



Gompers Park Athletic Association
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JUNIOR SOFTBALL DIVISION RULES FOR 2024

GENERAL RULES

1. The home team is listed second on the schedule and is responsible for the setup and takedown of the bases, screens, helmet racks and any other GPAA equipment. Home team will occupy the third base dugout.
2. Base lines are 55 feet from the back of home plate to the back of the base; pitching distance is 30 feet from the front of pitching rubber to rear point of home plate.
3. Home team supplies one game ball to the Home Plate Umpire
4. Length of game will be 5 innings (6 innings during coach-pitch only games). Tie games are allowed.
5. A team's inning shall consist of three outs or six runs, whichever occurs first. **EXCEPTION:** If the batter/runner drives in the sixth run of the inning, then her run and any preceding runs will score unless an out is made during the play or the umpire calls time. Maximum number of runs scored in an inning is 9, except the last inning. The last inning will be over when there are 3 outs.
6. Games are scheduled for two hours. No inning will begin after 1 hour 45 minutes of play.
7. All rostered players present at a game will play the field and bat the entire game.
8. Including the battery (pitcher & catcher), the maximum number of infielders shall be seven (7).
9. Catchers must wear complete gear; chest protector, mask and helmet. No one player shall occupy the same position for more than **2 innings**. All players must play a minimum of **2 innings** in an outfield position assuming roster has enough players to allow this. If the manager fails to comply with this rule, the penalty shall be one out for the second inning that the player plays the same position.
10. Infielders may be no closer than five (5) feet from the base path toward home plate.
11. Only the catcher can make a play at home. For example, the pitcher cannot run home and tag the base or the runner. The pitcher must throw the ball to the catcher.
12. Outfielders may not make an out in the infield. If a team cannot field any outfielders, a coach may play outfield and field the ball to the nearest infielder.

FORFEIT TIME

Forfeit time for all games shall be 15 minutes after the official scheduled starting time. (Exception: This time may vary only on agreement among two opposing managers and the Home Plate Umpire.)

BATTING AND BASERUNNING RULES

1. Bat must say "Official Softball", not be longer than 34" and not exceed 2 1/4" in diameter. If a player is caught using an illegal bat they will automatically be called out. The play is dead, and all runner(s) will return to their bases.
2. Throwing of the bat will not be allowed. A warning will be given to the team when a batter on that team throws a bat for the first time. A second thrown bat on that team will be an immediate out. The play will be dead; runners may not advance.
3. The Infield Fly Rule shall not apply.
4. A player hit by a pitched ball will be awarded first base, unless:
 - The batter does not attempt to get out of the way.
 - The pitched ball hits the batter in the strike zone, in which case the pitch is ruled a strike. This does not apply when a coach is pitching.
 - The ball bounces or rolls into the batter.
5. Runners may advance 1 base on hit balls that remain in the infield. On balls hit to the outfield runners may advance two bases. A ball is considered hit to the outfield if it lands in or rolls to the outfield grass.
6. No bunting is allowed.
7. If a foul tip is caught by the catcher, it shall be called a strike or an out depending on the count, unless it is tipped above the batter's head. Then it is a foul ball unless it is caught. (Umpire's judgment)
8. The runners will not advance a base on an overthrow.
9. In the first 1/2 of the season, there is no stealing. Runners shall be called out for leaving the base before the pitched ball reaches Home Plate or is batted. No pitch shall be declared to the batter.
10. After the first 1/2 of the season, stealing of 3rd base only will be allowed. Runners may not leave the base until the ball crosses home plate. Any runner leading off or leaving early will be called out. If the ball is hit, it will be called a no-pitch. If a strike or ball is called, the runner will be called out and the pitch will count. When the coach comes out to pitch there is no stealing.
11. When there are two outs and the catcher is on base, a courtesy runner may be used for the catcher so that she may put on her equipment. (Runner will be the player that made the last out.)
12. A coach shall not interfere by holding or pushing a runner in such a way as to assist the runner in returning to or leaving a base. PENALTY: Runner is out.
13. Any player throwing or kicking equipment will be warned by the umpire once; a second infraction will result in ejection from the game.

PITCHING RULES

(APPLY ONLY WHEN DESIGNATED ADULT PITCHERS PITCH)

1. During the first 4 games of the season, adults will pitch to all batters. The opposing pitcher will play the field next to the adult pitcher, and the adult pitcher may not interfere with any play in the field. The designated adult pitcher is not allowed to instruct the runners on their team but can instruct the batter until the ball is released. For the second 4 games of the season, adults will pitch odd inning and players will pitch even innings. The remainder of the season will be kid pitch.
 - a) There are no walks - batters will either hit or strike out.
 - b) No batter shall receive more than seven pitches. The seventh pitch shall be strike three if the batter doesn't swing. If the batter fouls off the seventh pitch, he continues batting until he puts the ball in play or doesn't swing.

