

# Third Edition Rule Book

## **FASTPITCH AMERICA World Series and Nationals Qualification Guidelines:**

1. Teams must be FASTPITCH AMERICA Sanctioned.
2. Attend the FASTPITCH AMERICA State Tournament **in your home state** or a Regional Qualifier Tournament for your area.
3. Receive an at-large berth.
4. Roster: Up to three pick-up players may be added to a team's roster after the FASTPITCH AMERICA State Tournament / National Qualifier / NIT.

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## **FASTPITCH AMERICA SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION OFFICIAL RULES**

The following rules are the official FASTPITCH AMERICA SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION rules that will be in effect at all Regional and National tournaments. Local areas may modify these rules to conform to their local high school rules and recreational league rules only. Optional rules are common in regards to coach pitch verses machine pitch in younger divisions. Using 10 defensive players in younger divisions is a recreational option designed to get more girls in the game. Local options are not necessarily endorsed by FASTPITCH AMERICA SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION, but demonstrate the flexibility and tolerance of the FASTPITCH AMERICA SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION. FASTPITCH AMERICA SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION will always be about the "can do's". Safety rules are **NOT FLEXIBLE**. We will adhere to all safety rules in their fullest, including safety Fastpitch America Softball Association rules that are mandated by the governing body of softball. In order to keep the FASTPITCH AMERICA SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION Rulebook as streamlined as possible, we will refer back to the National Federation of High School's (NFHS) rulebook for all rules and case studies. Addendum to the Third edition book is in yellow background and Italicized

## THE INTENT AND PURPOSE OF THE RULES

The restrictions which the rules place upon the players are intended to create a balance of play; to provide equal opportunity between offense and defense; and to create an atmosphere of sporting behavior and fair play.

Therefore, it is important to know the intent and purpose of the rules so that it may be intelligently applied in each situation. A player or a team should not be permitted an advantage that is not intended by a rule. Neither should play be permitted to develop which may lead to placing a player or a team at a disadvantage not intended by a rule.

### Definitions

- 1.1 Altered bat:** When the physical structure of a legal softball bat has been changed.
- 1.2 Appeal:** A play or rule violation on which the umpire does not make a ruling until requested by a coach or player. Judgment calls (Balls, Strikes, Safe, or Outs) are not appealable.
- 1.3 Base runner:** An offensive batter that has just put the ball in play becomes a base runner.
- 1.4 Bunt:** When a batter taps the pitched ball and attempts to put the ball in play. The bat does not have to remain still to be considered a bunt attempt.
- 1.5 Conference:** Anytime a head coach gets permission to suspend play to talk to the players. Only 1 offensive or defensive conference allowed per ½ inning without penalty. On the second defensive conference in a ½ inning the pitcher must be replaced. Replacement pitcher must pitch to at least one batter. The replaced pitcher may go back into the pitcher's position once per ½ inning.
- 1.6 Stalling:** Umpire has a right to end a conference early if the umpire determines a team is trying to stall a game. This call will not be questioned or appealed by a coach.
- 1.7 5 Minute Rule:** Umpire will stop the clock if a time out is called by either team or an injury occurs to a player in the last 5 minutes of the game. The umpire will have the official time.
- 1.8 Leap, Crow Hop, or Replant:** A "Leap" is defined as an act by the pitcher which causes both feet to be airborne at the same time on the initial move and move from the pitcher's plate. "Pushing off" and dragging the pivot foot in contact with the ground is required. If a hole has been created, the pivot foot may drag no higher than the level plane of the ground. A "Crow Hop" is defined as the act of a pitcher who steps, hops, or drags off the front of the pitcher's plate, replants the pivot foot, establishing a second starting point, pushes off from the newly-established point and completes the delivery.
- 1.9 Dead ball:** When the ball is not in play. Umpire will declare, "Dead ball."
- 1.10 Fake tag:** When a defensive player makes the motion of tagging a base runner when there is no actual play being made. Penalty could be ejection of the offending player.
- 1.11 Foul tip:** A foul tip is a batted ball that goes sharply and directly from the bat to the catcher's mitt or hand and is legally caught by the catcher. It is a strike and remains a live ball.
- 1.12 Hit by pitch:** When the pitched ball hits the batter and the batter is not swinging at the ball or a strike is not called. Dead ball results with the batter advancing to first base.
- 1.13 Illegal bats:** A bat that does not meet the requirements of an official bat as dictated by governing body of Softball.

