



2022 Central League Fall Ball



Remember that the fall ball season is primarily an instructional league. There are two (2) tournaments where managers and coaches are encouraged to play competitive softball. During the weekly Saturday play, managers and coaches are requested to emphasize instruction over competitive softball.

All Fall Ball season games will be non-standing games. No final scores will be submitted.

Conduct

Umpires will have zero tolerance towards abusive language, gestures, or actions of unsportsmanlike conduct by managers, coaches, players, relatives or other spectators. Any person or persons ejected from the game will not be permitted to return for the remainder of the game **AND** the following scheduled game.

Umpire Fees and Softballs

The home leagues are responsible for scheduling umpires at their facilities.

Each team is responsible for paying one-half (1/2) of the umpire fees.

Teams who do not show up for a scheduled game, or who do not give notice by **Thursday 6pm** prior to scheduled Saturday game(s), so umpires can be cancelled, will be responsible for all umpire fees. See Cancelled Games section.

Umpire fees are not to exceed **\$60.00** per umpire (\$60 for single 14U game). Jr. Umpire fee is \$50.00 Leagues will split umpire fees at the plate, with the exception of Central Orange and SHB umpires fees are to be paid to the snack bar before the start of the game.

Teams will pay umpires in full before the start of the game. For games at Central Orange please pay at the Snack Bar prior to the game. For games on Huntington Beach, please pay the scorekeeper.

The scheduling of umpires for the various divisions will be as follows:

- 6U:** Coach/Parent Umpire
- 8U:** One Umpire or Junior Umpire
- 10U/12U:** One Umpire
- 14U:** One Umpire

The following types of softball will be used during the fall ball season:

- 6U/8U:** 10" Worth/Rawlings RIF1 Soft Dot or Diamond RIF softballs
- 10U:** 11" Worth/Rawlings RIF1 Soft Dot or Diamond RIF softballs
- 12U/14U:** 12" Dudley or Rawlings softballs

Home team of the first game is responsible for the providing a new game softball and a used ball, which is in good condition. The opposing team is responsible for the providing a new game softball and a used ball for the second game.

Teams who play double-headers will each be the designated home team once during the double-header.

Team Volunteers

There will be a maximum of four (4) adults allowed in a dugout at any time. **NO EXCEPTIONS!**



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Cancelled Games

Each hosting league is responsible for cancelling umpires for games that need to be cancelled. For non-weather-related cancellations, contact must be made by **Thursday @ 6pm** to inform of a cancellation of the scheduled game on Saturday. Contact must be received and confirmed by the hosting league. Leaving a message without confirmation is considered a forfeit. If a team does not call or show up to a game (forfeit), that league is responsible for the game(s) fees for both leagues.

For any weather-related game cancellations, notice of field closures must be made by hosting team prior to two (2) hours before scheduled game start. Contact by the hosting league must be made and confirmed with the visiting league representative(s).

Rescheduling of any cancelled or rain-out games will be at the discretion of the leagues involved.

General Rules

The official rules of play will be the current USA Softball rules with the modifications defined herein.

Base-paths/Pitching distances will be:

6U: 55/60 feet, 27/30 feet

8U: 60 feet, 30 feet

10U: 60 feet, 35 feet

12U: 60 feet, 40 feet

14U: 60 feet, 43 feet

Prior to each game, the manager will submit to the official scorekeeper and the opposing manager a complete roster line-up for the girls that are present and eligible to play that day. Each girl on the roster will bat continuously in the order submitted.

Nine (9) players will constitute a team. However, a minimum of seven (7) players may start or continue a game in the 10U through 14U division. Eight (8) players may start or continue a game in the 8U division. If a team plays shorthanded, the USA Softball shorthanded rule 4-D (1) (c) does not apply, an out will not be recorded. A player leaving a game early for any reason will not incur an out at her next or any subsequent at bats.

Nine (9) players will play defense (10 players in the 8U divisions and optional 10 players in the 10U divisions) at a time unless only 7 or 8 players are available. **No** players will sit out two (2) consecutive defensive innings. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

If a team is short-handed they can pick up to three (3) rostered players from one of their own league rostered teams. An 8U team may pick up to four (4) rostered players.

- The pick-up player(s) **must:**
 - Not be a pitcher or a catcher.
 - Be inserted in the batting line-up starting after the last rostered regular team player.
 - Play defensively in the outfield only.

