

7TH / 9TH GRADE SOFTBALL RULES 2023 PARTNER WITH OTHER CITIES

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

Bases: 60 feet

Pitching mound distance: 43 feet

1. The game length will be 6 innings or 70 minutes. No new inning will begin after 60 minutes. Games will end when the inning in progress is over, even if the game is tied.
2. We will use a 12" softball.
3. The home team (listed first on schedule) will take the 3rd base dugout.
4. **SCOREKEEPER:** Coaches will keep score. The home team is responsible for the official score. However, both teams must provide a scorekeeper and match scoresheets after each inning. If discrepancies are found, they must be reconciled prior to the start of the next inning otherwise the home team's scoresheet will be official.
5. Nine (9) defensive players will be allowed to take the field with 6 standard infield positions (including catcher) and 3 outfield positions. 4 outfield positions may be used if both coaches agree. All present players will be in the batting lineup and will take their turns at bat.
6. **Play can begin with 7 players.** When another player arrives, that player can be inserted into the line-up and in an open position. Games will be ruled a forfeit if the number of players fall below 7 on a team. If a player in the lineup must leave the game early for reasons other than injury, the coach must notify the opposing coach and the umpire. **If there are less than 7 players at game time, a 5-minute grace period will be given before a forfeit is declared.**
7. The infield fly rule **WILL** be in effect.
8. The **dropped third strike rule** will be in effect. 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.
9. 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 2 innings in the field.**
10. Teams will bat until 6 runs have scored or 3 outs per inning. Once a runner has stopped advancing after the 6th run of that inning, the inning will be over.
11. **METAL CLEATS ARE NOT ALLOWED IN THIS LEAGUE.**
12. A mercy ruling of 10 runs after the 3rd inning will be observed. If at the end of the 3rd inning, one team is ahead by 10 runs or more, the umpire will call the game.
13. Stealing is allowed, including home. A runner can leave the base when the ball leaves the pitcher's hand. No lead offs.
14. A thrown bat is an automatic out – ***player safety issue (Umpire may issue warning before declaring batter out – umpire judgement)***
15. Runners are out if they do not legally slide and cause illegal contact – runners are never required to slide, but they must avoid dangerous contact.
16. All equipment must be kept in the dugout – the on-deck batter should be the only player out of the dugout. Equipment or players out of the dugout are in play and could interfere with play and penalize your team.
17. 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.
18. The coach must not leave the practice or game until all players have been picked up by their parent(s) or designated other as specified by player's parent.
19. **CHATTER** must not be directed at the opposing players. **EXAMPLE: HEY BATTER, BATTER SWING!!** All players and spectators must abide by this rule.
20. No unregistered players can be brought in to play. **ONLY PLAYERS WHO ARE REGISTERED MAY PLAY IN GAMES AND PRACTICES. ANY UNREGISTERED PLAYERS OR PLAYERS PLAYING**

ON MULTIPLE TEAMS/ NOT THEIR ASSIGNED TEAM DURING A GAME WILL LEAD TO THE TEAM HAVING TO FORFEIT ANY GAME(S) THEY HAVE PLAYED IN.

21. **SPORTSMANSHIP:** Coaches are expected to act as role models and will be held accountable for their behavior and the behavior of all players and parents.
22. **MISCONDUCT:** Misconduct is basically defined as “Improper behavior” including but not limited to berating players, coaches, officials, fans. The use of tobacco, being intoxicated and using vulgar language. The following penalties will be enforced for any form of misconduct while participating in or attending any Ogden City Recreation youth event or program of any kind. Ogden Recreation expects only good sportsmanship by all coaches, players, parents, officials and staff.
 - a. First time offence- The individual will receive a warning by the umpire, referee, supervisor or director. If the misconduct persists, the individual will be ordered to leave the premises. If the individual refuses to leave the premises the game may result in a forfeit and suspension from more games. With all cases the official or site will have the option to stop the game and call the authorities to remove the offending person.
 - b. Second time offence- The offending person will be suspended for at least 1 game depending on the severity of the situation and or could result in suspension for the rest of the season and will need to meet with the Recreation Manager before they will be allowed back.
23. If there is any physical contact with a coach, player, parent, official and or any Staff member the individual will be removed immediately, withdrawn from the program and could result in not participating in any activities sponsored by Ogden City. These decisions will be based on the discretion of the Recreation Manager.
24. **Make-up games will be played for rainouts or other weather-related issues only!**

We would like all our youth sports league games and practices to have a Drug-Free Environment. Managers, coaches, and parents are not allowed to use tobacco of any kind during games or practices. Violators will be asked to leave the park immediately.

Coaching Tips: What players should learn by this time in their years of playing softball.
(These are just some pointers to better help coaches teach kids during games. Keep in mind, some kids may be more advanced than others at different skills).

- Execute the basic rules of softball (i.e., out vs. safe, runs, fair vs. foul ball, etc.)
- Know what a force out is: A force out (aka force play) is made when a baserunner is forced to leave his base when the batter becomes a baserunner himself, and a fielder successfully tags the next base before the runner can reach it).
- Identify which positions they want to play and can perform with ease.
- As a catcher, execute all the responsibilities of the position, including making strong and accurate throws to appropriate bases to deter base stealing.
- As a pitcher, execute more techniques and strategies, as well as the simple basics of a proper pitching motion.
- Consistently anticipate and execute the proper play on defense.
- Execute advanced offensive strategies and tactics including sacrifice bunts; and other hitting strategies per ball/strike count and runners on base.
- Recognize balls versus strikes while at bat and swing at strikes.
- Be comfortable approaching each at-bat, whether coach- or player-pitched (pitcher should focus and throwing fastball over the plate nothing special).
- Successfully perform a steal.
- Confidentially slide; know how to slide or avoid contact when baserunning.
- Understand coaching strategies and offensive/defensive signals.