



Collinsville Youth Baseball and Softball League

5th & 6th Grade Girls Softball Program Rules with MERSBL Rules

5th and 6th Grades

Revised 3.25.2025

Collinsville Parks and Recreation Leagues are recreational in nature and are designed for all kids to play and improve their skills. This league is not about winning but learning to play the game.

Standings/statistics will not be kept by the league office

The Collinsville Youth Baseball and Softball Leagues will operate under the official USSSA rules with the following league amendments and inclusions

Spring/Summer season, teams will have a 12-game schedule with 10 games guaranteed.
No games will be played later than July 1st

Personal Conduct and Policy

TEAM CONDUCT

- A. Coaches, players, and spectators shall not dispute calls made by the umpire. Any verbal/physical abuse towards umpires will not be tolerated. Abuse of any kind will result in an ejection and a minimum one-game suspension.
- B. No manager, player, coach, or spectator may charge, threaten, or abuse an umpire at any time.
- C. Absolutely no foul language should be used in practices or games. The use of foul language can also result in a minimum one-game suspension.
- D. Teams can cheer/develop cheers for their own team, however, no cheers/chants/jeers/boos can be directed at any opposing player/coach/team.
- E. All spectators, not directly involved in the game, must stay more than 10ft outside the foul territory.
- F. Umpires are instructed to deal only with coaches, who are responsible for correcting any conduct issues with players, coaches, or spectators.
- G. If a discipline problem arises with a player during a practice/game, and the coach wishes to sit that player out, the coach has the right to sit that player. In a game situation, if this problem arises, please notify the opposing coach and umpire of the situation.
 - a. *In the event a player must be benched because of behavior issues, please notify the Parks and Rec staff.*
- H. Only coaches are allowed on the fields during games. Any parent entering the field will result in a minimum one game suspension.
 - a. Exception: parent(s) attending to an injured player/child.
- I. Tobacco and Vape products are not allowed to be used on the playing fields or in the dugouts on all park property. If someone wishes to use tobacco/vape products, they must be a minimum of 50ft from any athletic field/dugout.

Umpire in Charge (U.I.C.)

Michael Romanich

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Recreation Superintendent

Kristen Siebert

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Schedule Requests:

Cheryl Romanich

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Playing Field/Equipment/Uniform

PLAYING FIELD

- Bases will set at **60ft**
- Pitching rubber set at **40ft**

EQUIPMENT

- Official League Ball
 - 12in softball
- Parks and Rec will provide teams with the following equipment to use for the season:
 - 4-5 Batting helmets
 - 2-3 bats
 - 8-12 softballs
 - Catcher's mask, chest protector, shin guards, and a catcher's mitt

If any equipment breaks, different sizes are needed, or needs to be replaced, please contact the League Office

Equipment must be returned within 30 days of the team's final game to receive a full/timely coaching refund
This includes returning the 8-12 practice softballs provided at the beginning of the season

UNIFORM

- Parks and Recreation will provide the following uniform items:
 - Player uniform shirt
 - League hat
 - Coach Shirt and league hat for up to 2 coaches
 - *Teams may NOT make any alterations to the uniform (adding names, logos, etc.)*
- Pant and sock colors of the uniform will not be mandated by the league
- Coaches will inform parents on what color pants and socks to wear
 - A player cannot be benched because they are not wearing the correct colors.
- Players will need their own cleats and glove.
 - Rubber molded cleats are recommended but sneakers are allowed
 - Metal cleats are **NOT allowed**

WEATHER POLICY

CPRD Weather/Rainout Hotline

618-346-7529

(This is the Parks and Recreation Office Phone number)

Press #1

Updates will be made no later than 4pm on weekday games

Updates will be posted 2 hours before the first scheduled game on Saturdays and will be updated throughout the day if needed

DO NOT CONTACT THE OFFICE DIRECTLY FOR CANCELLATION INFORMATION

A copy of CPRD's complete Weather Policy can be found on the CBSL website

****Official game cancellations will be made by the League Office ONLY****

Rain/Inclement Weather Policy

Cancellation due to unplayable conditions or unforeseen conflicts will have the potential to be rescheduled if allowable.

