

# **General Softball Rules**

The Ayden Softball League will play by High School Rules with the following exceptions:

Age Requirements: Age cut off is January 1<sup>st</sup>.

Age Groups: T-Ball League: ages 4-5  
Machine League: ages 6-8  
Coach Assistant: ages 9-11  
Senior League: age 12-16

A younger player may participate in an upper age division with a request from the parent and approval from the recreation staff. However, after one game in the upper age division, the player will be ruled ineligible to participate in his or her respective age group and must remain in that age group for the current season.

Rosters and Registration: All players will be entered into the draft every year. The draft will take place following the registration period. A second draft may occur to fill remaining roster spots. *Draft order will be determined by picking numbers out of a hat.*

Field rules and Sportsmanship: No alcoholic beverages are allowed on the recreation property. This is a state law. If necessary, proper legal action will be taken to enforce this rule. A coach, player, or spectator with alcohol on their break will be asked to leave the recreation area immediately. No tobacco products-smoking, chewing, dipping, ect. Are allowed in the field or practice area. No profanity. No negative cheering. Children not participating must be under supervision by a parent/adult at all times. No children may be unattended at any time in the facility. Teams must clean the dug out before exiting after a game or practice

Game Jerseys: players shall wear the game jerseys supplied by the Recreation Department. If a player does not have the issued jersey, a temporary substitute may be worn without numbers that does not conflict with the color of the opposing team's. The umpire, scorekeeper, and opposing team's coach must be notified.

Catchers: Catchers must wear a mask, hockey style helmet, check protector, and shin guards furnished by the Ayden Arts and Recreation Department.

Jewelry: Hair beads and jewelry will not be allowed.

Facemask: All players are encouraged to wear protective face mask while playing defense.

League Issued Equipment: Coaches must return all league issued/borrowed equipment at the end of the season.

# **General Softball Rules**

Minimum Number of Players: A team must have 6 players present at the start time for the game to count for the season. 5 or less player will result in a forfeit.

One or Less Outfielders: If the ball goes to the outfield and there is one or less outfielders, the batter can only advance as far as second base at their own risk. All other base runners will be allowed to advance up to two bases at their own risk.

Outfield: A team may play with up to 4 outfielders. Outfielders must play on the grass. If the ball goes under the outfield fence, the outfielder should raise her hands in the air immediately to notify the official.

Participation Rule: We will play free substitution on defense. Players can be switched and rotated on or off the field each inning. No player will be allowed to sit the bench two innings in a row. If they sit two innings in a row, that player will be allowed to play every inning of the next game.

Batting Line-up: A team will bat the entire line-up. 1-12

Tie Breaker: If the game expires and the score is tied, the international tie breaker will be used.

International Tie Breaker: Both the home and the visiting team will start each inning with the last batted out on second base. If the score is still tied after 2 innings of play, the home and visiting team will start each inning with the last 2 batted outs on second and third base.

Timeouts: Coaches are allowed 4 times outs per regulation game. 1 time out per inning will be issued in extra innings.

Coaches: 1 Head Coach and 2 Assistants will be allowed in the dugout.

Cleats: No metal cleats will be allowed.

Helmets: Batting helmets with face guards required for all batters.

Season Standings: The season standings will determine the seeds for the tournament. If two teams have the same season recorded, we will look at head to head play. If head to head play is equal, then we will flip a coin to determine the seeds.

## **6-8 yr Age Division- Pitching Machine League**

**Innings:** A regulation game will consist of 5 innings or 60-minute time limit, whichever comes first. A side inning will consist of 3 outs or 5 runs.

**We will not start a new inning after 50 mins.**

Pitching Machine: The pitching machine will be set up at a distance of 35 feet from home plate. The speed will be set between 34-40 mph. As the season progresses, we will gradually increase the speed.

Pitcher: A defensive player will be allowed to play in the pitching circle. The pitcher should play on the left side of the pitching circle/closest to first base to avoid the pitching wheel.

Each batter will get 5 pitches to hit the ball. After 5 unsuccessful attempts to hit the ball the batter will be out. A foul ball will not count as a last strike. If the ball is batted and hits the pitching machine, it will be ruled a single and all runners will advance one base.

Passed Balls at 1<sup>st</sup> Base: If there is a pass ball/overthrow at first base, the batter **can** advance one additional base. Runners advance at their own risk. Other Base Runners: All other base runners will be allowed the advance one extra base at their own risk. A pass ball/overthrow at first will be at the umpire's decision/opinion.

Stealing: There will be no stealing in this league. Runners can only advance to the next base when the ball is hit. Runners are allowed to take a lead off the base when the ball crosses the plate.

Returning the ball to the Pitcher: The ball/play will be ruled dead when the ball is thrown back to the pitcher circle. The pitcher does not have to successfully catch the ball **but** she must be INSIDE THE CIRCLE for the ball/play to be ruled dead. If the base runners are more than half way when the ball is ruled dead, the official will allow them to go to the next base. If the base runners are less than half way when the ball is ruled dead, the official will have the runners go back to the previous base. \*NOTE\* Always encourage your base runners to run to the next base. The official will tell them if they need to go back to the previous base.

