-minute grace period will begin. If the short-handed team doesn't have enough players show up during the grace period, then a forfeit will be declared, and the game will count as a loss. Once a forfeit is declared, then a scrimmage game is playable, but the result will still be a loss for the record keeping. Umpires will work all games assigned.

Teams will be able to use "Pick up" players who are in the same age division or younger and from the WNSL to field a complete team for the regular season only. "Pick-up" players must be currently registered in the program.

SUBSTITUTES/ILLEGAL PLAYERS

Players may only be officially rostered to one (1) team per entire league unless approved by league admins.

SECTION 4: DISQUALIFIED OR EJECTED PARTICIPANT

- A. A disqualified player is prohibited from playing but can remain in the team area.
- B. An ejected participant must leave the grounds and have no contact with the umpires or participants in the game.

NOTE: Any player, coach, or parent ejected from a game will have a minimum of a one (1) game suspension and must also leave the property immediately upon being ejected. Suspension could be lengthened depending on the severity of the incident. Abuse of umpires, supervisors and WNSL staff may result in suspension for two or more games, this includes after the game is complete. Any person involved in fighting will be immediately removed from the facility and will be suspended from all leagues and facilities indefinitely.

- C. Any arguing of the judgment of balls and strikes will result in a team warning. Any repeat offense will result in the ejection of the team member.
- D. If a player is disqualified a team can play shorthanded, however if a player is ejected and the team does not have enough players, play cannot continue, and the game is forfeited.

THE GAME: SECTION 1: HOME TEAM

Prior to the start of the game, the home team shall be determined by schedule. The home team is listed second on the schedule.

The home team will occupy the 3rd base dugout. The visiting team will occupy the 1st base dugout.

NOTE: During the regular season when teams travel to other parks, the host association will be considered the home team.

NOTE: All tournament pool play games shall be determined by a coin toss.

SECTION 2: FITNESS OF THE GROUNDS and GAME TIMES

The umpire shall determine the Fitness of the grounds for a game **when WNSL staff is not present.**

Because our fields do not have lights, it is necessary that all weeknight games should begin and end on time. If there is a second game scheduled, the umpire should end the 1st game promptly at the end of the time limit, even in the middle of a batting order, and the score reverts back to the end of the previous inning. The umpire will determine when the game is over. If tied, the first game will end subject to the above time limit and will be recorded as a tie. The second game, if tied, will continue until completed or until the umpire calls the game due to darkness. For any game, if the inning begins but is not able to be completed, the score at the end of the last full inning will be the official result, even if tied. For tournament play only, the American Softball Association (ASA) tie breaker rule will be in effect if a game is tied by the time limit.

6U Playing Rule (Wookies)

- A. One Coach per team will act as umpires.
- B. If both teams have players present and ready to play, a game shall be started and played to its completion. Players arriving after the game begins may be added to the bottom of the batting order in the order of their arrival.
- C. Games will continue no matter if teams are short players.
- D. All players will be placed in the batting order and play on defense each inning. Six players will play in the infield and all others will play in the outfield.
- E. Each player will receive up to 3 pitches from the offensive coach. After 3 pitches, a tee will be brought out for the batter to hit off of.
- F. The infield fly rule will not apply.
- G. Anytime that a batter gets a hit the play will remain alive and the base runners can continue to advance on the bases until the ball is in control of a player in the infield, who must hold the ball above her head in the infield or when the lead runner is stopped and cannot advance.
- H. Any player that has passed a base in running to the next base when the umpire calls a play dead will be allowed to continue to that base she was attempting to take if she is beyond the mid-way hash mark. If the runner hesitates or pauses in advancing to the next base she is sent back to the last base she crossed. The decisions of the umpires as to whether the ball was in control of the player will be final and not subject to protest.
- I. Any batted ball coming in contact with the Coach pitching to the batter will be a dead ball and the batter gets to take first base. No other runners advance unless they have to for the runner coming to 1st.
- J. A team will not be allowed to score more than five runs in one inning.
- K. The girl playing the pitchers position must wear a mask and must stay within an 4-foot radius of the 32-foot pitching rubber until after the ball is hit by the batter. When playing the pitcher's position, she cannot be moved around in the infield or be moved into the outfield before the ball is hit. * A minimum of 3 different players should play the in circle per game.
- L. The Coach Pitcher may pitch from closer than 32'.
- M. The Coach Pitcher shall be required to leave the playing field by direction of home plate and secure the bat on a fair ball, making every effort to avoid interfering with the play.
- N. If a batter has to be removed from the line up for any reason, no out will be accessed and they can return to their original spot in the lineup at any time. Their AT Bat will just be skipped. Please communicate with the scorekeeper and umpire if this happens.
- O. Up to two defensive coaches will be allowed in the outfield (behind the imaginary baselines)
- P. If an offensive coach touches a runner during a live play, the runner will be out.
- Q. There will be no more than 6 defensive players inside the imaginary plane created by the imaginary lines between first and second bases and second and third bases. (This includes the catcher). They should be playing in correct spots on the field and not pulled in around the pitching circle. Other players must be in the grass.
- R. Games will last 6 innings of play or a time limit of 50 minutes. No new inning will be started after 50 minutes of play. There is no Mercy Rule.
- S. All hits that stay in the infield are limited to singles. Runners do not advance on overthrows to first base. For overthrows at 2nd, 3rd or home base, runners will be awarded 1 base.
- T. No protests will be allowed.

