

CAPO Girls Softball – Spring 2023 Rec Season

8U Division Rules

GAME DURATION: A regulation game in the 8U division will be 5 complete innings, or as ended by time limit (below). If the game is tied at the end of 5 innings, or when the time limit has been reached, the game will end in a tie.

TIME LIMIT: No new inning shall be started after 1 hour 20 minutes (1 hour 30 minutes is DROP DEAD).

UMPIRES: CAPO is playing to utilize volunteer umpires for the 8U division friendly games during the Spring 2023 recreational season. USA Softball certified umpires will be used for the mid-season tournament and end of season tournament.

DUGOUTS: Only coaches/managers/team moms and team members are allowed in the dugouts during regulation play. All players **must** remain in the dugout unless on the field, and **must** refrain from sitting in the stands during the game. Only water may be provided to girls once a game begins, food should be held until after the game.

COACHING: Coaches are only allowed to coach from the dugout or designated coach's box on the field during the game. Coaches are prohibited from coaching from the stands or behind the backstop.

Before the mid-season tournament, one coach may stand in the outfield to instruct their players on positioning and after a play has completed providing instructions to players on how the play should have been made. A coach shall not impede the speed of the game, and umpires are instructed to remove the coach from the playing field if in the umpire's opinion the coach is impacting the flow of the game. When play is live, a coach in the field cannot influence the live play at all; this includes yelling instructions to or touching players as this will result in an out.

UNIFORMS: All players are expected to present a neat appearance in uniform during the game. Coaches should wear closed toed shoes for safety while on the field.

JEWELRY: Players are prohibited from wearing jewelry during games. Players may tape earrings down.

MINIMUM PLAYER RULE: No minimum player rules are in effect. If a team has less than 10 available players, that team has the option to request defensive players from the other team. The other team shall provide up to 3 defensive players to play outfield positions. These defensive substitutions shall be the last 3 batters from the prior inning (i.e., furthest away from hitting again).

Ten (10) defensive players will be allowed to take the field with six (6) standard infield positions including catcher and four (4) outfield positions. The outfielders must be positioned at least 10' beyond the base path until the ball is hit.

LATE ARRIVALS: Team members arriving after a game has begun shall be placed at the end of the batting order.

EARLY DEPARTURES: The opposing coach shall be notified if it is necessary for a team member to leave the game before it is completed. Said player's spot in the batting order will be skipped from that point on with no penalty or "out" being assessed.

BATTING ORDER: All team members will be placed in the batting order. The batting order need not be arranged in conjunction with who starts the game defensively.

MERCY RULE: The mercy/run-ahead rule will be enforced when the opposing team is ahead by 15 after 3 innings, 12 after 4 innings or 8 after 5 innings.

PLAYING TIME:

1. No girl will sit out for a second inning until all other girls have been substituted for an entire defensive half. This applies per game only.
2. All players must rotate between infield and outfield.
 - Each player must play **one full inning in an outfield position** and **one full inning in an infield position** by the 3rd inning of each game.
 - To encourage development at the Catcher's position, Catchers are considered either an infield or outfield position.
 - A catcher can catch no more than 3 innings per game. At the end of 2 consecutive innings, a new catcher is entered into that position.
3. An injured player can be replaced with anyone from the bench at any time, no matter where you are in the substitution order.

PITCHING:

1. Each pitcher may pitch a maximum of 2 consecutive innings and a total of 3 innings per game. One pitch to a batter in an inning constitutes an inning.
2. A pitcher will pitch to either: *a batted fair ball; 3 strikes; hit by pitch; or 4 balls.*
 - If a batter is hit by pitch, then the offensive head coach shall make the call:
 - a) **The player may take first base.** No runs may be scored on a hit batter. If the bases are loaded, the runner comes home but the run does NOT count. If the player is hurt, this option should be selected and the last out shall run for the hitter.
 - b) **The player may proceed to coach pitch with a fresh count.** This is the preferred option if the player is unhurt.
 - If 4 balls, then an offensive coach will pitch to the batter **but retain the strike count.**
 - a) The adult pitcher will continue to pitch until the batter hits the ball in fair territory, strikes out, or is called out when the coach pitches a maximum of 4 pitches unless a ball is hit into foul territory on the 4th pitch.
 - b) Coaches shall pitch to the batter with at least one foot on the mound (the other may be behind the mound, not in front) at normal speed for that age group. Coach pitches should not have more than a 12" arch. If a ball is determined by the umpire to have too much arch, the ball is dead and will be considered a strike.

