

2024 Minor Girls Softball League Rules

GRADE/AGE ELIGIBILITY

Minor Girls Softball – All players must be 9 or 10 years of age. No players who are age 11 as of May 1, 2024 will be allowed to participate.

LEAGUE FEES BY DIVISION

Minor Girls Softball – \$250 per team, payable to Oregon Park District, ATTN Softball Fees, PO Box 237, Oregon, IL 61061.

RULES OF CONDUCT FOR PLAYERS, FANS, & COACHES

1. Any player, fan, or coach who swears will get one warning by the umpire. After the 1 warning they will be asked to leave the ball diamond by the umpire (extreme vulgarity will result in an immediate expulsion). The game will not continue until that person leaves the ball diamond.
2. There shall be NO TOBACCO USE OR ALCOHOL USE during any games by any player, fan, or coach in the immediate area of the ball diamond. The game will not continue until that person leaves the ball diamond.
3. If a player or coach is asked to leave a ball diamond, the head coach will be suspended the next scheduled game. Multiple ejections may result in temporary or permanent expulsion.
4. All parents and coaches shall read & sign a Code of Conduct prior to 1st game scheduled – signatures are to be kept on hand by the head coaches. (Attachment B)

INJURY/BLEEDING

Any player or coach who is bleeding or who has an open wound shall be prohibited from participating further in the game until appropriate treatment has been administered. If medical care or treatment can be administered in a reasonable amount of time, the individual would not have to leave the game. The length of time that is considered reasonable is the umpires' judgment. The reentry rule would apply to players. If there is an excessive amount of blood on the uniform it must be changed before that individual participates again.

PROTESTS

1. There shall be no protests. Misinterpretations of the rules shall be settled between coaches and the umpires. It is encouraged to have the rules with you at all times.
2. EXCEPTION: Roster questions. Please allow 48 hours for the coordinators to discuss.

NUMBER OF PLAYERS

1. Teams can play with as few as 8 players, with no automatic out.
2. Teams will play with 10 players on defense and are required to use all players in the batting order.
3. If a team has less than 8 players the game must be forfeited.
 - a. The league does recommend playing the game and sharing players amongst the two teams, but the game will be considered a forfeit.

UMPIRES

1. The home team will schedule umpires prior to each scheduled game. Home team is also responsible for payment of scheduled umpires.
2. Must have at least 1 patched umpire, but 2 umpires are preferred.
 - a. Plate umpire is required to be patched. 2nd Umpire can be 15 years of age or older and unpatched.

SCHEDULES AND REPORTING SCORES

1. Schedules can be found at www.rockriversports.org or www.oregonpark.org
2. Please report scores to lesley@oregonpark.org as soon as possible.

GENERAL PLAYING RULES

1. This league is designed to be developmental. Coaches are instructed to utilize all players, pending any discipline, in an effort to develop all players. Each player, without discipline problems, is entitled to at least 2 innings per game, unless mercy rule applies or the game gets shortened by weather.
2. The rules for softball shall be those of the National or State High School Athletic Association (NFHS or IHSA). Exceptions shall be listed in the Rules or Division information.
3. If a player throws a bat or helmet (even in the dugout), the team will be issued 1 warning. Upon a second occurrence, the player who threw the equipment can be removed from the game (may sit on bench).
4. All players must wear uniform shirts with numbers on the back.
5. Mercy run rules; (15 after 3 ½, 10 after 4 ½).
6. Regular season games **CAN** end in a tie.
7. In a play at any base, including home plate, if the defensive player covering has the ball, the runner is required to avoid contact with the defensive player (i.e. legal slide). Ruling for violation: Runner is called out. (umpire's discretion).
8. Due to time limits the ball must be returned to the pitcher immediately after an out.
9. A 16ft diameter circle will be drawn around the pitchers rubber. When the pitcher has the ball and has at least one foot inside this circle, it becomes a "dead ball" and no runner may continue to advance.
10. If a game is called due to rain or darkness before 3 completed innings (2 1/2 if home team is winning), the game will be rescheduled, if possible, and will be replayed from the start. After 3 complete innings, if play is halted in the middle of an inning, the score will revert back to the previous completed inning to determine the winner. Rainouts must be called by 4:00pm for a 5:30 start, or by 4:30 for later start times. The home team is responsible for contacting the visiting league coordinator. Each team is then responsible for following their set league instructions for rainouts.
11. The base paths are 60'.
12. The pitching distance will be 32' measured from the back of home plate to front of pitching rubber.
13. There are no walks. Pitchers will pitch until 4 called balls (non strikes) are thrown. If the batter is unable to get a ball in play after these pitches, and the batter has not struck out, the coach then steps in and throws 3 more pitches to the batter. If the batter fails to put the ball in play they are out.
14. No new inning can start after 1 hour and 30 minutes of play.
15. Games are 6 innings.
16. Innings end with 3 outs or 5 runs scored.
17. 11" Softball.
18. No bunting.
19. Batter may not run on dropped 3rd strike. They are out.
20. Stealing (refer to ATTACHMENT A).