8U Playing Rules (Rookies)

- A. If both teams have players present and ready to play, a game shall be started and played to its completion. Players arriving after the game begins may be added to the bottom of the batting order in the order of their arrival.
 - B. Games will continue no matter if teams are short players. We do not want to short teams' games.
 - C. All players will be placed in the batting order. Each team may have 10 players on defense at a time. Coaches may agree to allow more extra outfielders but both coaches must agree to this.
 - D. Each player will receive up to 5 pitches from the offensive coach. Three strikes by the batter swinging will be an out.
 - i. If the batter fouls the ball on subsequent swings, another swing will be allowed until the batter hits the ball or misses and strikes out.
 - E. The infield fly rule does not apply.
 - F. Anytime that a batter gets a hit (a ball hit in fair territory and travels at least 10' from the plate) the play will remain alive and the base runners can continue to advance on the bases until the ball is in control of the player pitcher or the infielder or the runners cannot advance. The umpire will declare "time" and a runner advances to the next base if the runner is over half way to the next base. (Umpire discretion)
 - G. Any player that has passed a base in running to the next base when the umpire calls a play dead will be allowed to continue to that base she was attempting to take if she is over halfway. If the runner hesitates or pauses in advancing to the next base she is sent back to the last base she crossed. The decisions of the umpires as to whether the ball was in control of the player pitcher will be final and not subject to protest.
 - H. Any batted ball coming in contact with the Coach pitching to the batter will be a dead ball and the batter gets to take first base. No other runners advance unless they have to for the runner coming to 1st.
 - I. A team will not be allowed to score more than five runs in one inning.
 - J. The girl playing the pitchers position must wear a mask and must stay within an 8-foot radius of the 32-foot pitching rubber until after the ball is hit by the batter. When playing the pitcher's position, she cannot be moved around in the infield or be moved into the outfield before the ball is hit. * A minimum of 3 different players should play the circle per game. (This should be done the first 3 innings). *
 - K. Players in the catchers position may stand to the side of the plate wearing a helmet and chest protector. If the catcher would like to sit behind the plate she must be in full gear.
 - L. The Coach Pitcher must have one foot inside the pitching circle and shall be required to leave the playing field by direction of home plate and secure the bat on a fair ball, making every effort to avoid interfering with the play.
 - M. If a batter has to be removed from the line up for any reason, no out will be accessed and they can return to their original spot in the lineup at any time. Their At Bat will just be skipped. Please communicate with the scorekeeper and umpire if this happens. No out will be recorded.
 - N. Up to two defensive coaches will be allowed in the outfield (behind the imaginary baselines)
 - O. If an offensive coach touches a runner during a live play, the runner will be out.
 - P. There will be no more than 6 defensive players inside the imaginary plane created by the imaginary lines between first and second bases and second and third bases. (This includes the catcher). They should be playing in correct spots on the field and not pulled in around the pitching circle. Other players must be in the grass.
 - Q. Games will last 6 innings of play or a time limit of 60 - 70 minutes. No new inning will be started after 60 minutes of play.
 - R. Following a hit in play, there will only be one base allowed on an overthrow to 1st base, 2nd, 3rd, or home bases.
 - S. Runners may leave the base once the pitch crosses the plate or is hit. Runners may not lead off.
 - T. No protests will be allowed.
-

10U Playing Rules (Minors)