At all Fall Ball Tournaments, pick-ups per discretion and preapproved through hosting league. Same rules as above.



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Round robin batting and free substitution will be used in all divisions, in all games, including tournaments.

Home team will be considered the official scorekeeper and is responsible to keep the official score in their team scorebook. **Remember:** Fall Ball is instructional, except for the tournaments. There is no place to put the official scorebook to track the game as it is played and is to be used as an instructional tool for the games that have been played.

Regulation Game

Any game that is called in less than (7) innings or time limit will be considered a regulation game. There will be no officially scheduled make-up games during the 10 weeks of season play.

Equipment

Players must wear their league-approved uniform. All players must wear rubber-cleated shoes (exception 14U). Batters must wear a batting helmet with a permanently mounted face guard. For their safety, players with long hair must keep it pulled back in a ponytail or braids.

Jewelry shall not be worn during a practice or game. This includes body piercing of any kind.

Bats must not be on the current USA Softball banned bat list. The current approved and non-approved list can be found at www.teamusa.org/USA-Softball.

Game Time and Limit

6U game time limits will be a one (1) hour and ten (10) minute no new and one (1) hour twenty (20) minutes drop dead game.

8U game time limit for single games will be one (1) hour thirty (30) minutes no new, finish the inning regardless of score. During seasons where there is an odd number of teams, 3-way double headers may be scheduled to compensate for BYE weekends. Leagues that do not wish to do double-headers for the entire season may be subject to a maximum of one (1) double header to accommodate the previous scenario. All double header games will have time limit of one (1) hour ten (10) minute no new, one (1) hour twenty (20) minute drop dead. Second game batting order should resume with next batter from first game or batting order can be reversed.

In the **10U, 12U, and 14U divisions**, no new inning will start after one (1) hour and twenty (20) minutes of play, with a one (1) hour and thirty (30) minutes drop dead game. A new inning starts when the third out is recorded in the previous inning.

Forfeit time shall be fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled game time.

Tie Game

In the event of a tie game (after 7 innings), the international tie breaker (ITB) rule will go into effect if there is time remaining in the game. If no time is remaining, the game will end in a tie.

Mercy Rule



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The game shall be considered a mercy game, and will be called and considered complete, if a team is ahead by the following:

- Fifteen (15) runs after three (3) complete innings, or
- Twelve (12) runs after four (4) complete innings, or
- Eight (8) runs after five (5) complete innings.

Courtesy Runners

Courtesy runners will be allowed for pitchers and catchers at any time. The team member who was the “last out” before the pitcher or catcher’s turn at bat will be the courtesy runner. If the last out is on base or at bat, or the last out is the pitcher or catcher, the next available player in the lineup will become the courtesy runner.

Pitching Outs

Physical pitching outs for the 10-week season will be limited to the following:

- 8U division:** no player may pitch more than six (6) physical outs per game. This is to foster the development of pitching.
- 10U division:** no player may pitch more than twenty-one (21) physical outs per week.
- 12U division:** no player may pitch more than twenty-four (24) physical outs per week.
- 14U division:** there are no pitching restrictions.

Run Limit

8U teams will be limited to four (4) runs scored for the first three (3) innings of the game. 4th Inning, and every inning thereafter, until the conclusion of the game, runs scored is unlimited. See 8U rules.

10U and 12U teams will be limited to four (4) runs scored for the first three (3) innings of a game. 4th inning, and every inning thereafter, until the conclusion of the game, runs scored is unlimited.

14U teams will be limited to five (5) runs scored for the first three (3) innings of a game. 4th inning, and every inning thereafter, until the conclusion of the game, runs scored is unlimited.

8U Rules

- Infield fly rule will not be used.
- Home plate is closed.
- A runner from third base may not score on an overthrow from the catcher to the pitcher.
- A runner on third base may not score on a passed ball by the catcher.
- A runner who is on third base will be awarded home if the ball goes out of play on a throw to the base from the catcher or on an illegal pitch.
- No player may pitch more than six (6) physical outs per game in first four (4) innings.
- No batter may advance to first base on a third strike that is not held by the catcher.
- A base runner may only steal one base per pitch. Players may not leave or attempt to steal a base until the ball has left the pitcher’s hand. Any player leaving the base prior to the ball, in the umpire’s judgment, will be called out.



