



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# BASEBALL & SOFTBALL RULES

Youth Sports



YMCA OF GREATER SAN ANTONIO

YMCA Mission: To put Judeo-Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

# **YMCA Pledge:**

## **Players Pledge:**

Win or Lose,  
I pledge before God  
To play the game as well as I know how,  
To obey the rules,  
And to be a good sport at all times,  
And to Improve myself,  
In Spirit, mind, and body.

## **Parents Pledge:**

I pledge before God,  
To always support my team,  
With good sportsmanship  
And sound judgment,  
And to develop my child's self-respect  
And support their participation in the program.  
The child first, sport second

## TEAM DUTIES

1. Both teams are responsible for cleaning up their bench immediately after the game.
2. Home team will provide a parent to keep score.
3. During the game, there shall be a limit of four (4) coaches in the dugout. See age division for specific rules.

## SPORTSMANSHIP

1. The YMCA does not keep official game scores or records. However, the score is kept during the game to promote a learning environment.
2. Unsportsmanlike conduct of the players or coaches is not tolerated. If the behavior persists, the individual will be asked to leave the facility.
3. **Any player, coach or spectator ejected may be suspended for at least (1) game and/or may be placed on season probation. If ejected again during a program, the individual is subject to permanent removal from the program. The YMCA sports cabinet will meet to review suspensions and removal. Cases will also be reviewed by the sports cabinet for reinstatement.**
4. If the atmosphere of the game feels unsafe or the YMCAs Values are not being adhered to, the referee or YMCA staff member can end the game.
5. If a team has less than the number of required players, the opposing team will be asked to "share" players in order to play the game. We make every effort to play each scheduled game.
6. Coaches are expected to adhere to YMCA Values and are responsible for team actions. This includes parents and players.
7. The YMCA Players and Parents Pledge is required prior to the start of each game. A YMCA Staff will lead the pledge, however in the event a staff member is unavailable, the coach, a parent or player can administer the pledge.

## YMCA YOUTH SPORTS KEY PHILOSOPHIES

1. Everyone must play at least half the game.
2. Coaches are volunteers. They are not paid.
3. Our focus is on fun and skill development.
4. Sportsmanship above all.
5. We promote a family atmosphere.

## **PLAYER SAFETY**

1. To protect the safety of all players in the program, any participant wearing a cast will prohibit them from participating in YMCA games or practices. Exceptions can be made with approval from the Sports Director and documented approval from a physician.
2. Soft casts will be permitted if approved by officials.
3. All types of jewelry (earrings, bracelets, necklaces, etc.) must be removed before the game.
4. Adaptive aids are approved on a case by case basis.

## **UNIFORM**

- Each player must wear their YMCA issued uniform with pants. Cleats with metal spikes are not allowed.
- Pitchers cannot use a first baseman mitt or glove with white on the exterior leather.
- Catchers must wear a catcher's mitt and a protective cup. The YMCA also recommends that all players wear a protective cup, especially infield players.

## **SUBSTITUTIONS**

- The goal of the YMCA is to provide all children with equal playing time. All players must play a minimum of 50% of the game.
- If a player is sick or injured, the referee must be notified before the start of the game. If a player ends up becoming ill or injured during a game, he or she can be substituted out.

# RULES FOR T-BALL (3-4 Age Division)

## 1. ROSTER

- Each team will have a minimum of 8 players and maximum of 10. Teams can “share” players if needed to play the game.
- Teams cannot start practicing until after the first coaches meeting.
- Every child will play all innings in the field unless they become sick or injured.
- Each team will field the full roster of 10 players (6 infielders, 4 outfielders).
- Each team will bat the full roster (10 players) per inning.
- If all 10 players are not present, the game will still be played.
- Players will be rotated each inning to play the position of pitcher. Players are also required to play at least one inning in the infield.

## 2. COACHES

- Up to FOUR defensive coaches will be allowed on the field but cannot interfere with the play. Any coach who physically interferes with a play shall cause the ball to be dead.
- Up to FOUR offensive coaches will be allowed on the field (one for the dugout, one at home helping tee up the ball/ helping batter, one as 1st base coach, one as 3rd base coach).
- Offensive coaches must inform the opposing team when their last batter is up. The last batter up will “clear the bases” and the half inning is over. The other team then is up to bat.
- Coaches are asked to expedite players between innings in order to get more playing time
- The home team coach will lead the players and parent’s pledge before the game starts.