21. All rostered players are required to bat in the batting order.
22. There can be up to 10 defensive players on the field (4 outfielders – must be 15 feet behind the baseline).
23. Free substitution on defense, except pitcher.
24. Once a player is moved from pitcher, they cannot return as pitcher in the same game.
25. A pitcher cannot pitch in more than 3 innings per game (1 pitch will constitute “an inning”).

TEAM ROSTER

1. Rosters are to be filed with the Oregon Park District when the application is submitted,.
2. A roster change must be reported to the Oregon Park District no later than 48 hours prior to the starting time of the first game they are to play in. (THE RULE IS ONLY FOR PLAYERS MOVING INTO THE COMMUNITY.)
3. Any team which plays a game with a player whose name is not on the roster submitted to the Oregon Park District will forfeit said ball game.
4. Coaches will notify the Oregon Park District of any players that quit no later than 1 week after occurrence.

REGULAR SEASON GAMES

1. The home team’s scorekeeper is the official scorekeeper.
2. All league games will be played on the home field or may be played on another field with the consent of both managers involved, per schedule, with the exception of rained out or postponed games.
3. Each team shall play a season’s schedule of games. Games which are rained out or postponed for any reason must be rescheduled by the home team (within two weeks is preferable). If teams cannot agree on a makeup date from a cancelled game then the league administrator will perform a coin toss to determine the winner which will show up as forfeit in the standings.
4. All scheduled regular season game dates are final as of June 1. No rescheduling, except for weather-related, will be done after June 1.
5. If opposing coaches/coordinators agree, Sunday afternoon games may be played.
6. The home team shall furnish 2 new balls per game.
7. The ground rules regarding home fields shall be respected. Coaches and officials for the game shall meet before the game and all ground rules shall be clearly and carefully explained.
8. Tournament seeding is determined by winning percentage then by head to head play.
9. Inning run rules apply (even in final inning). Home team coach decides whether or not to play bottom of final inning if Home team is down by more than 5 runs.

TOURNAMENT

1. The home team’s scorekeeper is the official scorekeeper.
2. Any game called before its completion (weather, darkness, mechanical failure, etc.) will be a suspended game regardless of the inning. When continued from the point of interruption, lineup and batting order will be the same. If there is a player not present from when the game was suspended and all substitutes have been used the missing player shall be treated as an injured player.
3. Higher seed will be home team throughout tournament.
4. The home team shall furnish 2 new game balls.
5. All mercy run rules are still in effect. (15 after 3 ½, 10 after 4 ½)
6. Per inning run rules may apply, EXCEPT for the final inning of a time limited game for both teams (allows teams to stage a comeback).
7. Time limit applies to all games except for Championship Game.

8. No ties in tournament play - An International Tie Breaker will be implemented for any Tournament Game ending in a tie at the end of time limit or regulation play. International Tie Breaker rules are as follows: At the beginning of each team's at-bat the last batter from the previous inning is placed on 2nd base with zero outs. It is not a sudden death. Each team has an opportunity to bat each inning. The game ends when one team is ahead at the end of an inning.
9. Weather conditions or tournament questions should be directed to the community coordinator responsible for hosting the tournament.