2. During the portions of the season where players pitch adults will only come in to pitch after 4 balls. While pitching, one foot must be in contact with the pitching rubber. The designated adult pitcher is not allowed to instruct the runners on their team but can instruct the batter until the ball is released. Penalty for flagrant abuse will be the removal of that designated pitcher.
 - a) The designated adult pitcher of the offensive team will pitch to the batters. Opposing pitcher will be positioned on the mound; when the designated adult pitcher releases the ball toward home plate, the opposing pitcher becomes the pitcher for fielding purposes, and the designated adult pitcher who is pitching becomes part of the playing field.
 - b) If a batted or thrown ball hits the designated adult pitcher who is pitching, the ball is dead.
 - c) The designated adult pitcher must make a legitimate effort to get off the playing field in the opposite direction of the play as quickly as possible. PENALTY: After one warning, the batter will be out; all runners must return to the base originally occupied at the beginning of the play. (Umpire's judgment)
 - d) If the designated adult pitcher who is pitching catches the batted ball, it shall be ruled a strike; on a two-strike count the batter will be out.
 - e) Adult will pitch until the batter strikes out or puts the ball in play.
3. Pitched ball must be pitched with no more than a limited arc (Home Umpire's Judgment). If a pitch has more than a limited arc, it will be called a ball.

PITCHING RULES

(APPLY ONLY WHEN JUNIOR GIRLS PLAYERS ARE PITCHING)

1. No pitcher will pitch more than 2 innings.
2. The pitcher shall not deliver a pitch until base runners are on base, catcher and batter in position. Penalty: No Pitch is called.
3. A pitcher's windup shall be a continuous motion without interruption, stop or reversal of the forward motion.
4. The ball must be delivered underhand, below the hip.
5. No pitch shall be declared when and if the ball slips from the pitcher's hand during the windup or during the backswing. It shall be a canceled pitch and the ball is dead.
6. The pitcher shall not deliberately drop, roll, or bounce the ball while in the pitching position in order to keep the batter from hitting it with the bat. (No pitch will be declared: Umpire's judgment)
7. The pitcher shall take a position with the pivot foot on or partially on the pitching rubber. The non-pivot foot can be in contact with or behind the pitching rubber. The pitcher's pivot foot must be in contact with the ground throughout the delivery, no leaping. Any step backwards must begin prior to the start of the pitch.
8. On the manager or coach's third visit in the same inning, the pitcher must be removed from the position.
9. Exception: On occasion of injury, the manager or coach will not be charged with a visit.
10. Once the pitcher has been removed from that position, she may not return to that position.
11. There is no dropped 3rd strike.
12. If a pitched ball hits the batter in the strike zone, the pitch is ruled a strike.
13. A pitcher who hits 3 batters with pitched balls in a game must be removed as a pitcher for the remainder of the game. Additionally, after a pitcher has reached ball 4 on the 5th hitter in an inning the pitcher shall be removed for the remainder of the game. An adult will finish pitching

- the rest of the inning in which a pitcher is removed.
14. There will be no walks. On the fourth ball called by the umpire, the batter will retain the number of strikes in the count. The designated adult pitcher will complete the at-bat. All regular batting & fielding rules shall apply once the ball is hit.
 15. Pitched ball must be pitched with no more than a limited arc (Home Umpire's Judgment). If a pitch has more than a limited arc, it will be called a ball.

LIGHTNING POLICY

When thunder is heard or a lightning bolt is seen, the thunderstorm is close enough to strike your location with lightning. Suspend play and remove all players from the field and park. Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or flash of lightning is seen prior to resuming play. For any subsequent thunder or lightning after the beginning of the 30-minute count, reset the clock and another 30-minute count should begin.

INJURIES

When a player is injured the umpire will call a time out immediately. Runners will be entitled to the base(s) as determined appropriate by the umpire. Home Plate Umpire's decision is final on all matters related to injuries.