## 3. GAME RULES

- Each game has a 50-minute time limit. A new inning cannot begin after the game has been in play for 40-minutes.
- The batter must hit the ball at least 5 feet to be fair. Bunting is not allowed.
- T-Ball: each batter has **4 SWINGS** from the Tee to put the ball into play. If the batter does not put the ball in play after the 4th swing, the player will take 1st base to become a runner. Important: please follow the “4 Swing” rule in order to keep the game moving, increase opportunity for more innings, and more “at bats” for the players.
- Prior to the batter swinging, one player (on defense) must be inside the pitcher’s circle. Outfielders must stay in the outfield until the ball is hit.
- To encourage gameplay and development, outs will not be called. Defensive plays are encouraged to develop participant skills.
- If a player receives a second warning for throwing a bat, the coach will be instructed to sit the child out for an inning.
- Once all offensive players have gone up to bat and the last batter has cleared the bases, teams will swap at bats/field and the game will move forward to the next half inning.
- YMCA provides the game tee and baseballs; please return any YMCA baseballs and the Tee.

# RULES FOR COACH PITCH (5-6 age) & MACHINE PITCH (7-9 age)

## 1. ROSTER

- Ten (10) players will play on each team; however teams may still play with six (6) players. Opposing coaches can share players in order to make even teams and play the game.
- The starting defensive lineup will consist of ten players. If there are more than 10 players on the defensive team, they will still have the opportunity to hit in their batting order.
- Any player who arrives late to the game will be placed at the end of the batting lineup.
- No player may sit 2 innings until every other player has sat at least 1 inning
- Every player must play one inning per game in the infield (P, C, 1st, 2nd, SS or 3rd).

## 2. COACHES

- Each team can have a maximum of 4 coaches.
- The team in the field (defense) is allowed to have max two (2) coaches in the outfield area, but are not permitted to touch any players or the ball. If there is interference, all runners will advance one base.
- Coach Pitch: Team batting (offense) will pitch to their own team (coach pitch), provide one coach to manage home plate (off to the side), and provide one 1st and one 3rd base running coach.
- Coach Pitch: For the team batting (offense), the home base coach will position him/herself off to the side of home plate to help set up the baseball tee when needed and collect balls at the end of the player's bat.
- Coach Pitch: Teams are not required to have a catcher for coach pitch division; however, teams may play a catcher if they want.
- Coach Pitch: Team batting (offense) will provide a coach to pitch to own team. The pitching coach will stand in the defensive circle or halfway between the mound and home plate to pitch the ball. The defensive player will stand in the defensive circle during the pitch. Once the ball is hit, all coaches must avoid any physical interference with the ball, but may verbally help guide/direct their players. In the event that the ball hits the pitching coach, all of the runners would be allowed one base.
- Machine Pitch: The team batting (offense) will provide one coach to operate the pitching machine AND one coach at home plate (off to the side). Main responsibility of the coach positioned off to the side of home plate will be to collect balls/keep the batting box clear/return balls to the mound after bat, help with safety, etc.
- Machine Pitch: Team in the outfield (defense) will provide a player to be a catcher. Catchers must be in full catcher gear to play catcher (YMCA provided gear). Teams have the option to position catcher safely behind home plate OR safely standing off to the side (i.e. batter side). Primary reason for the catcher at this age division is if there is a play at home plate.

## 3. GAME RULES

- Each game has a 50-minute time limit. A new inning cannot begin after the game has been in play for 40-minutes.
- Each game has a maximum of six innings. Half innings consist of 3 outs or five runs.
- The home team coach will lead the YMCA Pledge prior to the game.
- Any coach who physically interferes or aids one of his team players shall cause the player to be out and the ball shall be dead.
- No additional coach may enter the playing field, except in the case of an injury or as specifically noted in these rules.
- Bunting, leadoffs, and stealing are not allowed.
- Players may attempt to advance one base on an overthrow. Only one base.
- **Coach Pitch:** a player will get a maximum of **4 pitches** to put the ball in play. After the 4th pitch, the ball will be placed on a tee for one (1) more attempt. If the player does not put the ball in play from the tee after one attempt, the player is out. If a batter fouls on

the 4th pitch, the ball will be placed on a tee for one final attempt.

- **Machine Pitch:** a player will get a maximum of **4 pitches or 3 swings** to put the ball in play. If the player does not put the ball in play, the player is out. Normal foul ball rules apply on the 4th pitch or 3rd swing.
- The infield fly rule will not be in effect.
- Any player batting or base running must wear a helmet.
- Headfirst slides will not be permitted. Players may only slide feet first and avoid the defender. If the umpire declares the act of sliding into the defender as intentional, the player may be ejected from the game.
- Games can end in a tie.
- Coaches are asked to expedite players between innings in order to get more playing time

## 4. EQUIPMENT

- Coach Pitch baseball Level 5
- Machine Pitch baseball Level 5
- All bats must be USA Baseball approved
- Little League Bat should be at child's waist height
- Each Player must use a glove
- All players will wear either running shoes or shoes with rubber cleats. Steel cleats, cleats with spikes and open toe shoes are **NOT** allowed.
- All Players are required to wear the team shirt and cap. Catcher's gear will be available by the YMCA if needed and must be worn in machine pitch and up divisions.
- Machine Pitch: the machine will be set at 35 mph at a distance of 42 feet from the back of the plate. Coaches from both teams will manage/operate the pitching machine.
- Umpires will position themselves in the field behind the pitcher's mound/pitching machine.