Defensive Coach: One defensive coach will be allowed on the field while his/her team is on defense. The coach must stand and remain behind 2<sup>nd</sup> base and not interfere with the offense in any way. If the defensive coach interferes with the play, the batter will be ruled safe and all runners will advance to the next base.

Offensive Coaches: Offensive coaches MUST stay in the coaches' boxes located by first and third base.

Infield Fly: No Infield fly rule.

Dropped Third Strike Rule: Batters may not advance to first base on a dropped strike.

## **9-11yr Age Division- Coach Assist**

**Innings:** A regulation game will consist of 5 innings or 1:15 minute time limit, which ever come first. A side inning will consist of 3 outs or 5 runs.

**We will not start a new inning after 1:05 mins.**

**Pitching:** Pitchers will pitch from 35 feet with an 11 inch ball. If the pitcher hits the batter with the ball, the batter will be awarded first base. 3 strikes will be an out. 4 balls will prompt the offensive team's coach to come on the field and throw the rest of the strike count to the batter.

**Coach Assist:** The coach may stand 20-35 feet from home plate when pitching to the batters. The offensive coach on the field may not interfere with the defense during a play. If there is interference, the play will be ruled dead and the batter will be out.

Coaches will only be allowed to throw one "ball" per strike.

- 4 Balls / 0 Strikes = coach has 6 pitches to throw 3 strikes to the batter
- 4 Balls / 1 Strike = coach has 4 pitches to throw 2 strikes to the batter
- 4 Balls / 2 Strikes = coach has 2 pitches to throw 1 strike to the batter
  - NOTE: Any pitch that is in the strike zone will be called a strike regardless if the batter swings.

Bunting will not be allowed when the coach is pitching. Any attempt to bunt with the coach pitching will result in a strike.

**Passed Balls at 1<sup>st</sup> Base:** If there is a pass ball/overthrow at first base, the batter *can* advance one additional base. Runners advance at their own risk. **Other Base Runners:** All other base runners will be allowed the advance one extra base at their own risk. A pass ball/overthrow at first will be at the umpire's decision/opinion.

**Stealing:** Runners may leave the base when the ball crosses home plate. Stealing will not be allowed when the coach is on the field. Base runners may only steal **one base per pitch/play**. This includes the actual pitch from the pitcher to the catcher as well as the throw back from the catcher to the pitcher/or any baseman. Runners stealing home must slide or they will be called out. Stealing is defined by: Advancing to the next base when the ball has not been hit or bunted by the batter. Base runners may advance as many bases as possible on a batted ball.

**Infield Fly:** No Infield fly rule.

**Dropped Third Strike Rule:** Batters may not advance to first base on a dropped third strike. The ball is not dead and base runners may advance at their own risk.

## **12-16yr Age Division- Senior League**

**Innings:** A regulation game will consist of 5 innings or 1:30 minute time limit, which ever come first. A side inning will consist of 3 outs or 5 runs whichever comes first. We will not start a new inning after 1:20 minutes.

**Pitching:** Pitchers will pitch from 40 feet with a 12 inch ball.

**Pitching Changes:** Pitchers can be changed during a game at any time. If you pull a pitcher and sit her on the bench as a sub, she can re-enter the game to any position other than pitcher. If you pull a pitcher and keep her on the field, you can switch pitchers as often as needed. EX: every other inning, every other batter.

**Stealing:** Runners may leave the base when the ball leaves the pitchers hand.

- Revised on 3-24-17

# **Girls T-Ball Rules**

**Ages 4-5yrs**

**Innings:** A regulation game will consist of 5 innings or 40 minute time limit, which ever come first. A side inning will consist of a team batting their line up.

The bases will be 50 feet apart. Tee Balls will be provided by the Recreation Department.

## **Offense**

Batter must wear helmets. Facemask are optional

Teams will bat their entire roster before switching sides.

If a hit ball travels less than then (10) feet from the tee it is a foul ball.

The offensive team may have a maximum of 3 coaches on the playing field, one each in the coaches' boxes located near first and third base, and one at home plate.

If an out is made, the base runner will remain on the base.

## **Defense**

There will be free substitution on defense.

Defensive players must remain in position until the ball is hit.

No infield fly rule.

No stealing bases or no leading off. Base runners may not leave their base until the batter makes contact with the ball with her bat.

The defensive team may have a maximum of 2 coaches on the field, who must be positioned so as not to obstruct the offensive team or its coaches in any manner.

To stop play, the ball must be returned to the pitcher's circle. The pitcher does not have to catch the ball, but the ball must remain inside the circle.

Outfielders cannot make an out by tagging a runner or stepping on a base.

Coaches should encourage their defensive players to throw the ball to attempt to make an out, rather than allowing their players to engage in a foot race with a base runner to make an out.

**FUN IS OUR NUMBER ONE GOAL!!**