Lightning Policy

If lightning can be seen, all persons shall leave the field/facility and move to a safe area, such as car, pavilion, etc. and enter a mandatory 20-minute delay. If no lightning is seen for 20 minutes, play will resume. If lightning is seen anytime within the 20-minute delay, the countdown resets to 20 minutes.

This is required of all user groups at the Collinsville athletic facility

****The U.I.C. and/or the Site Supervisor will be the official timekeeper for any lightning delays. Game cannot resume until given approval from the U.I.C or Site Supervisor****

Heat Policy

Hot weather policy for cancellations, delays, and heat safety procedures for any outdoor facilities includes the following:

- **Heat Index of 95-99 degrees**
 - Optional break in play every 30 minutes
 - Break lasts up to 10 minutes
 - Watch and monitor participants and take any necessary action
- **Heat Index 100-105 degrees**
 - Mandatory water breaks every 30 minutes for up to 10 minutes
 - Game clock does NOT stop
 - Players must hydrate, remove protective gear, and attempt to find shade if available
 - Players in the Catcher position, may not catch for more than two consecutive innings
 - Watch and monitor participants and take any necessary action
- **Heat Index greater than 105 degrees**
 - Start of game is delayed; new start time to be decided upon by a representative of the Parks and Recreation Department
 - If the heat index has not changed, the game will be cancelled
 - All rules for the Heat Index of 100-105 degrees will be followed

Cold Weather Policy

Cold Weather cancellation policy for any outdoor facility includes wind chill or temperature **at or below 24 degrees** for *internal programs*.

General Rules

All Divisions

The Metro East Recreational Baseball and Softball League (“MERBSL”) - Baseball and Softball rulebook shall take precedence over NFHS rules. The NFHS rules shall govern when the MERBSL - Baseball and Softball - rulebook does not address a situation. If a situation arises that is not covered, or clarification is needed; it will be addressed by the MERBSL Baseball Commissioner and the League Coordinator.

Conduct

- Inappropriate behavior by players, coaches, or spectators WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. You will be asked to leave the park as a result of any confrontation with an umpire in this league.
- The head coach is responsible for the conduct of their team. This includes assistant coaches, players, and fans. No member of the team (assistant coach or player) other than the head coach may leave the area of the dugout or coaching box to dispute an umpire’s call.
- No team member, coach or player, may leave the area of the dugout or coaches’ box to argue a call or ridicule an umpire.
- The penalty for this infraction will result in both the offender and the head coach being restricted to the dugout for the remainder of the game.
- If the offender is a player, this will also result in an out each time his spot in the batting order is due. If the incident is severe enough, the offender may be ejected, with the head coach restricted to the dugout.
- If any person threatens an umpire, either physically or verbally, the
- game will be forfeited by the offending team, and if the offending person is a player or coach, he will be permanently banned from participating in the league.
- Fighting during a game will not be tolerated. If there is a fight during a game, all persons will be sent to their respective dugouts until the situation is calmed down. All participants in the fight will be ejected from the game. If there are any further alterations during the game, it will be forfeited by the offending team or teams.
- If ejected for fighting the resulting penalty is a two-game suspension.
- If ejected for fighting twice during the same season will result in being banned for the remainder of the season.
- After an ejection has occurred for any reason, the ejected person must leave the vicinity of the playing area immediately, and is prohibited from further contact, either direct or indirect, with the team (distance must be out of sight and out of sound). Failure to comply will result in a forfeit.
- If for any reason a player, parent, or coach is ejected from a game, he will receive the following disciplinary action.
- The 1st offense will result in a one game suspension, serving the remainder of the game and the next played game. If a parent is ejected, the head coach will automatically be ejected also. If there is not an assistant or representative available or willing to coach the game, the game will end in a forfeit against the offending team.
- The 2nd offense will result in league dismissal for the remainder of the season, with loss of all registration fees.
- All suspensions/ejections can be appealed to the league coordinator.