**1.14 Infield fly rule:** A batted pop fly in the infield with 1 or less outs when a base runner occupies at 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> base or 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> base. When umpire feels the ball can be caught by reasonable effort he indicates or verbalizes infield fly, and the batter is out.

**1.15 Live ball:** Any and all times that the ball is in play or until the umpire calls “time” or “dead ball”.

**1.16 Age Groups:** Age Groups are the age of a player on 1/1 of the Seasonal Year. Seasonal year begins on 8/01 of the calendar year and runs until 7/31 of the following year

**1.17 Age Up Date:** All Players must age up on 9/01 of the Calendar year. Example 1 a girl turns 17 on 01/02 of the seasonal year she can play 16U until 9/01 of the calendar year and then on 10/01 must start playing 18U. Example 2 a girl turns 17 on 9/02 of the calendar year she must as of 10/01 begin playing 18U for the Seasonal Year.

## Basics of Playing the Game

These are the basic playing rules adapted by the FASTPITCH AMERICA SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION. We will not mention the very basics, which are universal. Balls, strikes, outs, foul ball, fair ball, home run, triple, double, single, walk, strike out, etc. These are some of the fundamental parts of the game that have been a part of the game since it was invented.

**2.1 The plate is considered fair territory. A hit ball that hits the plate and remains fair or rests on the plate is considered a fair ball.**

**2.2 The strike zone is when a pitched ball crosses any part of the plate in width and crosses anywhere from the batter’s knees to her solar plex.**

**2.3 The game will be seven innings (6U and 8U will be 6 innings), unless a run rule comes into effect or the game has been established in advance with a time limit or less innings.**

**2.4 The run rule will be 12 runs after 3 innings, 10 runs after 4 innings, and 8 runs after 5 innings.**

**2.5 In 5 Inning format games the run rules will be 12 runs after 2 innings, 10 runs after 3 innings, and 8 runs after 4 innings.**

**2.6 Tied game after innings specified have expired or expired game time limit:**

1. Some leagues will play extra innings until a winner is determined.
2. Tournaments should use International Tiebreaker. (The last completed at bat in the previous inning becomes a base runner at second base. Play until a winner is determined).

**2.7 Determining home team:**

1. Leagues may pre-determine this on a schedule or use coin toss.
2. Tournaments should use coin toss before the start of the game.

**2.8 When the ball is “dead”:**

1. When “no pitch” is called by the umpire.
2. When a fly ball in foul territory is not caught.
3. Offensive interference.
4. When the batter or base runner is hit by the batted ball before the ball is touched by a fielder.
5. When the umpire calls “time”.
6. Buckets are allowed on the field for the purpose of calling signals only. If a ball hits the bucket or the bucket interferes with a fielder. Then interference, blocked ball or obstruction will be declared on the offending team as deemed necessary in the umpire’s judgment.

## **2.9 When the ball is “live”:**

1. Any batted fair ball.
2. Any fair ball that is in the playable field of play.
3. Any and all times before an umpire calls “time”.
4. When an umpire is hit by a thrown ball or batted ball.
5. When a base coach is accidentally hit by a thrown ball.

2.10 Protests will be decided at the time they occur (before the next pitch). Game will be halted and a ruling made. Then, if applicable, the game will continue. After consulting with the game umpires, the final decision will be that of the tournament director or the acting director in the tournament director’s absence.

## **Official Pitching Rules**

### **3.1 Before the pitcher pitches the ball, she must do the following:**

1. Have possession of the ball in either the pitching hand or the glove hand.
2. Have both hands separated as she steps onto the rubber.
3. Have both feet in contact with the rubber.
4. Pitcher must take or simulate taking signs while on the rubber from the catcher only.
5. On the pitch delivery the pivot foot may slide across the pitcher’s plate.