- c) Umpires will **not** call balls or strikes on coach pitch. Strikes will only be called on coach pitch by the umpire when a batter hits a foul or a swinging strike.
- d) The coach pitcher must have at least one foot in contact with the pitcher's plate for the entire pitching motion, until the ball has left the coach pitcher's hand.
- e) The player pitcher shall remain in the pitching circle/cylinder (both feet inside the circle/cylinder) while the coach pitcher is pitching and must play no closer to the batter than the pitcher's plate until the ball is hit.
- f) The coach pitcher must make every reasonable effort to get out of the way of the ball and/or defensive players.
- g) A batter may not advance past 2nd base on a hit against a Coach Pitch (i.e., no triples or home runs).

STRIKE ZONE: In order to encourage batter aggressiveness at the plate, improve infield skills and increase the fun for both parents and players, we are asking the umpires to modify the USA Softball strike zone and call a "Big Strike Zone." A big strike zone is defined here as a zone where, in the umpire's opinion, the batter could have made solid contact with the pitched ball. This means that the strike could and should be called from the batter's chin to the batter's knees.

INFIELD FLY RULE: Not applicable in this division.

BASE RUNNING: In accordance with USA Softball rules, an OFFENSIVE player has the duty to avoid a collision with a defensive player attempting to field a ball or make a play on the runner. If a collision occurs, the offensive player shall be automatically ruled out.

In order to avoid any collision with a defensive player, runners may slow down, slide, change directions, and stop entirely or even run around a defensive player within 3 feet of the base path.

STEALING BASES: All throws back to the pitcher from the catcher are dead. A runner can leave the base after the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.

1. Base runners may steal on pitched balls, passed balls or wild pitches. On a defensive attempt at either second base or third base, the runner may not advance beyond the original base attempted (No advancement on an overthrow). Home plate will be "closed" (no stealing or awarding of this base on an overthrow).
2. Runners may advance on batted balls and may advance one base only on an overthrow to any base.
3. Runners must stop advancing on batted balls when the ball is *either* controlled by the pitcher in the pitching circle or thrown over the line around the pitching circle by a fielder in an attempt to return the ball to the pitcher. Runners must be over halfway to the next base in order to be awarded that base. If not over halfway, they must return to the previous base.

DROPPED 3RD STRIKE: Not applicable for this division.

COURTESY RUNNERS: Courtesy runners may be used for any player that is hurt or unable to run without penalty in this division.

SCORING LIMITS:

1. There will be a maximum of 4 runs per inning.
2. Bunting will be allowed, however, the pitch must be delivered by a player pitcher. No bunting off a coach pitcher is allowed.

SCOREKEEPER: Each Home team must supply an official scorekeeper to record the game in the team scorebook. Gamechanger may be used. Score by inning and pitching records will be kept. Please be sure to report your score to your division director.

FIELD PREP: CAPO is attempting to secure volunteer field prep crew but, if unavailable, the HOME team is responsible for field prep.

DUGOUTS: The HOME team occupies the 3rd base dugout.

EQUIPMENT:

1. All equipment used shall be USA Softball approved.
2. USA Softball approved regulation 10" RIF-1 softballs will be the official game ball.
3. All players must have the proper equipment to take the field including cleats, face mask and glove.
4. Catchers must wear protective equipment including helmet, mask, chest protector and shin guards.
5. All batters, on-deck batters and runners will wear a batting helmet with a protective faceguard.
6. All bats used must be USA Softball approved bats.

BASEPATH AND PITCHING DISTANCE: The base path distance is 60 feet. The pitching distance is 30 feet.

POST-MID-SEASON TOURNAMENT RULE CHANGES

1. Defensive coaches must only coach from the dugout. Coaches will not be allowed in the outfield after the Mid-Season Tournament.
2. Any additional rule changes will be communicated by division directors prior to the beginning of the tournament.