The recreation league follows National Federation of State High School Associations Rules for Fastpitch Softball with some modifications. The modifications are intended to address the developmental aspects of the younger leagues, ensure player safety and facilitate the equitable participation of all players.

These rules will be used at all games. Please do not deviate from these rules and/or have any discussion and mutual agreement at the plate meeting before the game with the umpire.

* The home team should provide 2 game balls for each game.

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| **GENERAL INFORMATION** | | | |
|  | **8U** | **10U** | **13U** |
| Ages | Girls in  1st – 3rd Grade | Girls in  4th – 5th Grade | Girls in  6th – 8th Grade |
| Size of Ball | 11” | 11” | 12” |
| Distance for Bases | 55’ | 60’ | 60’ |
| Distance to Pitcher | 35’ | 35’ | 40’ |
| Length of Game**1** | Complete 6 innings or 120 minutes | Complete 6 innings or 120 minutes | Complete 7 innings or 120 minutes |

1. **Length of Game – All Divisions**
   * The last inning is the inning whose top half begins 90 minutes after the scheduled start time of a game. All games will have a 120 minute maximum limit.
   * If a batter is up at the time limit, the batter will get to finish her at bat.
   * If the last inning cannot be completed, the score will revert back to the end of the previous complete inning.
   * The time limit begins from the start time of the game declared by the umpire.

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| **UMPIRES/GAME INFO** | | | |
|  | **8U** | **10U** | **13U** |
| Umpires**2** | Offensive and Defensive Coaches | Provided by home field | Provided by home field |
| Field Coaches | 1st and 3rd base coaches, two defensive coaches positioned outside the lines in the outfield | 1st and 3rd base coach | 1st and 3rd base coach |

1. **Umpires - 8U Division:**
   * The 1st base coach makes all calls at 1st base and fair/foul balls on the 1st base side of the infield.
   * The 3rd base coach makes all calls at 3rd base and fair/foul balls on the 3rd base side of the infield.
   * The Coach Pitcher makes all calls for plays at second base, at the plate, determining the 10 foot rule, strikeouts and determines when play stops on defensive plays. The Coach Pitcher also makes the final call in plays where there are disputes.

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| **SCORING** | | | |
|  | **8U** | **10U** | **13U** |
| Runs allowed per inning | 3 runs  Applies to ALL innings | 3 runs  Does not apply to last inning | 5 runs  Does not apply to last inning |
| Continuation**3** | No | Yes | Yes |

1. **Continuation:**
   * Play shall stop after the maximum run has scored in an inning unless additional runs are scored as a result of the natural progression of a play.
     + **Example:** In 13U, four runs have scored and the bases are loaded. The batter hits the ball to the outfield and two base runners cross home plate prior to the end of the play. In this instance, both runs count.

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| **PITCHERS** | | | |
|  | **8U** | **10U** | **13U** |
| Pitcher**4** | Machine | Player and Coach | Player |
| Number of Batters a Pitcher Can Hit before She MUST Be Removed**5** | N/A | 3 | 3 |
| Hit by Pitch**6** | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Intentional Walks | N/A | No | No |

1. **Pitching Machine – 8U Division**

* The home team will provide the machine (and generator if applicable).
* If using a slingshot pitching machine, the following settings should be used:
  + A (Micro Adjustment):  2
  + B (Release Arm Block):  4
  + C (Power Pedal): 4

**Coach/Pitcher – 10U Division**

* + There are NO walks. Once a player pitcher has thrown ball 4, the offensive team's coach steps in and throws a maximum of 5 pitches.
  + The strike count continues from where the player pitcher left off. The batter will either get a hit, strike out, or be called out after the 5th pitch from the coach (if it is not a foul ball/tip). In addition, players on base when a coach is pitching may not steal or advance on a passed ball.
  + Pitchesshould be thrown with as little arc as possible. The coach pitch ball should not go above the pitcher’s head.
  + The coach must pitch from the pitcher’s mound.