**3.2 The pitch begins when the hands are no longer separated. The pitch delivery can be aborted by pitcher stepping off the rubber in a backward step with her plant foot.**

**3.3 The delivery must start no less than one second and no more than 10 seconds after the hands are in contact with each other.**

### **3.4 Pitcher’s delivery:**

1. Windmill or Slingshot style is acceptable.
2. Arm movement must be an underhand motion.
3. Pitcher may use backward movement of the pitching arm at the start of delivery; however, a backward step is not permitted.
4. If the underhanded arm movement is more than 12” away from the parallel of the body, the pitch will be considered a sidearm pitch.
5. A “Leap” or a “Crow Hop” is not permitted during the pitching delivery.

**3.5 Pitcher cannot stop her motion before the ball leaves her hand.**

**3.6 If the pitcher stops her wind up (unless the umpire calls time) without releasing the ball, an illegal pitch will be called and a ball will be awarded to the batter and base runners will advance one base. No action by a batter, coach, or fan can cause the pitcher to throw an illegal pitch.**

**3.7 Pitcher cannot have anything distracting on her pitching arm, hand, or wrist. Any sweatband must be flesh in color on pitching wrist or arm. Pitcher’s uniform, equipment and/or accessories must be worn properly. A pitcher is prohibited from wearing or using any item that, in the umpire’s judgment, distracts the batter.**

**3.8 Pitcher can ask the umpire for a different ball at any given time before the start of her pitch. During wet conditions, a coach may request permission to towel dry the balls for the pitcher.**

**3.9 Intentional Walk: If the pitcher desires to intentionally walk a batter, she can at any time during the players at bat notify the umpire of her intentions and the walk will be granted by the umpire. No pitches need to be thrown to the intentionally walked batter.**

## **Batting and Base Running**

The FASTPITCH AMERICA SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION will use the following basic rules for batting and base running:

**4.1 The girl is considered the batter when she takes her place in the batter's box.**

**4.2 The batter can call time by lifting her hand. The umpire can grant the batter time out. If time is not granted, she will take the called pitch.**

**4.3 Batting out of order can be appealed to the umpire by the defense:**

**1. Infraction appealed during illegal batter:** the correct batter takes over and assumes the pitch count.

**2. Infraction appealed after illegal batter has batted but before next pitch:** the girl that should have batted is out and any base advances will return to their position prior to the illegal batter's bat. The correct spot in the lineup will be the batter that follows the girl called out.

Example:

(Batter #5 is the girl called out. The correct spot in the lineup would now be Batter #6.)

**3. Infraction appealed after illegal batter has batted and after next pitch:** the play stands. All base runners remain where they are.

**4. Batter positions on the lineup sheet are determined by the player's name and not the jersey number. Improperly recorded position numbers and player numbers are correctable errors.**

**4.4 The batter is out when the following happens:**

**1. Batter steps on the plate when hitting the ball in fair or foul territory.**

**2. Batter steps out of the batter's box when hitting ball in fair or foul territory.**

**3. Batter fouls off third strike while trying to bunt.**

**4. Catcher catches third strike foul tip.**

**4.5 The batter can advance to first base when the following happens:**

**1. Batter is pitched 4 balls.**

**2. Batter is hit by pitch (unless the ball is in the strike zone or swung at).**

**3. Catcher drops third strike with one or less outs with no base runner occupying first base or with two outs regardless of occupation of first base. A Ball that hits the dirt and caught by the catcher is considered a dropped third strike. Exception to dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike:** If the batter enters the Dead ball area, she will be called out. The dead ball area is considered outside of the fence surrounding the field or in the dugout.

**4. When the catcher interferes with the batter's bat while batter is swinging at the pitched ball, or anytime during a pitch. If the ball is put in play during the interference, the offensive coach has the option to take the result of the play or the interference.**

**4.6 The base runner must run the bases in order when advancing or retreating.**

**4.7** When a base runner misses a bag, the play is appealable to the umpire by the defensive coach or any player on the field. Appeal must be made before the next pitch (except coach pitch) is delivered.

**4.8** If a base runner attempts to advance to the next base while the pitcher has possession of the ball in the pitcher's circle, she must continue to the next base. Any attempt to retreat back to the previous base (without pitcher attempting to make a play on the base runner) will result in the base runner being called out. This is called "hesitation" or "look back" rule. The base runner can turn the corner and immediately look for the ball. This is not an attempt to advance to the next base.

**4.9** Base runners may attempt to steal only after the ball leaves the pitcher's hand during her delivery of the pitch.

