



# **AMERICAN RIVER GIRLS SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION**

## **RULES OF PLAY AND FACILITY**

**AMMENDED 02/2024**

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# **Rules of Facilities / Play**

## **Section 1: Rules of Play Overview**

The following rules have been established by American River Girls Softball Association (ARSGA). ARSGA reserves the right to amend, omit or modify the playing rules at any time in order to maintain fair playing time, maximize safety, and maintain a competitive balance and to preserve the integrity of the game.

These rules have been designed to help promote the development of playing skills at all levels of play.

The playing rules will be used as follows in Spring League Play:

1. ARSGA Playing Rules
2. NorCal Girls Softball playing Rules (Interleague, All-Stars & Fall Ball)
3. ASA Playing rules

The playing rules will be used as follows in Fall Ball League Play:

1. NorCal Girls Softball playing rules (ARSGA Play time requirements supersede NorCal Rules in all game situations)
2. ASA Playing rules
3. ARSGA Playing Rules

This league shall consist of the following divisions: 6u, 8u, 10u, 12u, 14u, and 16u. The 14u and 16u division may be combined depending on registration and coaching availability.

## **Section 2: Equipment and Uniform**

- A. All players available for play should wear alike apparel
  1. Players should be dressed in an official uniform as issued by ARSGA. This uniform includes:  
Jersey
  2. The pants (or shorts) and socks are to be decided by the manager.
- B. Helmets: All players must supply and wear a helmet with Face Mask. Helmets cannot be shared with other players.
  1. Chin Straps are optional, If worn they MUST be snapped onto the helmet
- C. Jewelry: Do not allow players to wear jewelry of any kind during games or practices except medical alert bracelets or necklaces. Medical alert bracelets or necklaces must be taped to the body so the medical alert information remains visible.
- D. Cleats: Plastic model cleats (softball or soccer acceptable). Metal cleats are allowed in 14u/16u divisions
- E. Practice attire should still be appropriate. Low cut tank tops or shirts with the sides cut out are not allowed. No sports bras are to be worn alone as a shirt.

UMPIRE WARNING – The umpire will give one warning per game to each manager at the same time regarding a player who enters the batter's box with the above not followed. After that, a batter entering the batter's box is an automatic out for the offender and the ball will be considered dead.

### **Section 3: Rules for 6u Division**

6u division – Purpose of this division is to promote skills and knowledge of the game in a fun environment.

1. Ages: 4 ½ through 6 years
2. Ball: 10" Safety Ball
3. Base Paths: 60 Feet
4. Team Size: 6-8 Players recommended
5. Practice: Up to 1 hour per day, up to 2 days per week.
6. Game Time: 1 hour or 3 complete innings
7. No Leadoff – Leave when in play
8. Bat the roster every turn at bat (suggested that the last batter get a home run/ clearing the bases) Keeping it fun!
  - A. Pitching will be done by a Coach/Manager pitching to their own team – must be Background Checked/Insured
  - B. Batter will be allowed 4 balls or 3 strikes. If a player fails to make a hit the tee will be used
  - C. A Coach/Manager will place the ball on the batting tee
  - D. Batter is allowed only 3 swings on the Tee before being declared out
  - E. Foul ball on a third strike is declared out
  - F. When in use the tee shall be placed in front of home plate and the pitcher shall be positioned on the pitching rubber. During the first half of the season, a player may hit off the tee instead of being pitched to at the managers discretion
  - G. If the ball and hose (from Tee) are hit at the same time the ball shall be considered fair if it traveled 10 feet
9. Players will advance only base to base
10. Stealing is not permitted
11. No play at the plate
12. No standings, no score
13. Recommended maximum of 2 coaches on the field with their players on defense and may provide verbal instruction during play
  - A. Managers and Coaches may call time out in order to provide additional instruction to their players at bat, or at the end of a play for the fielders
  - B. Interference with a ball in play by either the manager or coaches will allow an additional base to each runner and the ball will be declared dead
14. No All Stars available
15. Fall Ball may be available depending on registration numbers

## **Section 4: Rules for 8u Division**

8U Division - Purpose of this division is to maximize basic instruction for girls 7 and 8 by teaching the fundamentals of softball. The beginning of developing pitching and fielding skills will be emphasized.