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- Ten (10) players play on defense. The tenth player will be an outfielder and positioned no closer than ten (10) feet from the baseline.
- No player except the pitcher or catcher shall start in a defensive position closer than 25 feet to home plate, measured from the front side of the plate anywhere between the 3rd baseline and the 1st baseline.
- There are no walks in the 8U division.
- The play shall become dead immediately when the umpire calls the fourth ball. Any base runner attempting to advance by stealing will be returned to the base, which was held prior to ball four.
- If a batter receives four (4) balls from the opposing pitcher, the coach or adult designated pitcher (C/AP) will pitch to the batter.
- The C/AP must pitch from the pitcher's mound.
- The C/AP will assume the count and pitch to the batter and the umpire will rule on each pitch utilizing the strike zone.
- A limit of five (5) pitches from the C/AP to the batter will be allowed until a ball is hit fair, or the umpire calls out the batter on strikes. If the 5th, or any pitch after that, from the C/AP is a batted foul ball, then pitches will continue until a ball is hit fair, or the batter is called out on strikes. Any pitch after that, which is not swung at, will be considered a strike, and the batter will be called out.
- No bunting is allowed when the C/AP is pitching to the batter.
- Players may not steal a base when the C/AP is pitching to the batter.
- If a ball pitched by the opposing pitcher hits the batter, the count will be re-set and batter will receive C/ADP pitches.
- If a ball pitched by the C/AP hits the batter, the batter will continue her at bat, and will not be awarded 1st base.
- If the C/AP is hit by a batted or thrown ball, or in the judgment of the umpire, interferes with any player attempting to field any fair or foul ball, the ball will be declared dead. The batter will be out, and all base runners will be returned to the base they held prior to the time the ball was pitched.

6U Rules

- **In Play Ball** - A mark will be made on each base line 6 feet out from home plate. The ball must past this distance for it to be an in-play ball. If ball is within the lines batter will return to bat again.
- **Pitching Distance** – The pitching distance shall be 27 or 30 feet depending on field location. Coaches must pitch from the pitching rubber.
- **Pitching Rules** – Coach pitch the entire season.

Any player playing position of pitcher must wear a helmet with face mask or pitching mask

- **Batting** – All players present shall be listed on the official line-up and shall bat in the order listed for the entire game. Each team shall bat until a total of four (4) runs have been scored or until 3 outs have been made.

*Each batter will be pitched 5 coach pitches, coach pitch will not end with a ball hit into foul territory, after coach pitches have been exceeded, the player will be given maximum 3 swings with tee.

- **Required Playing Time** – All players present must play a minimum of three defensive innings per game. No player shall sit more than 2 consecutive innings and shall sit no more than 3 innings total. All players MUST play a minimum of 1 inning in the infield during each game. If the required amount of playing time is not met due to a called game, then that player must start the next game. Innings do not need to be played consecutively.



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- **Four Run Rule** – Either team may score up to four (4) runs per inning. Innings 6 and 7 teams may score unlimited runs.
- **Stealing** – No stealing off coach pitcher.
- **Defensive Players** – Each team has an option to either field ten (10) players on defense, or field all their players on defense. If fielding ten, all four outfielders including the rover (10th player) must position themselves on the cut of the grass and must remain there until the pitch has crossed the plate. If fielding more than ten, all players except the six (6) infielders must position themselves on the cut of the grass and must remain there until the pitch has crossed the plate.
- **Defensive Coaches** – Two (2) defensive coaches may be placed in the grass area to aid in coaching the outfield players.
- **Ruling of Catcher/Pitcher overthrow** – If the runner is standing on the base or is retreating to a base, then the runner does not advance forward.
- **Overthrow** – Only one base is awarded on an overthrow to first base, even if the ball is still in play.
- **To Stop Play** – The ball must only break the plane of the pitcher's circle to stop play.
- **Coach Pitch** – Each batter will receive a maximum of five pitches with extra pitches if the 5th ball is fouled. Player is out after 3 strikes. After 5 pitches the player will be allowed three (3) swings from the tee.
- **Adult Pitcher** – The adult pitcher of the team batting must move away from a hit ball so it may be fielded. If the ball hits the adult, the ball is declared dead. The batter returns to the plate and the runners return to the bases they were occupying before the ball was hit.
- **Bunting** – is allowed, must go past the 6-foot mark on field.
- Prior to the start of each game a parent volunteer will be selected by each team and will serve as the umpire while their team is on offense.