**4.10** Base runner cannot **run more than 3 feet** out the base path to avoid a tag. This will result in base runner being called out. The base path is the path between the runner and a direct line to the next base.

**4.11** Base runner should avoid contact with the defensive player at any base if there is a defensive play being made. This is for the safety of the girls. Any aggressive act will result in the base runner being called out or at the umpires discretion the runner may be ejected from the game.

No defensive player may block a base, home plate, or the base path without having possession of the ball.

**4.12** Base runner cannot interfere with a defensive player making a play on the ball. This results in the runner being called out and all base runners returning to previous bag before the interference occurred (unless forced to advance). The batter/runner is deemed safe at first base.

**4.13** If a batted ball hits a base runner prior to passing or being touched by a defensive player (nonpitcher unless the pitcher touches the ball or makes a play on the ball), the base runner is called out. In addition, if the runner interferes with an attempt by the defense to field the ball, the base runner will be called out.

**4.14** Base runner must retouch her base during a caught fly ball and cannot advance to the next base until the ball is touched by the defensive player's glove or body.

**4.15 Obstruction:** Obstruction is any act committed by a player, coach, or fan that impedes the batter for a fair opportunity to hit the ball or to hinder a runner from reaching the next base. This obstruction can be physical, visual, or verbal.

**4.16 Interference:** Interference is any act committed by a player, coach, or fan that impedes the defensive team from making a play on the ball. This interference can be physical, visual, or verbal. A checked swing or attempted bunt with the bat pulled back is not considered interference.

## **Official Lineup of Players and Substitutes**

The FASTPITCH AMERICA SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION has adapted the following rules. The official lineups are for league and tournament play. They will be used for all State, Regional and National play.

**5.1 Team must start with nine defensive players.**

**5.2 Another option is using “Extra Players (EP)”. Using nine regular players and up to three “EP”. There would be 10, 11 or 12 total players on the lineup sheet. Any nine can be used in the field with 10, 11 or 12 batters. (This lineup is designed to get more players in the game). Three of the players would have EP as their position. Any of the 10, 11 or 12 players can be used for defense.**

**The coach can change the defensive players at any time using the 10, 11 or 12 players on the bench. DEFO Position:** In addition to the 3 EPs allowed under FASTPITCH AMERICA SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION rules, teams may also add a “DP/FLEX” player to their lineups. **For purposes of simplicity, if a coach chooses to use a DP/FLEX and only 9 batters, one of the 9 batters will be considered an DP.**

**Exception: If the DP/FLEX is used, that player must remain on defense throughout the game, unless inserted into the lineup “once” for the DP, or replaced on defense, in which case the FLEX position would be eliminated for the remainder of the game.**

**5.3 Substitute players shall be listed on the lineup sheet. They can be used at any given time during the game. The original player (starter) can re-enter the game at any given time. The starter and the substitute may each re-enter once.**

**5.4 Courtesy runners are allowed for pitchers and catchers. Determination for the courtesy runner will be as follows:**

1. Any player listed on the lineup sheet that is not currently in the batting order. The FLEX is listed in the batting order and can only be used as a courtesy runner only for the DP that she is tied to.
2. If all players listed on the lineup sheet are currently in the batting order then the courtesy runner will be the last player with a completed at bat. If the last completed at bat is a pitcher or catcher, the courtesy runner will revert to the batter immediately preceding her in the batting order.
3. Courtesy runners can only run for either the Pitcher or Catcher per half inning. They cannot run for both.

**5.5 All lineup sheets will be turned in at the start of the game. One copy will be given to the plate umpire and one copy will be given to the opposing team. If a player is lost to injury or illness, that space in the lineup will be scratched through. Exception: if there are less than 9 players on the lineup sheet, the player’s spot will not be scratched through. Instead, the affected spot will be an out when that spot comes up in the order. If there is a substitute player available, the substitute will go in that spot. There is no out penalty as long as there are at least 9 players left on the lineup.**

**5.6 Any player ejected from the game will result in an out when that spot in the lineup comes up, unless there is a substitute player available to go in that spot. Minimum requirements for fielding a team are still active. A team must have a minimum of 9 players on the lineup card, but can finish with a minimum of 8 players. The missing player in the batting order would be an out. Less than 8 fieldable players on the team will result in forfeit for that team.**

**5.7 A player’s age on January 1<sup>st</sup> of the seasonal year determines the age classification in which the player is eligible to participate. Seasonal years will run from 10/1 until 9/31 of the following year. *Beginning 10/1/2014 girls will required to Age-Up in the fall.***

**Example:** if a girl will turn 9 on 12/30 of the current year, she must play as a 10U player.

**Example:** if a girl turns 9 after 1/1 of the seasonal year, she can play 8U until the seasonal year ends.

**5.8 Age groups will be broken down as follows:**

6-Under, 8-Under, 10-Under, 12-Under, 14-Under, 16-Under, 18-Under, 18-Over, 16/18 Combined.