1. Ages: 7-8 years
2. Ball: 10" Safety Ball
3. Base paths: 60 feet
4. Pitching: 30 feet
5. Practice: Up to 3 times a week, for up to two hours. Once games commence, only 3 events may be held per week (i.e. if 2 games are scheduled, you may have 1 practice, if 1 game is scheduled, you may have 2 practices, etc.)
6. Game time: 1 hour 30 minutes or 4 innings
7. 4 run rule per half inning. Half inning ends after the fourth runner crosses the plate and any subsequent runs scored shall not count.
8. Bat the Roster (continuous batting). Batting line up must be rotated to allow equal time at bat during the season. Line-Up card must be turned into umpire each game. Umpire will then turn the Line-Up card into the Division V.P or snack bar at the end of each game.
9. Team size: up to 15 players.
10. 10 players take the field, minimum of 8 for an official game.
11. Outfielders may not lineup as infielders – 6 infielders, 4 outfielders for a 10 player team.
12. Outfield is defined as 10' from natural baseline – fields are to be chalked at the 10' line.
13. Outfielders must be 10' from natural baselines at time of swing.
14. All players must play at least 1 infield position within a 2 game set. Exceptions to playing certain positions can be made for safety reasons with the mutual consent of the Division Vice President, the Player Agent and the President. The player's parent and/or guardian will be notified of the determination by the Division V.P. Reach out to the Division Vice President with any safety concerns.
15. No player shall sit out more than two consecutive innings. This will apply to all except for disciplinary reasons.
16. 5 warm up pitches between innings or 1 minute; time starts at the time the third out is recorded or 4 run limit is reached.
17. Game termination due to climate or lack of daylight can only be determined by the Umpire. An official game will be after 3 completed innings, or if the home team is ahead after 2 ½ innings. If not reached, the game will be rescheduled.
18. No drop third strike.
19. No infield fly rule.

20. Baserunning - Runners can only advance one base on a batted ball being fielded in the infield that has not crossed the 10' outfield line. Runners and batter/runner may advance extra bases while a hit ball remains in the outfield and must stop at the next base once the ball is in control in the infield. Control will be a ball caught in the glove or hand or an attempt catch and within reach. Runners and batter/runner may be put out if they advance beyond the base they are entitled.
- A. Leadoff of 15 feet maximum – allowed on release of pitch – NO STEALING.
  - B. Runners must be back on base at time of pitch or an out is recorded.
21. A pitcher may not pitch more than 2 innings per game, 1 pitch to a batter constitutes an inning pitched.
- A. Illegal pitch will not be called. However, the pitcher must make every attempt to pitch legally. If in the umpire's opinion the pitcher is gaining a gross advantage from an illegal pitch, then coach must correct or remove the pitcher
22. A "No Walk" rule will be in effect. A pitcher will be given an opportunity for a natural strike out. In event that the pitcher does not reach a strike out and delivers 4 (four) balls the manager or coach (coach-pitcher) of the opposing team will be able to pitch the remaining number of strikes to their batter.
- A. The coach-pitcher must pitch with one foot on the pitching rubber.
  - B. Every pitch by the coach-pitcher will be considered a strike with the exception of a third strike foul ball.
  - C. The player-pitcher is to remain within the pitching circle positioned directly aside or behind the coach-pitcher while they deliver the pitch.
  - D. At no time shall the coach-pitcher obstruct play.
  - E. No bunting or slap hitting off coach-pitcher.
23. If hit by pitch by player-pitcher – batter must walk to first base (NO exception).
24. If hit by pitch by coach-pitcher – batter will receive another pitch (does not count).
25. All stars and Fall Ball are available.