UNIFORMS

1. Uniforms are to be worn in regular season games only, not for practice.
 - a) Uniform is shirt, socks & pants/shorts approved by the Association. Athletic shoes must be worn. Face masks are strongly encouraged in the field, but not required. No other head apparel will be allowed.
 - b) Player without full uniform will not be allowed to play. **EXCEPTION:** In the event of a last-minute substitution managers must agree if player can play without uniform.
2. Uniform shirts must be tucked in at all times. Failure to comply with this rule will be as follows: Batter will be called out if this is noticed before the batter has taken a swing. If the play has happened and this is noticed, then the batter will not be called out, but must fix the shirt. A fielder will be warned once and removed from the game for 1 inning if shirt continues to not be tucked in.
3. All players are required to wear a helmet with a face shield when at bat or on the bases, during the games and practices. Intentional removal of a helmet by a batter or base runner, while the play is in progress, will result in that player being called "OUT." (Umpire judgment).
4. All batters must remove jacket, sweater, sweatshirt, etc. so that the uniform number is visible while batting. (In cold weather, a jacket or sweater may be worn over the uniform shirt on the bases and in the field.)
5. No metal spikes or opened toe shoes shall be allowed.
6. A team warning should be made during "ground rules" regarding jewelry. **Absolutely NO jewelry is to be worn by any player during practice or games. Any player caught wearing jewelry during the game while on the playing field or in the dugout will be ejected from the game. This rule is for the safety of all players on the field and will be strictly enforced. Band-Aids or other forms of concealment will not be allowed.**

SUBSTITUTIONS

1. When less than nine members of a softball team are present for a game, the manager may substitute from a lower (younger) division of Gompers Park rostered players to make nine

- players. Teams may play with as few as 5 players, with a coach playing the outfield. If a team is unable to field a team to play 3 times in a season, for any one team, after a report from the Vice-President, the Board of Directors may review for possible action to remedy the situation.
2. Substitutes may not be used as part of the battery for Pony and Major Girls. Substitutes may only play the outfield for all other divisions.
 3. Substitutes must bat at the end of the lineup and not before any rostered players. If a rostered player arrives late, then that player will bat after the substitute.
 4. Substitutes from baseball divisions for baseball and softball divisions for softball.
 5. Substitutes will abide by rules of division in which they are substituting.
 6. Substitutes can play on any team that calls for a specific game.
 7. If a substitute is called up for a game and for any reason there are now ten or more rostered players of the team that called the substitute up, the substitute cannot play for the team that called him/her up. The manager must use his or her best efforts to not have the situation occur, since it is not fair to the player that has come to the game as a substitute. The substitute would be eligible to play on another team that was short on players, if this situation occurred.
 8. Managers are expected to work together to field full teams for all games. For example, under no circumstances should a team with ten players (nine regular rostered players of that team and one call-up) win by forfeit over a team that has only seven or eight rostered players. The other team should transfer the call-up to the other team and the game played to completion. Additionally, if a team has less than 5 players the managers can agree to share a player or two to even out the teams.
 9. When call-ups play in a game, they must play at least ½ of the game in the field and bat the entire game.

FIELD REGULATIONS

1. No smoking and **ABSOLUTELY NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES** will be allowed on the field or in the dugouts at any time. This applies to all spectators as well as managers, coaches, umpires and parents. Failure to comply with the alcohol regulation can result in forfeiture of the game, suspensions from the league, or at worst, arrest. (Alcohol is prohibited by the law on Park District Property.)
2. No one except rostered players, managers and coaches are allowed in the dugout during the game.
3. No one will be permitted to stand or sit behind the backstop during the game. Only the on-deck batter is allowed behind the backstop in the on-deck cage.
4. Each team's spectators will be responsible for keeping their area cleaned of empty cans, food wrappers, etc., following the game.
5. A contact avoidance rule will be enforced. Any deliberate, forceful, or intentional contact with a fielder will result in the runner being called "out" regardless of the location of the ball. **REMEMBER:** it is the responsibility of the runner to avoid the fielder whether the fielder is fielding a batted ball, receiving a thrown ball or tagging a runner. If the fielder impedes the runner, interference will be called on the fielder and the appropriate base or bases will be awarded to the runner, but under **NO** circumstances should the fielder be considered "fair game" to the runner.
6. An overthrow is a dead ball. An overthrow is defined as a ball thrown beyond the boundaries of the field. The runner is entitled to the base he is facing and advancing towards plus one.
7. A pitcher is allowed 5 pitches between innings. Any new pitcher will be allowed 8. The new pitcher must throw at least one strike during their 8 warm up pitches otherwise the inning will revert to coach pitch.