## **Equipment**

This is the equipment to be used while playing in official FASTPITCH AMERICA SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION events. As a rule, equipment must be standard approved equipment that is properly marked with "Official Softball" or similar markings that certify the equipment. All official safety equipment must be used and properly marked as certified.

**6.1 All bats must be unaltered official softball bats. The umpire will check all bats prior to the game. Any illegal bats will be removed from the dugout prior to the game. National High School Federation maintains a list of illegal bats and FASTPITCH AMERICA will enforce this. Use of illegal bat will result in an automatic out and ejection of player using the bat. Non-compliance will lead to offending player and coach being ejected from the game.**

**6.2 A FASTPITCH AMERICA stamped game ball or the equivalent must be used in all FASTPITCH AMERICA sanctioned events. All 12-Under through 18-Over division balls must be 12" in diameter with .47 C.O.R. and .375 compression. 8-Under and 10-Under must use 11" diameter with .47 C.O.R. and .375 compression.**

**6.3 Non-compliance will lead to offending coach being ejected from the game.**

**6.4 All batting helmets and catching gear must be approved and in original condition. Numbers and personalized designs are okay. PLAYER SAFETY IS THE MAIN CONCERN.**

**6.5 Shoes and socks must be worn and plastic cleats are recommended. Metal cleats are allowed for 14-U, 16-U, 18-U, 18-Over, and 16/18U divisions. Coaches may wear open toed shoes.**

**6.6 Hats and visors are permissible. They are optional between each individual player.**

**6.7 All jewelry is prohibited, except medical alert bracelets which must be worn on the glove hand. Non-compliance will lead to offending player and coach being ejected from the game.**

**6.8 Numbers must be worn on uniforms, with no 2 players on a team having the same number.**

**6.9 All helmets must have NOCSAE approved face guards. Defensive face guards are recommended and endorsed by FASTPITCH AMERICA.**

**6.10 FASTPITCH AMERICA does not require infielders to wear face shields and Heart Guards but does highly recommend the use of them. The only exception to this rule is in 8U all infielders in 8U MUST wear face shields.**

## Regulations of the “Playing Field”

These are the basic dimensions for the playing field for each individual age group. The FASTPITCH AMERICA SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION will use these dimensions for all official events. Maximum fence distances can be further if there is no way possible to bring playing field into legal distance. Temporary fences are recommended to bring fields into legal bounds.

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Pitching Distance</b>	<b>Base Distance</b>	<b>Distance “Feet”</b>
6-U Tee Ball	35 Feet	55/60 Feet*	120-200 Feet*
8-U	35 Feet	60 Feet	150-225 Feet*
10-U	35 Feet	60 Feet	150-225 Feet*
12-U	40 Feet	60 Feet	175- 225 Feet*
14-U	43 Feet	60 Feet	200- 225 Feet*
16-U	43 Feet	60 Feet	200- 225 Feet*
18-U	43 Feet	60 Feet	200- 225 Feet*
18-O	43 Feet	60 Feet	200- 225 Feet*
16/18 Combined	43 Feet	60 Feet	200- 225 Feet*

\*Distance based upon availability of playing field

- 7.1 There will be a 16-foot diameter circle drawn evenly around the pitching rubber.
- 7.2 The batter’s box will be to the left and to the right of the plate. They will be 3 feet wide and 7 feet long. Four feet toward the pitching rubber from the center of the plate.
- 7.3 Base lines will extend out 3 feet on both sides of the base parallel to the centerline. (Total of 6 feet wide).
- 7.4 Coaching boxes and on-deck batter’s boxes are suggested.