## RULES FOR SINGLE A Division (10-12 age)

- The Y's youth sports committee adopts YMCA of Greater San Antonio's rules for baseball. The YMCA follows the rules of the National Federation of State High School Associations.

### 1. ROSTER

- Coaches will need to bring a copy of their official roster to the field for referencing. Coaches playing an unregistered player will result in immediate forfeit of the game and one (1) game suspension pending an investigation.
- Roster size is limited to max 12 players to ensure ample playing time. Teams are allowed to play with as few as 7 players. Teams may "loan/share" players, if necessary, to play the game
- If any new players arrive after the start of the game, they will be added to the bottom of the lineup and start playing immediately.

### 2. COACHES

- Each team can have a maximum of 3 coaches present in the dugout.
- Only the first base coach and third base coach are allowed on the field.
- Teams are required to have both bases coached by an adult.
- Any coach who physically interferes or aids one of his team players shall cause the player to be out and the ball shall

be dead.

- A batted home run is a dead ball and base coaches are allowed to congratulate players when rounding the bases.
- No coach should enter the playing field except for injury or official visits to the mound. The length of the mound meeting is up to the umpire, but kept to a minimum.
- Coaches are asked to expedite players between innings in order to get more playing time
- Coaches are asked to have their teams vacate the dugout promptly after their game ends.

### 3. GENERAL GAME RULES

- Max six (6) innings or one hour and 30–minutes of game time; five (5) run limit per inning.
- A new inning cannot begin after the game has been in play for one hour and 15–minutes.
- If game time expires (1.5 hours) in the middle of a half inning and a team is behind by 2 runs or less, the half inning will be completed. Games can end in a tie – no extra innings.
- The play is dead once the pitcher has the ball on the mound.
- If a player is ejected from the game their spot in the lineup will count as an out.
- If a player is injured during the game their spot in the lineup will NOT count as an out.
- The umpire will call balls and strikes from behind the catcher OR behind the pitcher.
- Contesting balls or strikes is not permitted.
- Challenging called outs on the field is not permitted.
- Bunting is allowed.
- Headfirst slides will not be permitted.
- If a player does leave the game early, due to ejection or voluntarily, their spot in the lineup will be skipped with an out being charged (excluding injury).
- All teams can free substitute in the field with the exception of the pitcher. Once a player has been removed from the pitcher position, they cannot re-enter as a pitcher.
- The dropped third strike rule **DOES** apply.
- All players who are batting and base running must wear a helmet.
- Players warming up a pitcher must wear a protective catcher’s mask.
- The YMCA will provide TWO (2) game balls per game. Teams are responsible for retrieving their foul balls.
- The coach shall notify the umpire immediately upon the arrival of a late player. The umpire will then inform the opposing coach.
- The YMCA Sports Director will be the sole judge of weather cancellation. In the event of a cancellation, if half of the game was played, it will not be made up.
- Equipment cannot be left on the playing field. It should be left in the dugout.
- Only the players, coaches, officials, and YMCA staff are allowed on the field during play.
- Teams shall exchange lineups before the game and provide a copy of their lineup to the umpire.
- Team lineups should include a player’s full name and their starting defensive position.
- Courtesy runner – the last recorded out may pinch run for the catcher whenever the catcher is on base.
- The runner cannot collide, lower shoulder or shove any player when approaching base. Conversely, coaches must instruct players to not impede baserunners or block a base. Basic intent is to avert a collision on the field or at any base.
- If a player receives a second warning for throwing a bat, the player will be called out.
- Game time will officially start after the YMCA Player pledge.



- All teams will bat a continuous lineup.

## 4. SINGLE A RULES

- 10–run rule applies after three (3) innings or 8 runs after four (4) innings.
- Base stealing is allowed. However, no lead offs, runners are not allowed to leave the base until the ball crosses the plate. A team will have one (1) warning if a player leaves early.
- Players may attempt to advance one base (including home plate) if the catcher drops or the ball passes the catcher. Players may not advance a base when the catcher is attempting to return the ball to the pitcher.