1. **Number of Hit Batters – 10U and 13U Divisions**
   * No more than 3 above the knee during the game.  After the 3rd hit batter, pitcher MUST be removed and cannot pitch the remainder of the game.
2. **Hit by Pitch – 10U and 13U Divisions**
   * Any ball that hits a batter inside the batter’s box is considered hit-by-pitch regardless if it touches the ground first. In addition, the batter does not have to attempt to move out of the way from being struck by the pitch.

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| **BATTING** | | | |
|  | **8U** | **10U** | **13U** |
| Batting Lineup**7** | All players | All players | All players |
| Balls and strikes**8** | No (6 pitches that cross the plate in the strike zone) | Yes  (but no walks) | Yes |
| Foul ball on last pitch | Player continues to bat | Player continues to bat | Player continues to bat |
| 10 foot rule**9** | Yes  (line should be drawn before the game) | N/A | N/A |
| Dead Ball - batted ball hits pitching machine | Yes Runners advance one base. | N/A | N/A |
| Thrown Bat | One warning for EACH team. Next thrown bat, ball is dead and batter is out | One warning for EACH team. Next thrown bat, ball is dead and batter is out | One warning for EACH team. Next thrown bat, ball is dead and batter is out |

* 1. **Batting Lineups – All Divisions**
  + Players who arrive after the first pitch of the game will be added to the end of the lineup. If a player leaves the game and/or is unable to bat, her place in the lineup is skipped and an automatic out is NOT taken.
  1. **Balls and Strikes – 10U Division**
  + There are NO walks. Once a player pitcher has thrown ball 4, the offensive team's coach steps in and throws a maximum of 5 pitches. The strike count continues from where the player pitcher left off. The batter will either get a hit, strike out, or be called out after the 5th pitch from the coach (unless it’s a foul ball on the last pitch).
  1. **10 Foot Rule – 8U Divisions**
  + A batted ball must go forward at least 10 feet on the ground in fair territory to be a fair ball.  Defensive players can make plays on all foul pops, including those hit behind the plate, that go over the batter’s head (i.e., if the ball is caught, the batter is out).

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| **BASERUNNING** | | | |
|  | **8U** | **10U** | **13U** |
| Stealing/ Advance on passed ball | No | Yes  (cannot steal Home) | Yes |
| Sliding | Yes (feet first only) | Yes (feet first only) | Yes |
| Dive Back to Base | N/A | Yes | Yes |
| Advance on overthrows - to 1st Base**10** | No | Yes – at own risk but maximum of 1 base | Yes |
| Advance on overthrows - to 2nd & 3rd Base**10** | No | Yes -  except throws from catcher to 2nd/3rd on an attempted steal | Yes |
| Intentional Bunting | N/A | No | Yes |
| Courtesy Runner**11** | No | Yes | Yes |
| Advance on dropped third strike**12** | No | No | Yes |
| Infield Fly Rule**13** | No | No | Yes |
| Collision Rule | N/A | Called by umpire | Called by umpire |
| Stealing 2nd Base on a walk**14** | N/A | No | Yes |