MANAGERS AND COACHES FIELD DECORUM

1. The manager or acting manager will be the only person to hold discussions with the umpire once the game is underway. No one other than the manager or acting manager will be permitted to approach the umpire. This applies to players, spectators, parents, and other coaches. Failure to comply with this rule may result in forfeiture of the game.
2. Managers are responsible for the behavior of all their players, coaches, and fans.
3. Managers and coaches should wear team shirt and hat at all games.
4. Only the team on offense may have a coach in each coach's box at first and third bases. All other coaches, offensive and defensive, must remain in the dugout.
5. No verbal abuse of any kind should be allowed by one team toward the other. (Opposing team should not say "swing" when opponents are at bat.) Derogatory remarks about a specific batter to the pitcher should be strongly discouraged. (He can't hit! or "Easy Out!" for example) **IN THE INTEREST OF SPORTSMANSHIP, ONLY POSITIVE ENCOURAGEMENT TO ONE'S OWN TEAMMATES SHOULD BE ALLOWED.**
6. At the conclusion of the game, teams should line up behind their managers and, in a sportsmanlike manner, shake hands at the center of the field.
7. Managers will instruct their players not to spit in their hands before shaking hands with the opposing team. Any players found guilty of spitting in his hand may be subject to suspension of one or more games. (Per board approval)
8. No cell phones allowed on while on the playing field.

UMPIRES

1. All decisions by the umpire are final. Umpires have the authority to eject players, managers, coaches and spectators from the game. They also have authority to call a game a forfeit if actions of the spectators or participants warrant.
2. There are no appeals. Umpire has final judgment on all calls.
3. The Home Plate Umpire has the final word on any play. In certain situations, he/she may confer with the base umpire if requested to do so by a manager or coach. In those cases, the decision may or may not be overturned depending on the outcome of the conference. The Home Plate Umpire still has the final decision in these cases.
4. Umpires and base coaches are part of the playing field. If a batted or thrown ball hits an umpire or coach, the ball is still in play.
5. Managers and/or coaches cannot call off a game for any reason.

The Home Plate Umpire's decision shall be binding and final on all matters not specifically covered in any GPAA rules. The Board of Directors retains the right to interpret, amend or add to these rules at any time.

PROTESTS

There are no protests

EJECTIONS

1. Any manager, coach, or player that gets ejected from the game will automatically be suspended for the next game. There are no exceptions. NOTE: Until the umpire leaves the playing field you can still be thrown out.
2. Any person that gets ejected will have to leave the playing area. Playing area is dependent on

the umpire's judgment.

3. IF MANAGER OR COACH GETS EJECTED FROM A GAME, THEY CAN NOT MANAGE OR COACH ANY TEAM IN ANY DIVISION UNTIL THEY HAVE SERVED THEIR SUPENSION FOR THAT DIVISION THEY WERE EJECTED FROM. THIS INCLUDES IF THE MANAGER OR COACH IS A SPECTATOR AT ANOTHER GAME IN ANOTHER DIVISION.

SPECTATORS

1. Only the on-deck batter is allowed behind the backstops.
2. Any problems or questions regarding the interpretation of rules should be directed to the Division Vice President or the President.
3. Any problems or questions regarding the umpires should be directed to the Umpire in Chief or the President.

WEATHER

1. Unless notified by their manager or the league, all players must report to the playing field as scheduled. In the event the field is determined to be playable by the umpire, the forfeit rule goes into effect automatically.
2. Some games may be played on the grass if approved by the GPAA Board.
3. The decision to cancel a game will be delayed as long as possible, right up to game time, if necessary.
4. If managers of both teams do not agree on playing conditions, the Home Plate Umpire will decide whether or not to play the game.
5. All canceled games will be scheduled for the next available open date.
6. Canceled games must be reported to the Division Vice-President and the Umpire-in-Chief immediately by the manager of the Home Team.
7. Once the game has begun, stopping, or cancelling the game becomes the responsibility of the Home Plate Umpire.

STATE LAW (720 ILCS 5/12 – 4 FROM CH.38 PAR. 17)

Knows the individual assaulted to be a sports official or coach at any level of competition and the act causing the assault to the sports official or coach occurred within an athletic facility or an indoor or outdoor playing field or within the immediate vicinity of the athletic facility or an indoor or outdoor playing field at which the sports official or coach was an active participant in the athletic contest held at the athletic facility. For the purposes of this paragraph "sports official" means a person at an athletic contest who enforces the rules of the contest, such as an umpire or referee, and coach means a person recognized as a coach by the sanctioning authority that conducted the athletic contest.

ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

ANY CONDUCT DETRIMENTAL TO THE LEAGUE WILL BE GROUNDS FOR IMMEDIATE DISMISAL FROM THE GOMPERS PARK ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION