

New Providence Recreation Department
Softball Rules and Specifications 3rd and 4th Grade
(3-13-08)

1. **GOALS:**

*to teach fundamental and rules;*to develop sportsmanship;
*to promote interest in the game;*to exercise; *to have fun

2. **FIELD SET-UP:**

Pitching Distance: 35 feet from the pitching plate to home plate (measured from the back corner of home plate nearest the catcher to the front and middle of the pitcher's plate)

Bases: 60 feet apart

Distance Home Plate to Second base: about 85 feet (should be aligned with 1st and 3rd and home)

Bases: May remain loose

Double First Base: Orange to outside of foul line, white to inside

Home team: last team on schedule; bats last; and sits on first base side

Away team: first team on schedule; bats first; and sits on third base side

Equipment Box: It is the coaches' responsibility to assure that equipment is returned to the box and the box is locked securely. (Please do not make combination public.)

3. **# OF PLAYERS:** A minimum of 8 players are permitted to start an official game .Up to 10 players will play defense in the field including 4 outfielders. If a team has less than 8 players it will forfeit the game but should use, for defensive purposes, a "guest" player(s) from the other team to allow a game to be played for "fun". The guest player(s) shall be the players(s) from the other team who made the last out(s) of the inning before.

4. **OFFICIAL GAME:** Games start at 6PM. A 15-minute leeway is allowed in starting time. FIVE innings is the scheduled game. The losing team must bat THREE times to constitute an official game. No inning may start after 8:00 PM.

5. **EQUIPMENT:**

a. **Helmets with face shields and chin straps:** : All players must wear protective batting helmets with face shields and chin straps when at bat and when running the bases. The helmets must meet National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE) standards. Helmets meeting the standard will have the NOSCAE label on them. Do not use any helmet if the shell is cracked or deformed; or if the interior padding is deteriorated. Do not use any helmet if its face shield is cracked or deformed, or if the material or coating is deteriorated.

b. **Footwear:** Sneakers or composition cleats are permitted.

c. **Softballs:** 11 inch regulation softball

d. **Bats:** ASA regulation softball bats

e. **Fielding gloves:** must be worn by all players on defense.

f. **Jewelry:** is not allowed.

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6. PITCHING RULES:

- a. One pitch thrown to a batter is considered one inning pitched by a pitcher.
- b. A pitcher shall not pitch more than THREE innings in one game.
- c. The # of walks in a single inning is limited to 3. After the third walk, only strikes will be called on the batter. After the third walk, if a pitcher pitches enough balls to walk two more batters whether consecutive balls or not, the pitcher will be changed. The original strike count remains the same. After the team has used two pitchers, the pitching team's coach will designate a parent or coach to complete the inning as pitcher. Regular players resume pitching the next inning.
- d. Substitution: A pitcher removed from the circle in any game is eligible to continue playing in any other position or return to the bench. She can return to the circle in a subsequent inning subject to the three-inning limit.
- e. Pitchers are limited to five warm-up pitches at the start of the game and between innings.

7. DEFENSE:

- a. No player on defense (exception –pitcher and catcher) may be in fielding position in front of either first or third base until the batter hits the ball.
- b. Starting position for all outfielders must be on the outfield grass

8. BATTING RULES:

- a. No bunting.
- b. All players present at the start of a game must be listed in the official batting lineup and bat when her turn comes throughout the game even if that player is not in the defensive lineup at the time.
- c. Any player coming after the start of the game must be added to the end of the batting order and bat in that position for the remainder of the game.
- d. No more than 10 players may come to bat in each of the first FOUR innings. The tenth batter cannot reach base by being walked or hit by a pitch. She must cause an out or reach base on a hit or an error.
- e. On deck batter must only prepare in the on deck area (caged in area by the dugout) with a batting helmet on (no swinging of bat anywhere else).
- f. No throwing of the bat permitted. Bat will be placed down or carried to first base after the batter hits the ball. Warning at first offense; called out at second offense and will not bat for the remainder of the game.
- g. Hitting the ball is much preferred over "taking the walk".