- A. A team with players ready to play regardless of number will start game. Players arriving after the game begins may be added to the bottom of the batting order.
 - B. If a team only has eight (8) players available to begin a game, the Head Coach may pick up Rookie League Players and add them to the team.
 - a. The team uniform rule is waived for the pick-ups in such games.
 - C. The Head Coach shall note on the line-up sheet the Rookie League Players added.
 - D. All players will be placed in the batting order and will bat regardless of defensive play.
 - E. Each team may play 10 players on defense at any given time. The extra player(s) is in the outfield. If both coaches agree more players may play in the outfield. Both coaches must agree.
 - F. Unrestricted defensive substitution will be allowed so long as each player plays as much as possible in the game.
 - G. When there are two outs and one of the players on base is the team's catcher, the catcher can be replaced by the player who made the second out as a pinch runner. (Speed up Play)
 - H. If a batter is taken out of the batting lineup for any reason, upon appeal by the opposing team, an out will be assessed on the first at bat only of the removed player. On subsequent at bats, the player may return to the lineup, or she may be skipped without an out being assessed. (A player may return to the lineup one time only.)
 - I. A player may pitch any number of innings per game or day. A player having been removed as a pitcher may pitch again in the same game.
 - J. A legal pitch is defined by the ASA pitching regulations (see Appendix A). An illegal pitch will result in the pitch being called a ball. Illegal pitches are at the discretion of the umpire.
 - K. The pitcher cannot walk more than two batters (does not have to be consecutive batters) per inning. A Hit-by-pitch will be considered a walk. After the second walk or HBP, when the pitcher throws four balls, the batting team's coach will come in and pitch a maximum of three (3) pitches. All HBP batters take 1st base. Foul balls count as a pitch but there is no limit on the number of foul balls after the second pitch. After three (3) coach pitches, assuming no foul balls on the third strike, the batter is called out.
 - a. After rule "K" is put into play, the pitcher will reenter the game after each batter. If the batter is then walked, the batting team's coach re-enters and pitches up to 3 pitches.
 - b. A Hit batter may decline taking the base and continue the at-bat. If the batter is hit within the first two HBP/Walks and declines to take the base, it will not count towards the pitcher's walk total.
 - L. A team will not be allowed to score more than five runs in one inning.
 - M. Following a hit, there will be only one base allowed on an overthrow to any base.
 - N. A ball must be hit further than 10 feet to be a hit. Less than 10 feet will be considered a foul ball.
 - O. Games will consist of a maximum of six innings or a time limit of 70 - 80 min. No new inning will start after 70 minutes of play.
 - P. Stoppage of play occurs when the pitcher has control of the ball in the circle or runners are stopped from advancing. The Umpire will call "Time."
 - Q. Only one coach may be in the outfield to direct players.
 - R. International tiebreaker applies (Last batted out will begin on 2nd base with no outs)
 - S. Stealing will not be allowed.
 - T. Runners may not leave the base until the ball crosses the plate. If a runner is judged to leave early, the umpire will call time and the play called dead. Multiple players leaving early can result in the player being called out and is at the umpire's discretion.
 - U. No infield fly rule
 - V. No dropped third strike
 - W. No intentional walks will be allowed
 - X. Catcher/Pitcher may not block plate if she does not have the ball for a tag at home plate.
 - Y. Mercy run rule will apply. 12 after 3 innings, 10 after 4, 8 after 5.
-

12U and 14U Playing Rules (Majors/Prep)