Official Baseball and Softball

The official baseball and softball of the MERBSL - Baseball and Softball shall be authorized by the MERBSL Athletic Committee. The various divisions of the league must use only the designated baseballs or softballs as authorized for each division. The umpires for each game will provide one new ball and one used ball.

Pitching Outs, Distances, Base Paths, Ball Size, and Time Limit

Baseball

DIVISION	PITCHING	BASE PATH	Machine Speed	BALL SIZE	Game Length
Tee Ball	OFF THE T	50 ft	N/A	Tee Ball	3 innings
Coach Pitch	Coach & Tee	50 ft	N/A	Tee Ball	3 innings
Instructional	42 ft	60 ft	36-38 MPH	Official Baseball	6 innings
Rookie	42 ft	65 ft	N/A	Official Baseball	6 innings
A	50 ft	70 ft	N/A	Official Baseball	6 innings

Softball

DIVISION	PITCHING	BASES	Circle	BALL SIZE	Game Length
Instructional	30 ft	55 ft	N/A	11 in (white)	6 innings
Rookie	35 ft	55 ft	8ft Radius/16ft circumference	11 in (raised seam - yellow)	6 innings
A	40 ft	60 ft	8ft Radius/16ft circumference	12 in (raised seam - yellow)	6 innings
AA	40 ft	60ft	8ft Radius/16ft circumference	12 in (raised seam - yellow)	6 innings

Game Length

- Immediately before the first pitch is thrown, the umpire will shout out the official start time to both coaches and keep track of the official time. Time limits apply to all games, including the post season tournament and are as follows.
- No new inning will start after 1 hr and 30 minutes past the official start time. With the exception of tournament games in case of a tie. (Regular season games can end in a tie game).
- Any inning started must be completed, no matter the length of time, with the exception of the home team would not need to finish batting if ahead in the game after the lapsed time.
- An inning begins at the moment of the 3rd out or 5th run of a completed inning, with the exception of the 6th and any proceeding inning(s), which would be the 3rd out.
 - Example 1: The 3rd out or 5th run is scored of the bottom of the 5th inning, the time is at 1 hr and 29 minutes past the start time, a new inning will start and will be completed.
 - Example 2: The 3rd out or 5th run is scored of the bottom of the 5th inning, the time is at 1 hr and 30 minutes, the game is over.
 - Example 3: Regular season game: 3rd out is completed at the bottom of the 6th inning, tie game, the time is at 1 hr and 29 minutes, a 7th inning will be played.
 - Example 4: Regular season game: 3rd out is completed at the bottom of the 6th inning, tie game, the time is at 1 hr and 30 minutes, the game is over. Tie game is official.
- Tournament Games cannot end in a tie.
- For instructional and older, umpires will be given discretion (based on the pace of the game) to call the last inning and allow for unlimited runs. The goal is to have a game last approximately 1hr 30 minutes but also give the trailing team a chance to win. For example, if the pace of the game leading to innings lasting

approximately 20 minutes, then the umpire may call for the last inning around the 1 hr 15 time point and that inning would be played with un-limited runs. This would be communicated to both coaches.

Inclement Weather

- In the event of rain, lightning or darkness, a complete game will consist of four (4) completed innings or 3 1/2 innings if the home team is ahead.
- A MERBSL Baseball and Softball member present and/or a game umpire will make the final decision in regard to weather or nightfall.
- Prior to the start of a game, a MERBSL Baseball and Softball member will make the final decision in regard to weather or nightfall.
- Once the game has started, the umpire will make the final decision in regard to weather or nightfall.
- In the event of a tie game due to rain, lightning or darkness, the game will end in a tie and be officially recorded as such. For "suspended" and "canceled"
- In the event there would be stoppage in play due to necessary field repairs (i.e. broken bases or pitching rubber, backstop fencing) that fall under the MERBSL Baseball and Softball control, time will be added to the length of the game equal to stoppage in play. Even with this additional time, games can still be called in the event of rain, lightning or darkness. Games will be considered complete, suspended or canceled based on Rules set by Game Length and Inclement Weather.
- At no time will time be added due to weather or other conditions out of the control of the MERBSL Baseball and Softball.