## **Section 5: Rules for 10U Division**

10U Division - Purpose of this division is to maximize basic instruction for girls 9 and 10 by continuing to teach fundamentals of softball while preparing for more competitive play.

1. Ages: 9-10 years
2. Ball: 11"
3. Base paths: 60 feet
4. Pitching: 35 feet
5. Practice: Up to 3 times a week, for up to two hours. Once games commence, only 3 events may be held per week (i.e. if 2 games are scheduled, you may have 1 practice, if 1 game is scheduled, you may have 2 practices, etc.)
6. Game Time: 1 hour 30 minutes or 6 innings. No new inning may start after 1 hour and 45 minutes have elapsed from the beginning of the game. Once an inning begins, it is to be completed. Extra innings will be played to break the tie as long as that extra inning is begun prior to 1 hour and 45 minutes having elapsed from the beginning of the game.
7. 5 run rule per half inning. Half inning ends after the 5th runner crosses the plate and any subsequent runs scored shall not count.
8. 5 warm up pitches between innings or 1 minute; time starts at the time the third out is recorded or 5 run limit is reached.
9. Game termination due to climate or lack of daylight can only be determined by the umpire. A game will be official after 3 completed innings, or if the home team is ahead after 2 ½ innings. If not reached, the game will be rescheduled.
10. Bat the roster (Continuous batting).
11. Team size: up to 15 players
  1. 10 players take the field, minimum of 8 players for an official game.
12. All players must play at least 1 infield position within a 2 game set. Exceptions to playing certain positions can be made for safety reasons with the mutual consent of the Division Vice President, the Player Agent and the President. The player's parent and/or guardian will be notified of the determination by the Division V.P. Reach out to the Division Vice President with any safety concerns.
13. No player shall sit out more than two consecutive innings. This will apply to all except for disciplinary reasons.
14. Drop third strike in effect.
15. Base runners may steal 1 base at a time from the release of the pitch, they are at risk.
16. Infield fly rule in effect.
17. Pitching restrictions – must show 2 pitchers per game, each pitcher must pitch one full inning, defined by 3 outs or 5 runs. No pitcher shall start two consecutive games. See **Section 8: Pitching** for more details.
18. Courtesy runner or last out made may be used for the Pitcher and Catcher.
19. All stars and Fall Ball are available

## **Section 6: Rules for 12U Division**

1. Ages: 11-12 years
2. Ball: 12"
3. Base Paths: 60 feet
4. Pitching: 40 feet
5. Practice: Up to 3 times a week, for up to two hours. Once games commence, only 3 events may be held per week (i.e. if 2 games are scheduled, you may have 1 practice, if 1 game is scheduled, you may have 2 practices, etc.)
6. Game time: 1 hour 30 minutes or 7 innings. No new inning may start after 1 hour and 45 minutes have elapsed from the beginning of the game. Once an inning begins, it is to be completed. Extra innings will be played to break the tie as long as that extra inning is begun prior to 1 hour and 45 minutes having elapsed from the beginning of the game.
7. 5 run rule per half inning. Half inning ends after the 5th runner crosses the plate and any subsequent runs scored shall not count.
8. 5 warm up pitches between innings or 1 minute; time starts at the time the third out is recorded or the 5 run limit is reached.
9. Game termination due to climate or lack of daylight can only be determined by the umpire. A game will be official after 4 completed innings, or if the home team is ahead after 3 ½ innings.
10. Bat the roster (Continuous batting)
11. Team size: up to 15 players
  - A. 9 players take the field, minimum of 8 players for an official game.
12. All players must play at least 1 infield position within a 2 game set. Exceptions to playing certain positions can be made for safety reasons with the mutual consent of the Division Vice President, the Player Agent and the President. The player's parent and/or guardian will be notified of the determination by the Division V.P. Reach out to the Division Vice President with any safety concerns.
13. No player shall sit out more than two consecutive innings. This will apply to all except for disciplinary reasons.
14. Pitching restrictions – must show 2 pitchers per game, each pitcher must pitch one full inning, defined by 3 outs or 5 runs. No pitcher shall start two consecutive games. See **Section 8: Pitching** for more details.
15. Courtesy runner or last out made may be used for the Pitcher and Catcher.
16. All-Stars and Fall Ball is available.