- A. A team with players ready to play will start game regardless of number. Players arriving after the game begins may be added to the bottom of the batting order.
 - i. If a team does not have nine players available to begin a game, The Head Coach may pick up Minors Players and add them to the Team Roster.
- B. The team uniform rule is waived for the pick-ups in such games.
- C. The Head Coach shall note on the line-up sheet the Minors Players picked up.
- D. If a team has nine players available to begin a game, Minors Players may not be picked up.
- E. All players will be placed in the batting order and will bat regardless of defensive play.
- F. Each team may play 9 players on defense at any given time. (Be sure you rotate girls each inning and no girl sits on the bench 2 times in a game unless necessary- equal playing time).
- G. Unrestricted defensive substitution will be allowed so long as the coach makes sure players get equal time throughout the season.
- H. When there are two outs and one of the players on base is the team's catcher, the catcher can be replaced by the player who made the second out.
- I. If a batter is taken out of the batting lineup for any reason, upon appeal by the opposing team, an out will be assessed on the first at bat only of the removed player. On subsequent at bats, the player may return to the lineup, or she may be skipped without an out being assessed. (A player may return to the lineup one time only.)
- J. A team will not be allowed to score more than five runs in one inning.
- K. Games will consist of a maximum of six innings of play. A time limit of 70 - 80 minutes will apply, and no inning may begin after 70 minutes.
- L. International tiebreaker applies. Next batter due up, the previous batter will start at 2nd with no outs).
- M. Leads offs are allowed after the ball leaves the pitcher's hand and stealing bases are allowed; unlimited in any way, including stealing of home. Once a team has a 10-run lead that team may not steal any base including passed balls and overthrows from home to the pitcher.
- N. A batter can advance to 1st base on a dropped third strike with 2 outs or if 1st base is unoccupied with 1 or 2 outs. (Regular rules apply)
- O. Infield Fly rules apply.
- P. Any player may pitch. All pitchers will pitch from 40 feet. The pitching distance is measured from the front of the pitcher's plate to the back of the home plate. This is a fast pitch league. A pitcher must begin her pitch with her pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate. The non-pivot foot may begin in contact with the pitcher's plate, or the non-pivot foot may begin behind the pitcher's plate with no contact on the pitcher's plate. Her first step must be toward home plate. Windmill pitching will be allowed. There is no arc requirement.
- Q. A legal pitch is defined by the ASA pitching regulations (see Appendix A) unless superseded by this document. An illegal pitch will result in the pitch being called a ball. Illegal pitches are at the discretion of the umpire.
- R. A player may pitch any number of innings per game or day. A player having been removed as a pitcher may pitch again in the same game.
- S. When the Pitcher A) Has control of the ball, B) Is in the Pitcher's Circle and C) Is not making a defensive play, the "Look Back" Rule is in effect. This requires a Runner who is in between bases to either advance to the next base or retreat to their previous base. If the Runner is already on a base, they must stop. If the Runner does not either advance or retreat, or if they leave their base, they are out.
 - i. Throwing towards the base, running towards the Runner or feinting a throw are considered defensive plays.
- T. No intentional walks will be allowed.
- U. Mercy run rule will apply. 12 after 3 innings, 10 after 4, 8 after 5.

APPENDIX A

PITCHING REGULATIONS

The Following Regulations constitute a legal pitch. Illegal pitches are called at the discretion of the umpire and will be deemed a ball.

PRELIMINARIES

Before starting the delivery (Pitch) the pitcher shall comply with the following:

- A. The pitcher may not take the pitching position on the pitcher's plate without possession of the ball.
- B. The pitcher shall not be considered in the pitching position unless the catcher is in position to receive the pitch.
- C. Both feet must be on the ground within the 24-inch length of the pitcher's plate. The shoulders shall be in line with first and third base.
 - a. The pitcher shall take a position with both feet in contact with the pitcher's plate.
- D. While on the pitching plate, the pitcher shall take the signal or appear to be taking a signal with the hands separated. The ball must remain in either the glove or the hand.
- E. The pitcher shall bring the hands together for not less than one second and not more than 10 seconds before releasing it,
 - a. Both feet must remain in contact with the pitching plate at all times prior to the forward step.

LEGAL DELIVERY

- A. The pitcher must not make any motion to pitch without immediately delivering the ball to the batter.
- B. The pitcher must not use a pitching motion in which, after bringing the hands together in the pitching position, the pitcher removed one hand from the ball, and returns the ball to both hands.
- C. The pitcher must not make a stop or reversal of the forward motion after separating the hands.
- D. The pitcher must not make two revolutions of the arm on the windmill pitch. A pitcher may drop the arm to the side and rear before starting the windmill motion.
- E. The delivery must be an underhanded motion with the hand below the hip and the wrist not farther from the body than the elbow.
- F. The release of the ball and follow through of the hand and wrist must be forward and past the straight line of the body.
- G. In the act of delivering the ball, the pitcher must take one step with the non-pivot foot simultaneous with the release of the ball. The step must be forward and toward the batter within the 24-inch length of the pitcher's plate, provided contact is maintained with the plate. Raising the foot off the pitching plate and returning it to the plate creates a rocking motion and is an illegal act.
- H. Pushing off with the pivot foot from a place other than the pitcher's plate is illegal. This includes a "crow hop" as defined in rule 1.
- I. Pushing off and dragging the pivot foot in contact with the ground is required. If a hole has been created, the pivot foot may drag no higher than the level plane of the ground.
- J. The pitcher must not make another revolution after releasing the ball
- K. The pitcher shall not deliberately drop, roll or bounce the ball in order to prevent the batter from hitting it.
- L. The pitcher has 20 second to release the next pitch after receiving the ball of after the umpire indicates "Play ball"