## Umpires Rights and Responsibilities

These are the standard guidelines adapted by the FASTPITCH AMERICA SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION that governs the rights and responsibilities of the umpires.

- 8.1 The umpire is responsible to keep control of the game.
- 8.2 The umpire has the right to eject any player, coach, or fan from a game for any unsportsmanlike behavior.
- 8.3 Any judgment call that the umpire makes cannot be protested.
- 8.4 Any call made that may be a misinterpretation of the rules can be protested.
- 8.5 A head coach can appeal to the plate umpire in the case of a batter on whether or not a check swing was checked or not. (The field umpire might have a better view). The plate umpire does not have to grant the appeal.
- 8.6 The umpire can suspend play for any reason: acts of nature, unruly conduct, etc.
- 8.7 Everyone has the responsibility to ensure sportsmanship in all events. An unruly fan may place the entire team in jeopardy of ejection or possible forfeit.

## **Recreational League Play & Tournament Guidelines**

These are the guidelines adapted by the FASTPITCH AMERICA SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION for running leagues. Local directors may make modifications to accommodate local needs.

### **9.1 League play Guidelines:**

1. All teams and umpires must be registered with FASTPITCH AMERICA. Umpires must register individually to receive proper insurance coverage.
2. Teams should be picked in a manner to ensure parity in the league. There is nothing worse than having a stacked team among a group of inexperienced teams. League parity assures better games and a better chance of fair play.
3. At the end of the season, all-star teams can be picked and they should represent the best players that each individual team has to offer.
4. Local all-star tournaments should be rotated between the local area parks on a year-to-year basis.
5. Fundamentals should be taught to the players at all age groups and divisions. Clinics should be arranged for all new coaches.
6. Sportsmanship and fair play should be stressed to all players and coaches.
7. Sponsors should be appropriate for our youth to be associated with.
8. Run Limits in league play for 8U and 6U is 5 per half inning.

## **Special Tournament Rules**

### **10.1 6-Under TEE-Ball Rules:**

1. Each half inning will end with 3 outs or with 10 batters, whichever comes first.
2. Free substitution on the field. There will be no more than 6 players in the infield.
3. Two defensive coaches may be present in the field to assist his or her team with positioning on the field. During play the coach must be behind the deepest fielder and may not interfere with the game. If a coach touches the ball or a player, interference will be called and each runner will be awarded the base that she was running to plus one additional base. The umpire will rule on the play whether interference should be called on the coach.
4. All infield defensive players except the pitcher must remain no closer than 10' in front of an imaginary line drawn on the baseline between first base and second base and between second base and third base until the ball is in play. The pitcher must stay in the circle with at least one foot in the pitcher's circle until the ball is hit. The outfielders must be 10' behind the imaginary base line before pitch is thrown.
5. If the ball is fielded and overthrown during an attempt to make a play at a base, runners will be allowed only one additional base provided the ball is retrieved and immediately returned to the pitcher in the pitcher's circle. If a fielder gets the ball after the overthrow and makes an attempt to make a play on the runner, the ball remains live and runners may advance.
6. The batter will have a maximum of 5 swings from the Tee unless the 5<sup>th</sup> and consecutive swings are foul. A coach will be allowed at the plate to assist the batter with the Tee.

7. "Time" will be called by the umpire when the team in the field has returned the ball to the pitcher in the pitcher's circle and the player has control of the ball or when the runners have stopped.
8. All players present when the game begins will be included in the batting lineup. Teams will "bat the roster". If a player arrives after the game has started, she will be added to the bottom of the batting order. No pinch runners will be allowed unless a player is injured.
9. A batter must hit the ball at least 10 feet in order for it to be ruled a fair ball. The distance shall be designated by an arc drawn between the two foul lines. Incidental contact with the Tee is allowed as long as the ball is also hit and is fair.
10. In the event that the tenth batter hits the ball, the defensive team may end the inning with an out on the lead runner regardless of the number of outs already made. Returning the ball to the pitcher in the circle will result in time being called.
11. There will be no walks.
12. There will be no infield fly rule.
13. Fielders CANNOT STAND on a base unless they are receiving a throw.
14. A throw is considered as the ball being thrown overhand to another player. Rolling the ball is not allowed and will not be considered a throw. (No "bowling" is allowed)
15. There will be no base stealing.
16. Catchers may not throw down on runners on any base
17. 6U can use a combination of coach Pitch and Tee-Ball rules (coach gets 3 pitches then the batter can get 2 swings with the ball on the tee).
18. All infielders MUST wear a face shield.