## **Section 7: Rules for 14 & 16U Divisions**

1. Ages 14u: 13-14 years / Ages 16u: 15-16 years
2. Ball: 12"
3. Base Paths: 60 feet
4. Pitching: 43 feet
5. Metal cleats are allowed
6. Practice: Up to 3 times a week, for up to two hours. Once games commence, only 3 events may be held per week (i.e. if 2 games are scheduled, you may have 1 practice, if 1 game is scheduled, you may have 2 practices, etc.)
7. Game time: 1 hour 30 minutes or 7 innings. No new inning may start after 1 hour and 45 minutes have elapsed from the beginning of the game. Once an inning begins, it is to be completed. Extra innings will be played to break the tie as long as that extra inning is begun prior to 1 hour and 45 minutes having elapsed from the beginning of the game.
8. 5 warm up pitches between innings or 1 minute; time starts at the time of the last out.
9. 5 run rule per half inning. Half inning ends after the 5th runner crosses the plate and any subsequent runs scored shall not count.
10. Game termination due to climate or lack of daylight can only be determined by the umpire. A game will be official after 4 completed innings, or if the home team is ahead after 3 ½ innings.
11. Bat the roster (Continuous batting)
12. Team size: up to 15 players
  - A. 9 players take the field, minimum of 8 players for an official game.
13. All players must play at least 1 infield position within a 2 game set. Exceptions to playing certain positions can be made for safety reasons with the mutual consent of the Division Vice President, the Player Agent and the President. The player's parent and/or guardian will be notified of the determination by the Division V.P. Reach out to the Division Vice President with any safety concerns.
17. No player shall sit out more than two consecutive innings. This will apply to all except for disciplinary reasons.
18. Pitching restrictions – must show 2 pitchers per game, each pitcher must pitch one full inning, defined by 3 outs or 5 runs. No pitcher shall start two consecutive games. See **Section 8: Pitching** for more details.
19. Courtesy runner or last out made may be used for the Pitcher and Catcher.
20. All-Stars and Fall Ball is available.

## **Section 8: Pitching**

1. Must show at least 2 pitchers per game.
2. Each pitcher must pitch one full inning, defined by 3 outs or 5 runs.
3. No pitcher shall start two consecutive games.
4. Every two games in the schedule is considered a set, with the even numbered ending the set
5. 6U – Coach pitch only
6. 8U – A pitcher may not pitch more than 2 innings per game.
7. ARGSA Pitching Rules supersede NorCal and ASA rules during all forms of game play, with the exception of inter-league play.

These pitching rules are written to encourage coaches to develop pitching within the league. FAILURE to follow these guidelines will result in forfeit of the game played and the starting pitcher cannot pitch the entire next game.

## **Section 9: Batting**

1. Every player available for play shall be placed on the official batting order. Continuous batting and open substitution with the exception of the pitching position shall be utilized.
2. If a player arrives late for a game, after the official batting order has been turned into the official scorekeeper, the player shall be placed at the end of the batting order.
3. If a player must leave a game early, due to injury or for another reason. She will be removed from the batting order and the succeeding batters moved up. No out will be recorded for the missing batter.

## **Section 10: Coaches / Managers / Volunteers**

1. Managing/Coaching Personnel must be Background Checked and have their completed SafeSport
2. Manager/Coaches of teams may be Male or Female of at least 18 years of age.
3. At least one female must be on staff, Background Checked and Insured. (Recommend having a few)
4. Female must be present and on the field during all team practices and games.
5. All team volunteers on the field of play or dugout must be background checked and SafeSport completed.
6. Manager/Coaches must release players to a parent or guardian at the end of practice. Players must not leave the practice area without a Manager/Coach.