## 5. PITCHER RULES

- Any player on the roster may pitch.
- Players may pitch a maximum of six (6) innings per week. Any player that pitches in three (3) or less innings is required to have 24 hours of rest between games.
- Any player that pitches four (4) innings is required to rest 72 hours between games. For example, if a team plays on a Friday at 7:00pm, the pitchers used in that game can't pitch in the next game, unless their next game is at 7:00pm on Monday or later.
- If a pitcher hits three (3) batters in an inning or five (5) in a game, it is mandatory that they be removed from the game.
- A pitcher's undershirt cannot be exposed if it is white.
- The pitcher cannot wear a batting glove underneath their glove.

## 6. EQUIPMENT

- All bats must meet USA Baseball standards.
- Bats may be taped or fitted with a sleeve no more than 16 in.
- Laminated bats and softball bats are not permitted.
- Each Player must use a glove.
- All players will wear either running shoes or shoes with rubber cleats. Steel Cleats, spikes, and open toe shoes are not permitted.
- All Players are required to wear the team shirt and cap. Long pants are also required but are not provided by the YMCA.
- All catchers' equipment will be provided by the YMCA and must be worn during all practices and games.

## 7. PLAYING FIELD

- Single A: 70–feet between each base and 50–feet between home plate and the pitcher's mound.

# RULES FOR GIRLS SOFTBALL

## 1. ROSTER

- Teams are allowed to play with 8 players, maximum 12 players. If any new players arrive after the start of the game, they will be added to the bottom of the lineup and start playing immediately.

## 2. COACHES

- Any coach who physically interferes or aids one of his team players shall cause the player to be out and the ball shall be dead.
- Only players and coaches taking part in the game will be allowed on the playing field. All spectators must remain off the field and out of the team dugouts.
- Three (3) coaches are allowed in the dugout.
- The offensive team may have one coach over the age of 18 in each of the coach's boxes.
- Coaches are asked to expedite players between innings in order to get more playing time

- Coaches are asked to have their teams vacate the dugout promptly after their game ends.

### 3. GAME RULES

- General softball rules will apply in all games unless specified in these rules or stipulated by the Umpire. Amateur Softball Association (ASA) Rules apply.
- The home team will provide a parent to run the scoreboard. If a scoreboard is present.
- The home team coach will lead the YMCA Pledge prior to the game.
- A half inning will expire when five (5) runs are scored or three (3) outs are made.
- 7-9 age division games will be 60-minutes long.
- 10-12 age division games will be 75-minutes long. A new inning cannot begin after the game has been in play for 65 minutes.
- A maximum of six (6) innings may be played.
- A maximum of 9 players are allowed on the field. Teams may "share" players if needed to play the game.
- Every player present at game time must play at least half of the game or three (3) innings unless they become sick or injured.
- 7-9 age division: can be machine pitch OR coach pitch (same team). Teams may begin season coach pitch.
- 7-9 age division: batter will get a maximum of 4 pitches or 3 swings to put the ball in play. If the player does not put the ball in play, the player is out. Normal foul ball rules apply on the 4th pitch or 3rd swing.
- 7-9 age division: the team in the field (defense) is allowed a max two coaches in the field on defense to assist players (no ball interference)
- 7-9 age division: the team batting (offense) will provide one coach to operate the pitching machine (or as pitching coach) AND one coach at home plate (off to the side). (Main responsibility of the coach positioned off to the side of home plate will be to collect balls/keep the batting box clear/return balls to the mound after bat, help with plate safety, next batter up, etc.)
- 10-12 age division: will be player pitch. Each player has a maximum of four (4) balls or three (3) strikes.
- Windmill pitching is not allowed.
- All teams can free substitute in the field with the exception of the pitcher. Once a player has been removed from the pitcher position, they cannot re-enter as a pitcher.
- No Stealing. Runners are not allowed to leave the base until the ball crosses the plate. A team will have one (1) warning if a player leaves early.
- No Stealing home plate. Runners may not advance to home plate on a passed ball OR while the catcher is attempting to return the ball to the pitcher.
- Leading off will not be allowed (all age divisions).
- 10-12 age division players may attempt to advance one base if the catcher drops or passes the ball, as long as the next base is not home plate. The catcher may attempt to throw the runner out.

### 4. EQUIPMENT

- Each player must use a glove.
- All players will wear either running shoes or shoes with rubber cleats. Steel Cleats, spikes, and open toe shoes are not permitted.
- Catchers are required to wear a helmet, catchers mask, shin guards, chest protector. They must wear this gear during practice, warm-ups and games. YMCA will provide catcher's gear.
- 7-9 age division players will use an 11-inch ball.
- 10-12 age division players will use an 12-inch ball.

## **5. PLAYING FIELD**

- 7-9 age division: if using a pitching machine will be set at a distance approximately 40 feet from the back of the plate. Coaches from both teams will manage/operate the pitching machine.
- 10-12 age divisions: distance of 60-feet between each base and 45-feet between home plate and the pitcher's mound.
- The umpire will position themselves in the field behind the pitcher's mound.