## 10.2 6-Under and 8-Under Coach Pitch Rules:

1. 8 runs or 3 outs per ½ inning. Following the 3<sup>rd</sup> out or 8<sup>th</sup> run scored, all play is stopped in order to prevent injury.
  2. There will be 10 defensive players allowed on the field. There must be no more than 6 infielders. The outfielders must play at least 10 feet beyond the bases.
  3. 5 pitches or 3 swings, 5<sup>th</sup> and consecutive fouls will not be counted against the 5 pitch count.
  4. If the coach pitcher is hit by the ball it is a do over no pitch. The batter will return to the batters box and assume the count that was on them before the pitch
  5. The Player-Pitcher must remain in the pitching circle until the ball is pitched. The Coach-Pitcher may pitch at any distance inside the 8 ft pitching circle and within the boundaries of the 24 inch pitching rubber. To clarify, the Coach-Pitcher must be touching or be directly in front of the pitching rubber and use a straight ahead pitching approach. Coach-Pitchers may not pitch from either side of the pitching rubber so as to gain the advantage of a directional hit. **Penalty:** If at any time prior to release of the ball, the Coach-Pitcher steps outside of the pitching circle or is outside the imaginary 24 inch pitching rubber boundaries, a strike will be called on the batter.
  6. While the ball is in play, all runners are free to advance at their own risk. Play is stopped on defense by stopping the lead runner. Once the lead runner has been stopped, the ball is no longer in play. The ball is thrown to the pitcher's circle and no runner may advance.
- Example #1:** Runner "A" is at 2<sup>nd</sup> base when the batter (Runner "B") hits the ball. Runner "A" then runs and reaches third base safely, while the ball is fielded and is thrown to the 3<sup>rd</sup> baseman. The 3<sup>rd</sup> baseman now possesses the ball and is capable of tagging Runner "A" out if she was to attempt to advance. The Umpire declares play stopped. The ball is then thrown to the pitching

circle and Runner “B” is halted at 1<sup>st</sup> base.

**Example #2:** Using the same scenario as Example #1, Runner “A” is at 2<sup>nd</sup> base when the batter (Runner “B”) hits the ball. However, Runner “A” is tagged out prior to reaching 3<sup>rd</sup> base. In this scenario, the ball is not dead, but rather Runner “B” would now become the lead runner and may continue to advance at her own risk until she is declared out or her progress is stopped by the defense. The umpire then declares play stopped and the ball is thrown to the pitching circle.

7. Balls must be approved. (COR 0.47-11 inch. Optic yellow)

8. Two coaches can stand in the outfield in foul ball area only, one on each side of the field.

9. Runners may leave the base when the coach releases the pitch.

10. Run rule is 12 runs after 3<sup>rd</sup> inning, 10 runs after 4<sup>th</sup> inning, and 8 runs after 5<sup>th</sup> inning.

11. Unlimited amount of players on the roster.

12. Teams can bat up to 13 players. Lineup may consist of 10 players with up to 3 EPs.

13. Dead ball is called if Pitcher-Coach is hit by pitch or interferes with play.

14. There will be no base stealing.

15. Bunting and Slapping are allowed.

16. **NO SMASH Hitting (Faking a bunt and then hitting away)**

17. There will be no “Infield Fly Rule” or “Intentional Walk” for 8-Under.

18. A throw is considered as the ball being thrown overhand or underhanded to another player. Rolling the ball is not allowed and will not be considered a throw. If in the umpires judgement the ball was rolled to another player then the runner will be declared safe.

19. **The Catcher may not catch a foul ball unless they are in the catcher’s box when the pitch is thrown and in the squatted position. If the Catcher is in the standing position, this will not be considered a caught foul ball. IF THE GIRL DECIDES TO PLACE HERSELF ANYWHERE OTHER THAN THE CATCHER’S BOX AND CATCH A FOUL, IT IS CONSIDERED A NON CAUGHT FOUL BALL.**

20. All infielders **MUST** wear a face shield

### 10.3 8-Under Modified Girl Pitch Rules:

1. The Player-Pitcher will pitch 5 pitches or until there are 3 balls on the batter, whichever comes first. If the batter does not hit the ball or strike out, then a coach assume the count on the batter and will have the opportunity to pitch up to 3 pitches. If the batter fouls off the second pitch from the coach, she will remain at bat until she hits the ball fair or strikes out.