9. BASE RUNNING:

- a. The batter running to first base must step on the orange part of the double first base while the fielder touches the white part of the base.
- b. No stealing of bases is permitted at any time.

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- c. Base runners must remain on base until the batter hits the ball. A base runner shall be called out for leaving base before the ball is hit, play stops, runners do not advance, and the batter remains at the plate.
- d. The infield fly rule does not apply in this league.
- e. An overthrow that goes into foul territory results in a one base advance for all runners.
- f. An overthrow that stays in fair territory results in runners advancing as much as they can at their own discretion.
- g. A return of the ball from catcher to pitcher, following a pitch, is not considered an overthrow.
- h. Sliding is allowed. No head first sliding allowed. Runners encouraged to slide into home plate when there is a play at the plate.
- i. After a batted ball, play stops when the pitcher receives the ball in the pitching circle from another player on her team.
- j. By the umpire's judgment, runners are awarded the next base if they are more than $\frac{1}{2}$ of the way to the base when the play stops.

10. **SUBSTITUTION:** Free substitution (not during an inning except to replace an injured player) for positions other than pitcher. (See previous pitching rules).

11. **UMPIRES:**

- a. The assigned umpire must work at home plate. Should a 2nd umpire be present, that umpire will work the bases.
- b. No umpire is allowed to call balls & strikes from behind the pitcher.
- c. Please notify the Recreation Department (464-4430) in the event you do not have an umpire for any scheduled game or if the umpire is late in arriving for the game.
- d. The UMPIRE is the only person permitted to call off a game. In the event the assigned umpire does not show up, a gentlemen's agreement between each team's coaches must be reached to use volunteer umpires to make it an official game.
- e. UMPIRE DECISIONS: Coaches are required to use discretion involving any umpire's decision. All efforts must be made to confine any discussion to the managers, coaches and umpires only. Players and spectators must not be allowed to be part of any discussion involving the umpire's decision.

12. **SCORES:** Scores (as well as any other areas of concern such as field conditions or equipment) must be called into the Recreation Department (464-4430) or e-mailed to nprec@newprov.org within 24 hours by both teams.

13. **COACHES:** The team at bat may coach in the coach's box at first and third base. Coaches for the team that is fielding should remain with the team behind the fence (in the dug-out).

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14. PLAYING TIME:

- a. Coaches must make every effort to equalize playing time over the course of the season.
- b. It is recommended that players be given the opportunity to play various positions (subject to coaches' judgment).
- c. All players must play at least every other inning on defense.

15. GAME PREPARATION: Proper warm-up technique should be stressed for all players, particularly pitchers. Proper clothing to meet weather conditions is recommended.

16. GAME CANCELLATION: In the event the team's coaches deem it necessary to request the postponement or cancellation of any game, the Recreation department must be notified by that coaching staff at least SEVEN days in advance of the scheduled date. This will allow the Rec. Dept to let the other team know that an official game will not be played. The team requesting the cancellation will receive a forfeit loss and the other team will receive a forfeit win.

17. GAME POSTPONEMENT: Any game called due to bad weather, darkness, or poor field conditions will not be made up.

18. RECOMMENDATIONS: Managers and coaches are urged to instruct all players on the proper fundamentals of the game. This includes but isn't limited to the following:

- a. Batting (Proper stance & technique)
- b. Pitching (Proper motion & delivery)
- c. Running the bases
- d. Fielding (infield/outfield)
- e. Fielding Positions
- f. Throwing and catching techniques
- g. Basic Rules
- h. Sportsmanship/Teamwork

19. CHANGES: The above rules are subject to change at any time by the Recreation Department once all teams 'coaches are notified.

20. BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS: Behavioral Expectations for parents, coaches, and players were approved by the Community Activities Advisory Board in 2008. Behavioral Expectations are shared with the intent of providing conduct guidelines. All recreation participants – parents, coaches, and players – are asked to review and follow these guidelines.

* Behavior Expectations are found @: www.leaguelineup.com/newprovbaseball.

Please click on Bulletin board and then click to Behavior Expectations.

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