## **Section 11: Scoring**

1. 6u Division: No Score kept
2. 8u, 10u, 12u, 14u, 16u: Score kept
  - A. Record of Innings Played
3. Official record of books will be kept of all games.
4. Home team will be the official scorekeeper. If home team is unavailable to keep score for a game, someone from the visiting team shall keep official score.

## **Section 12: Home/Visiting Team Responsibilities**

1. Home Team
  - A. Team listed first on the schedule and is responsible for pre-game / post game set up, to include by not limited to:
  - B. If not issued obtain 1 new ball for game, 2 new balls issued at first game. These balls should be kept by Home team to be used as practice pitching balls and for games as a “good” backup ball.
  - C. Water Field (at all times prior to dragging)
  - D. Drag Field (Only Board Members and Coaches can drive the quad)
  - E. Rake
  - F. Chalk field (1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> base Lines, Pitcher’s Circle, Coaches Boxes, Batter’s Box)
  - G. Insert Bases/Remove Bases
  - H. Check for Safety and Foreign items on the field
2. Visiting team
  - A. Team listed second on the schedule and is responsible for pre–game post game setup and cleans up, to include by not limited to:
  - B. Snack Bar duties – See **Section 13: Snack Bar**
  - C. Check and Clean All Dugouts of trash and other items
  - D. Remove trash and take to dumpster for disposal
  - E. Remove recycle items and take to designated area for disposal
3. All Teams -Make sure all Containers are closed and secure after game completion.
4. In the event that a team is unable to comply with **Section 12 and Section 13** at the designated time, the scheduled team will be charged with a forfeit.
5. ALL Interleague games are the ARGSA’s team’s responsibility. You must handle both the home and visiting team duties.

## **Section 13: Snack Bar**

1. Each team will be responsible for operating the league's snack bar during their visiting team games.
2. Each shift will consist of 2 hours of operation concurrent with the team's scheduled game time.
  - a. Each Volunteer must be 18 years or older, unless pre-approved by the Snack Bar Coordinator.

## **Section 14: Umpire Warnings/Protests**

1. Throwing the bat or other equipment is dangerous and therefore prohibited.
  - A. On the first occurrence the player will be warned. The player will be called out on the second occurrence. On the third occurrence, the player is called out and removed from the batting order. The batting order moves up and that batter will also be barred from the balance of the game. Players barred will be allowed to take their time at defense. The manager will be responsible for providing corrective instructions to the player prior to the team's next game. If the problem persists the manager must notify the Board of Directors for additional action in order to maintain the safest possible atmosphere.
2. All game grievances/protests should be submitted via email or in writing. A copy shall be kept for league records. Otherwise, they will be given no recognition.
  - A. Grievances and protests will be submitted to the Divisional Vice President with a copy to the League President within 48 hours after the completion of the game in question. In the event that the Divisional Vice President is directly involved in the grievance or protest, they will be passed and the information submitted directly to the League President.
3. A committee shall be appointed by the Board of Directors as necessary and shall consist of a Chairperson and at least two (2) Board Members, not associated with the grievance.
4. Protests shall be in accordance with the NorCal Girls Softball Rules
5. The validity of the protest and/or grievance shall be studied and acted upon by appointed Grievance and Protest committee.
6. Grievances and protests shall be acted on, in the presence of the manager concerned, within seven days after receipt by the league.

