

OFFICIAL RULES TRI-VALLEY SOFTBALL

SENIOR DIVISION

Grades 7 and 8

2009 Season

Last Updated: May 27, 2009

If rules are not specifically covered, the rules of the Amateur Softball Association of America shall govern play.

A. Scheduling

1. Teams will be allowed a maximum of 5 practice sessions per week during the pre-season and 2 practices per week once the season has begun.
2. Game time is 6:00 pm unless otherwise noted on schedule.
3. A league representative should be consulted to confirm postponement or rescheduling of a game.
4. It is the home team's responsibility to reschedule a game no more than two weeks after the postponement.
5. The visiting coach and the umpire must be notified at least 2 hours prior to game time if a game is to be postponed due to weather conditions.
6. The umpire will use his/her discretion in deciding if a game is to be postponed due to weather conditions at the beginning of or during the game.
7. Games must be stopped immediately upon sighting of lightning. Umpires will advise coaches of decisions regarding termination of the game.
8. All rescheduled games must be made-up within two weeks unless agreed upon by both coaches ahead of time. Every effort must be made to avoid rescheduling.
9. Each game is 6 innings long. To be official, 4 innings must be completed (or 3 1/2 innings in the event the home team is ahead).
10. No innings will be started after dusk or after 8:00 PM which ever comes first.

B. Players

1. Each team will play up to 9 players in the field at a time, unless both coaches agree upon 10 players at game time.
2. There will be no substitutions allowed using players from higher divisions. Registered players from the same town, but different teams, may be used to play a game only as a last effort to get enough players to prevent forfeiting a game. Players from lower divisions can be used to prevent a team from forfeiting.
3. Added players must be placed at the end of the batting order and regular team players must get their first choice of field position.
4. Added players are not allowed to pitch.
5. Each team must have 7 players to play an official game. A forfeit will be called if either team fails to have 7 players eligible to play 15 minutes after the posted game time.
6. A team expecting to have fewer than 7 players may contact the opposing coach at least 24 hours before game time to reschedule the game.

7. All players will be included in a continuous batting order. The initial batting order reflects those players ready to play at game time. Late arrivals must be placed at the end of the batting order, not inserted in the middle of the line-up as they arrive. If an injured player in the continuous batting order is unable to play she will be skipped in the order and the opposing team will not get an automatic out.
8. Each player must play 2 complete innings in the field unless the coach has a valid reason for not playing her.
9. Free substitution rules will be in effect.
10. **The starting pitcher can be re-inserted as a pitcher once** during a game if she hasn't pitched her maximum innings yet.
11. In playoff games:
 - i. If a team is unable to field at least 7 players at any point during the game, that team will forfeit.
 - ii. Players may be promoted from lower divisions only if there are not enough players available from the original roster.
 - iii. Players from other teams within the same division are NOT allowed to play on a playoff team.
 - iv. Players from lower divisions are NOT allowed to pitch.

C. Pitching

1. The pitcher can pitch a maximum of 4 innings a game and/or 7 innings in two consecutive games.
2. The pitcher cannot pitch more than 11 innings over the course of seven days.
3. One pitch constitutes an inning pitched.
4. The pitcher must start her wind-up with both feet on the pitching rubber and the first step with the non-pivot foot (right foot of a right handed pitcher) must be forward and toward the batter within the 24 inch length of the pitcher's plate.
5. It is not a step if the pitcher slides the pivot foot (left foot of a right handed pitcher) across the pitcher's plate toward the batter, or if the pivot foot turns or slides in order to push off the pitcher's plate, provided contact is maintained with the plate.
6. Raising the pivot foot off the pitching plate and returning it to the plate creates a rocking motion and is an illegal act.
7. Any illegal pitch will be considered a ball.
8. If a pitcher hits 3 batters in one inning she will be taken out for the rest of the inning. The pitcher can return to pitch during the game. However, if she hits 2 additional batters (or 5 total for the game) she must be taken out (from the pitcher's position) for the rest of the game.
9. When league playoffs begin, the clock resets on innings pitched so that any innings accumulated in the final games of the regular season are not counted in determining maximum number of innings pitched.

D. Equipment & Field of Play

1. The bases will be 60 feet apart.
2. Double safety base is required at 1st base.
3. Batting helmets with face masks and chin straps are mandatory for batters, base runners and players waiting on deck.
4. Throat protectors, shin guards, chest protectors, and catcher's helmets with masks are required for catchers.
5. Twelve-inch .47 core softballs will be used.
6. The pitcher's plate will be 40 feet from the apex (point) of the plate.

E. Game Rules

1. During a game, there will be a maximum of 3 coaches, 1 scorer and the members of the team seated on the bench. All other assistants and visitors must be seated elsewhere.
2. The home team score book shall govern the score of the game. The umpire must write his/her name in both teams score books.
3. When a pitcher has the ball within a 4-foot radius around the pitcher's rubber, the base runner is obligated to proceed in either direction to a base. If a player stands still or changes direction she will be called out UNLESS the pitcher makes a play for the runner.
4. Any tied games (at the end of playable conditions) can be completed by a tiebreaker. This should be done at the coaches' discretion.
5. A dropped 3rd strike by a catcher **will not count** as a strike and an out. (Dropped 3rd strike rule applies.)
6. The infield fly rule is in effect. In the event of an infield fly the batter is out and the runners may advance at their own risk. For the infield fly rule to be in effect, there must be runners on 1st and 2nd base, or runners at 1st, 2nd, and 3rd base with less than 2 outs and an infielder in position to make the catch.
7. Bunting is permitted.
8. Stealing will only be allowed **after the release** of the ball by the pitcher.
9. The only exceptions for bunting and stealing are when a team is ahead by 8 or more runs. Base runners on the team that is ahead are not allowed to advance on wild pitches, passed balls or bunts.

F. Run Limits

1. There is a 5 run per inning rule. Once a team has scored 5 runs the half inning will be terminated regardless of the number of outs.
2. A team will be allowed to score the greatest of 5 runs or the number of runs to get within 8 runs.
3. There are no run limits in the last inning of the game.
4. The game is over if one team is ahead by 15 or more runs and the losing team has batted at least 5 times. The home team does not have to bat for this rule to take effect.

G. Safety Rules

1. All players must remove ALL jewelry to be eligible to play. Taping over earrings is not allowed.
2. Tri-Valley strongly recommends the use of mouth guards on the playing field. Other safety equipment including heart guards and face masks is allowed.
3. A batter that throws the bat will be given a warning (the umpire will inform the coaches and the player of the warning). The second time a batter throws the bat the player will be called out.
4. The runner must be called out if she remains on her feet and deliberately crashes into a defensive player. The defensive player could be holding the ball waiting to apply a tag or about to release a thrown ball.
5. In order to prevent a deliberate crash ruling, the runner can slide feet first, jump over the top of the defender holding the ball, go around the defender (if outside the three foot line, the runner would be called out), or return to the previous base touched.
6. If the defensive player blocks the base path without possession of the ball, the runner will be safe. The defensive player is not allowed to stand on or straddle the base path, a base or home plate unless they have possession of the ball.
7. A runner must slide into home plate if there is going to be a play at the plate. The runner can be called out at the umpire's discretion. Note: If the act is determined to be flagrant, the offender may be ejected.
8. A runner may slide into the fielder, but not head first.