2. There will be no walks. The batter must hit the ball or strike out. The only time a batter may take first base is if she is hit by a Player pitch.

3. The umpire will record balls and strikes on the batter.

4. The pitching distance will be 35 feet with an 8-foot circle.

5. The bases will be set at 60 feet.

6. All batters and runners must wear a batting helmet.

7. There will be 10 players on Offense and defense. The Player-Pitcher will remain in the pitching circle when the coach pitches.

8. Catchers must wear full protective equipment (mask-throat protector, chest protector, shin guards).

9. If the catcher does not occupy the catcher’s box in the squatted position until the Coach-Pitcher pitches the ball, they will not be allowed to catch a foul ball and have it considered an out. It would be considered a dead ball foul.

10. A throw is considered as the ball being thrown overhand to another player. Rolling the ball is not allowed and will not be considered a throw.
11. There will be no base stealing, or throwing behind the base runners.
12. There will be no infield fly rule.
13. All infielders MUST wear a face shield

#### **10.4 8-Under Machine Pitch Rules:**

1. 5 hittable pitches = 5 strikes (if the ball is fouled off on the last pitch, then the batter continues to bat). A ball that is not hittable will be called a no pitch by the umpire.
2. The runner may lead off when the ball leaves the machine.
3. There will be 10 defensive players allowed on the field. There will be 4 outfielders behind the base path. The pitcher must have one foot in the circle and be even with the pitching machine.
4. A minimum of 9 players for either team.
5. Two coaches are allowed on the field in the outfield.
6. The Machine will be set at approximately 35 MPH.
7. Bunting and stealing will be allowed. NO SMASH Hitting (Faking a bunt and then hitting away)
8. The bases will be set at 60 feet.
9. Time will be called when the ball is back in the pitcher's circle.
10. One base will be awarded on any overthrow trying to pick off a runner.
11. A throw is considered as the ball being thrown overhand to another player. Rolling the ball is not allowed and will not be considered a throw.
12. Runners will not be allowed to steal home. If the ball is hit and it hits the pitching machine or coach, it is an automatic one base for all runners.
13. Play stops when the ball is back in the pitching circle or the lead runner is stopped.
14. All infielders MUST wear a face shield

#### **10.5 10-Under Special Rules**

1. An 11" diameter game ball must be used in all FASTPITCH AMERICA sanctioned events.
2. The pitching distance will be 35 feet.
3. 10-Under teams will play by the same rules as older age divisions, with the only exception being the ball size and pitching distance.
4. Face shields are highly recommended for the Pitcher, 1<sup>st</sup> Base and 3<sup>rd</sup> Base Players
5. Heart Guards are also recommended for the Pitchers

#### **10.6 High School Division Special Rules**

1. High School group is a combined age group of 16-U and 18-U.

### **FASTPITCH AMERICA Sportsmanship Guidelines**

#### **11.1 Sportsmanship Guidelines:**

1. If a player gets hurt, after the play has stopped the umpire shall call Dead Ball. Until Dead Ball is called on an injury the runners may advance at their own risk. Safety of the players is taken very seriously and should be monitored by all coaches and umpires.
2. Unsportsmanlike behavior by a player, coach or fan is an ejection offense.
3. Umpires should be fair, impartial, use good judgment and never speak rudely or out of turn to a player, coach or fan. An umpire puts a human element into the game. They are subject to making errors the same as coaches and players are subject to making mistakes. In the spirit of fair play and sportsmanship we will not allow anyone to show disrespect towards them because of their decisions. FASTPITCH AMERICA will do their part by pursuing the best decision makers to call FASTPITCH AMERICA events.
4. Coaches will follow the rules of sportsmanship, never stall a game, be a graceful winner and loser, and never speak rudely or out of turn to a player, coach, fan or umpire. Coaches are also responsible for the sportsmanship of their own players and fans. Coaches should not tolerate unsportsmanlike conduct from their own players or fans.

# **FASTPITCH AMERICA SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION**

## **Team Insurance**

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