EQUIPMENT

1. All bats must be 2 ¼ inch barrel. No larger bats allowed and no wood bats.
2. Catchers must wear a hard helmet, throat guard, chest protector, and shin guards (using a batting helmet while warming up the pitcher is not allowed).
3. ALL players must wear a helmet while on deck, while batting, and while on base.
4. Facemasks are required on all batting helmets
5. All infielders must wear an infield face mask while on defense. It is strongly encouraged that all defensive players wear them.
6. No steal cleats.
7. No jewelry is allowed to be worn during the game by players. (sunglasses are acceptable...no necklaces...no neckropes...no bracelets...no nose rings...no earrings).
8. Each community involved within the league shall make sure that their fields are safe and ready for play. The Oregon Park District assumes no responsibility for unsafe playing conditions in other towns.

ATTACHMENT A

STEALING

Base runners can attempt to steal 2nd or 3rd base on a passed ball ONLY. A passed ball is defined as a pitch that gets away from the catcher and gets outside of either batter's box or the catchers box (umpire's judgment).

Players can steal 1 base only. They cannot continue to advance, even if the ball is thrown into the outfield.

There is no stealing home in Minor Girls Softball. The only way a runner may go to home after being stopped at third base is:

- A. If the bases are loaded and the batter is walked/hit by a pitch.
- B. The batter hits the ball.

In a live ball situation - example: a runner on 1st base is stealing 2nd base, the defensive team tries to make a play on the runner stealing 2nd base, the runner on 3rd base cannot advance home.

Once a runner stops at 3rd base they may not advance/steal home base if the pitcher misses the ball when it is thrown to them either by the catcher or by another member of the defensive team.

If the runner does not stop at 3rd base on a hit ball they may advance home at their own risk if the ball is thrown to the pitcher and the pitcher misses the ball.

A runner at 3rd base may not advance/steal home when there is a passed ball by the catcher or when the ball is thrown to the pitcher and the pitcher misses it.

If a coach is unsure about this ruling it should be discussed with the opposing team coach prior to the beginning of the game.

ATTACHMENT B

Parent's Code of Ethics/Conduct

Helping parents to be aware of their roles and responsibilities and offers ways they can make the youth sports experience more enjoyable and positive is a goal of the Rock River youth baseball and softball league.

Responsibilities and Expectations

For a program to be truly successful, it takes the cooperation of everyone involved: players, coaches, officials, staff, spectators and especially parents. Parents have the following responsibilities and expectations when participating in any Rock River sponsored athletic program:

1. Parents have a responsibility to their children.

To make sure that your child gets the most out of his or her playing experience, parents should show their unwavering support, including positive reinforcement of your child's performance and effort. This is essential, especially at an early age, to ensure their healthy development. Parents should also be positive role models, including, but not limited to, always showing proper sportsmanship and refraining from negativity of any kind.

2. Parents have a responsibility to the coaches.

Coaches volunteer their personal time to spend it with your child. They need you to be supportive of their decisions and not undermine their efforts. If you don't agree with a coach, you are expected to tell that coach, but make certain it is done at the right time and place, in a non-argumentative manner and not in front of the children. Parents are also expected to drop off and pick up their children on time for games and practice, and it is highly encouraged for parents to stay and participate to maintain control of the group and to assist the coach as needed.

3. Parents have a responsibility to the league.

Staff cannot be at games and practices for all teams. Therefore, to maintain the positive nature of these programs, it is essential for parents/spectators to report any abusive behavior or any other situation that needs to be addressed to staff. This is the only way that these programs can achieve their intended goals.

4. Parents/Spectators have a responsibility to other parents.

Personal gain and satisfaction should not be derived from a child's performance. Competition and taunting between parents is never acceptable, and no parent/spectator should ever feel embarrassed or disappointed by their team or child's performance. Good plays should always be cheered, and disappointments should always be consoled, no matter whose team it affects.

I, _____, hereby pledge to provide positive support, care and encouragement for my child participating in youth sports programs by following the expectations identified above.

Child's Name _____

League _____

Parent's Signature _____

Date _____