1. **Overthrows - 10U Division**
   * A batter/base runner CAN advance to 2nd base on an overthrow at 1st base during a defensive play but cannot proceed any further. This limitation applies only to the runner at 1st base. All other runners on base at the time of the overthrow are not limited to one base. If the ball is still in play on an overthrow to first, the defense can attempt to make a play on a runner going to second base after an overthrow without liability of giving up any additional bases to that runner (i.e., runner limited to one base).
   * A base runner on 1st base CAN advance to 2nd base on an overthrow as the result of a pickoff attempt of that base runner by the catcher.
   * A base runner at third base CANNOT advance home on an overthrow during a defensive play made on a batted ball or on a pickoff attempt of that base runner by the catcher. A base runner stealing third base CANNOT advance past third base on an overthrow by the catcher.
2. **Courtesy Runner – 10U, 13U and HSE divisions**
   * A courtesy runner may be used for the player who starts the next inning in the catcher or pitcher position and may be inserted at any time after the player has safely reached base.
   * The courtesy runner should be the player who made the last out of the inning. If there are no outs, then the courtesy runner is the last runner who scored a run. If there are no outs or no runs in the first inning, then the courtesy runner is the last batter in the batting order.
3. **Dropped third strike – 13U**
   * When the catcher fails to catch the **third strike** before the ball touches the ground and there are fewer than two outs and first base is not occupied at the time of the pitch or any time there are two outs
4. **Infield Fly – 13U**
   * An infield fly is a fair fly ball (not including a line drive or an attempted bunt) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort. The rule applies when 1st and 2nd bases (or when 1st, 2nd and 3rd bases) are occupied with less than 2 outs.
5. **Stealing 2nd Base on a walk – 13U**
   * A runner who was walked can attempt a steal to 2nd base as long as it is a continuous motion and does not stop or pause after touching 1st base.

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| **DEFENSE** | | | |
|  | **8U** | **10U** | **13U** |
| Minimum Number of Players | 8 | 7 | 7 |
| Maximum Players in Field**14** | 10 | 9 | 9 |
| Initial Position of outfielders | 4 outfielders- must be on the grass except deep/large infields | On outfield grass. | On outfield grass. |
| Minimum Playing Time (Defense)**15** | At least 3 innings  (1 in infield) | At least 3 innings  (1 in infield) | At least 3 innings  (1 in infield) |
| Maximum Playing Time**16** | 3 innings maximum at any one position | 3 innings maximum at any one position | 3 innings maximum at any one position |
| Stopping Play (Defense) | Player in possession of ball within the base line as called by the Coach Pitcher | Time called by umpire | Time called by umpire |

1. **Maximum Players in Field – 10U**
   * Coaches have the option to play 10 players in the field (4 outfielders instead of 3) if they can mutually agree before the start of the game.
2. **Minimum Playing Time – All Divisions**
   * Applies only to players that are present for the entire game. Also catcher is considered an infield position in the 10U, 13U, and HSE divisions
3. **Maximum Playing Time – 10U, 13U and HSE divisions**
   * Playing time limit does not apply to the catcher in the 10U, 13U, and HSE divisions.

**Other Important Safety Rules**

**Suspending play for Lightning (from OBGC’s Lightning Policy)**

* If at any time lightning is seen or thunder is heard at the field, all play must be stopped immediately and all players, coaches, and fans need evacuate the area and seek shelter. Play cannot continue until there has been a 30-minute waiting period after the last lightning flash is seen. Even if weather conditions appear to have improved within the 30-minute window, you must wait the required time. Lightning can strike from as far as 10 miles away.
* The onus of removing a team or individual from an athletic site in the event of lightning activity is on the coach supervising the activity. The safety of all team members rests with that coach.

**Concussion Awareness (from OBGC’s Concussion Awareness Policy - *new 2012*)**

* If a player has a suspected concussion during a practice or game, that player is to be immediately removed from that activity and is not allowed to participate in a practice or game until they have a note from a doctor allowing them to play. Coaches should report these incidents to the appropriate point of contact at [softball@obgc.com](mailto:softball@obgc.com).

**Warming up Pitchers**

* Anyone under the age of 18 who is warming up a pitcher prior to or during a game must wear a catcher’s mask. This applies to both players and non-players.

**Jewelry**

* All jewelry should be removed prior to the game.

**Helmets**

* Batting helmets must be worn at all times when the batter/runner is in the field of play.

**Batting warm-ups**

* Batting warm-ups must take place in an area that is out of play and away from spectators. The on deck batter may warm-up in the batter’s circle but must be alone. All warm-ups with toss, tees, hitting sticks, bat sleeves or any other equipment other than the player’s bat, must take place in an area out of play and away from spectators.