

# 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Grade Softball Rules 2024

All games played at Golden Spike Park West Field- 1260 West 5050 South Riverdale

Game cancellations will be posted to [riverdalecity.com/youth-sports](http://riverdalecity.com/youth-sports)

Questions/Concerns: email Baylee at [bcascaddan@riverdalecity.com](mailto:bcascaddan@riverdalecity.com) 801-621-6084

Rules Governing play will be the National Federation of State High School Associations rules with the following additions, exceptions, changes:

## Equipment/Field:

A regulation 12" softball will be used in this league.

Players must wear a uniform and running shoes or rubber cleats. No metal cleats.

Players must wear a helmet, mask, or safety equipment when required. Specified later.

Base path distance is 60ft. Pitching distance is 35 ft. Home team takes 3<sup>rd</sup> base dugout.

All equipment must be kept in the dugout. The on-deck batter should be the only player out of the dugout. Only one player may be on-deck at a time.

## Game Play:

Games will be 5 innings or 45 minutes. No new inning after 45 mins. Games will end when the inning in progress is over, even if the game is tied. If the Home team is ahead at the end of the time period and current inning, Guest team will finish their at bat and the game will be over if Home is still ahead (the bottom of the inning will not be played.)

**Home team must take the field within the first 2 minutes of game time.** If they have not taken the field by that time, the Guest team will get an automatic runner placed on 2<sup>nd</sup> base.

**Guest team must have their first batter on deck within the first 2 minutes of game time.** If the first batter is not on deck at that time, there will be ONE automatic out added to the count at the beginning of the inning.

Three outs or one time through the line-up will end each half inning. However, the coaches and umpires will meet before the game and each team will be allowed to bat the number of batters equal to the team with the most players. Free substitution allowed on defense. All players must play at least two innings in the field. Please substitute players equally.

A mercy ruling of 10 runs after the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning will be observed. If at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning, one team is ahead by 10 runs or more, the umpire will call the game.

All players present and playing defense must be in the batting lineup and will take their turn at bat. If a batter is on the lineup and misses their time at bat, an out will be given each inning that they miss their at bat.

Play can begin with 7 players. When another player arrives, that player can be inserted into the end of the line-up. Games will be ruled a forfeit if the number of players fall below 7 on a team. If fewer than 7 players are present at game time, a 5-minute grace period (deducted from game time) will be given before a forfeit is declared. If a player in the line-up must leave the game early for reasons other than injury, the coach must notify the umpire and scorekeeper. Make-up games will be played for rainouts/weather-related issues only.

## Rules:

**Batters:** Batters must wear a helmet. **Throwing the bat is an automatic out.** Umpire may or may not issue warning before declaring batter out, umpire judgement. Bunting is allowed. **The dropped the third strike rule will be in effect.** If the batter does not immediately start running, they will be called out (Umpire's judgement.) The batter/runners may advance on a dropped third strike as long as first base isn't occupied at the time of the pitch. With two outs batter/runner may advance even if the base is occupied.

**Runners:** Runners must wear a helmet. **Stealing is allowed, including home.** Runner cannot leave the base until the ball leaves the pitchers hand. Runners are out if they do not legally slide and cause illegal contact (runners are not required to slide, but they must avoid dangerous contact.)

**Defensive Players:** 9 defensive players will be allowed to take the field with 6 standard infield positions (including catcher) and 3 outfield positions. Please rotate positions played. If teams are short a player, they may distribute their players for the best field coverage. **Catchers MUST wear a face mask, chest protector, and knee/shin-guard protection. All players in the field must have a softball glove/mitt.**

**Pitchers** get a maximum of 3 practice pitches. **Pitchers must start with both feet on the mound, only ONE STEP forward.** If a pitcher wishes to take a step back, they must do so with the non-pivot foot. Your pitcher should only be pitching if they have practiced pitching at practice. Game time is not the time for a first try at pitching. A balk(ball) will be called if the pitcher makes an illegal motion or a motion to deceive the batter.

**Umpires:** Any umpire's decision which involves judgment is final. If there is only one umpire, he/she shall have complete jurisdiction in administering the rules. If a player or coach is ejected from the game, they will have an automatic one game suspension. The player or coach will not be allowed to be at the ballpark during this suspension. Failure to comply will result in his/her team forfeiting.

**COACHES-** 2 base coaches are allowed on the field, no defensive coaches. **Have your lineup ready and turned in before game time.** When your team is at bat, have one "batter on deck" and one "in the hole" that are completely ready for their turn. Teach your team to fetch bats if they are "in the hole." Teach your girls to immediately run on third strikes! **TEACH YOUR PLAYERS TO STEP OUT OF THE BATTERS BOX EVERY PITCH IF THERE IS A RUNNER ON THIRD!**