## **Section 15: Injuries**

1. In event that an injury occurs to a player said player can be taken out of the game with NO recourse and may re-enter if able, pending any blood has been covered or removed. Just skip in lineup and resume game.
2. In event that a runner is injured, substitute with last out.
3. Complete injury report form in coaches' binder, if necessary or if requested.
4. Divisional Vice President is to be notified of injuries to players, coaching staff/volunteers and parents/spectators

## **Section 16: Other**

1. Only positive coaching and cheering is allowed, failure to do so will be subject to Board action. Teach players to cheer for each other, not against the other team.
2. Any player warming up a pitcher **MUST** wear a catcher's mask or batters helmet.
3. **Team abolishment:** If for some reason a Manager/Coach quits or becomes unavailable the following will apply:
  - A. Other staff will be asked to assume the role left
  - B. A board member will take that place
  - C. If unable to create said team, everyone will be notified and funds will be refunded
4. Minimum players: A team must have at least 8 players, except 6U with 5 players, present to play an official game. The determination of the positions to be left vacant is the decision of the teams Manager/Coach. If not enough players the game will be forfeited by the team that is short.

## **Section 17: Rules of ARGSA Facilities**

1. No Parking on Bunting Court behind Oakview
2. The Facilities we are permitted to use are School Properties, their rules apply to all ARGSA Board Members, Parents, Players and Spectators.
  - A. NO Tobacco products of any kind, smoking/vaping/chewing tobacco
  - B. NO Dogs
  - C. NO Alcohol
3. All Managers, Coaches or any assisting parents/volunteers must be background checked and SafeSport completed in order to assist with practices and games. This includes warming up pitchers.
4. No pitching, hitting, or throwing against backstops and fences.

## ARGSA Summary of Rules

Complete set of rules available at [ARGSA.org](http://ARGSA.org)

Rule Name	6U	8U	10U	12U	14U & 16U
<b>Division Ages</b>	4 1/2 - 6	7 - 8	9 - 10	11 - 12	13-14 & 15-16
<b>Ball Size</b>	10" RIF 1 Safety	10" RIF 1 Safety	11"	12"	12"
<b>Base Path Distance</b>	60'	60'	60'	60'	60'
<b>Pitching Distance</b>	N/A	30'	35'	40'	43'
<b>Number of defensive players</b>	10	10	10	9	9
<b>Number of players for an official game</b>	5	8	8	8	8
<b>Time Limit</b>	60 Minutes	90 Minutes	90 Minutes	90 Minutes	90 Minutes
<b>Number of innings</b>	3	6	6	7	7
<b>Number if innings for an official game</b>	N/A	3	3	3	4
<b>Mercy Rule</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Playing time requirements/Minimum play time rules</b>	No player sits more than 2 consecutive innings. All Players must at least play 1 infield position within a 2 game set (Exceptions to playing certain positions can be made for safety reasons with the mutual consent of the Team Manager, the Division Vice President, the Player Agent and the President).				
<b>Pitching Limit</b>	N/A	MAX of 2 innings per game	7 innings total per 2 game set. At least 2 pitchers must pitch 1 inning (3 outs/5 runs) per game. No pitcher can start 2 games in a row		
<b>Coach Pitch</b>	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
<b>Continuous Bat</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Walks allowed</b>	N/A	No	Yes, one base only. No Stealing	Yes	Yes
<b>Max runs per 1/2 inning</b>	0	4	5	5	5
<b>Leadoffs</b>	No - Can leave for one base after ball is hit	Yes - up to 15' on the release of the pitch	Yes - On the release of the pitch		
<b>Steals</b>	No	No	Yes- One base per pitch	Yes -On the release of the pitch	
<b>Infield Fly</b>	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Drop third strike</b>	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Courtesy Runner</b>	No	No	Yes, for Pitcher and Catcher only		
<b>Jewelry</b>	NO - Medical alerts must be taped to wrist, any unremovable jewelry must be covered with band aids				
<b>Cleats</b>	Plastic	Plastic	Plastic	Plastic	Plastic or Metal
<b>Team Duties</b>	<p><b>Home:</b> Responsible for all game preparation/equipment. Watering, dragging, chalking. bases, picking up 1 game ball from dugout. Putting away all equipment after game. Make sure your dugout is clean.</p> <p><b>Visitor:</b> Responsible for having a parent volunteer in the snack bar. Emptying garbage into dumpster after games. Make sure your dugout is clean.</p> <p><b>Hosting:</b> Responsible for all of the above</p>				