Lightning Policy

- If lightning can be seen, all persons shall leave the field/facility and move to a safe area, such as car, pavilion, etc. and enter a mandatory 20-minute delay. If no lightning is seen for 20 minutes, play will resume. If lightning is seen anytime within the 20-minute delay, the countdown resets to 20 minutes. *The U.I.C. and/or the Site Supervisor will be the official timekeepers for any lightning delays. Games cannot resume until approval from the U.I.C or Site Supervisor*
- Weather: The following weather-related protocols will be observed: In the case of lightning or severe rain, all competition will be halted, and all guests will be asked to vacate the fields and proceed to the safety of their vehicles.
- Suspend play immediately for 30 minutes. Once play has been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard or lightning is witnessed prior to resuming play.
- The competition will resume when the weather clears or may be postponed (in the case of severe weather) In the case of light rain, competition will continue until safety becomes an issue.
- In case of extreme weather, the umpire coordinator or park representative shall determine if and when play shall cease, resume or be rescheduled. It is the responsibility of each manager/coach to obtain the latest schedule information for any and all reschedules.

Speed-up Rules

- Between innings, five warm-up pitches or two minutes are allowed. New pitchers are allowed eight (8) warm-up pitches. Penalty - if the batting team is delaying the game more than 2 minutes, the umpire will start calling one strike every 20 seconds. If the defensive team is delaying more than 2 minutes, the umpire will call a ball every 20 seconds delayed.

Delay of Game

- Intentional delay of the game by the team in the lead to take unfair advantage of the 1 hour,
- 15 min. the time limit will result in a warning on the first occurrence and, on the second occurrence in the game, will result in a forfeit (Umpire's Judgment).

Mercy Rule

- See Division Summary pages for mercy rule specifics.
- Batting Order: The official batting order must give the player's name and number.
- No players on the same team may have the same number.
- Round Robin batting is used (all available players are in the batting order).
- Once a player is in the lineup and leaves for any reason other than injury, illness, or a predetermined reason, that position in the batting order will be an out each time it comes up for the remainder of the game after the player leaves. All predetermined reasons must be communicated to both head coaches and the umpires before the game begins.
- Players arriving late may be added to the bottom of the batting order at any time before the start of the fourth inning
- In the event of an injury to a player, if the injured player cannot continue when scheduled to bat, the position in the line-up will be dissolved and the injured player will not be allowed to re-enter the game.

Uniforms

- All players will be expected to play any scheduled game with uniform issued by the MERBSL Baseball and Softball.
- All team uniforms will be a tee shirt (must be tucked in), mid- thing/knee-length black shorts, and visor. (No league-issued pants/shorts for T- Ball or AAA ball).
- Hats/visors are optional; however, only MERBSL Baseball and Softball issued hats/visors or sponsor issued hats can be worn during the game.
- Players may wear additional garments, e.g., a sweatshirt or jacket for their comfort, however, the MERBSL Baseball and Softball shirt shall be worn on the outside of any other clothing.
- All boys must wear a hard cup supported in baseball league play in Instructional and up.
- Shorts are not allowed (except in Tee Ball, Girls Instructional, and Heat advisory situations).
- Pitchers may wear sunglasses as long as they are not distracting to the batter. If the opposing coach issues a complaint to the umpire, the umpire has full authority to ask the pitcher to remove the sunglasses.
- No uniform alterations allowed. Nothing is allowed to be ironed on, silk screened, pressed or attached to league is-sued hats, pants, shorts or shirts. Examples include personal names, additional numbers, anything that individualizes a person or team. All games will be played as scheduled; however, such uniform alterations will result in an automatic team forfeit (and a loss counted in team standings) until which time proper uniforms can be fielded.

Equipment

- **Metal spikes:** Shoes with metal spikes or metal cleats are strictly prohibited in all divisions. The penalty for wearing them shall be ejection from the game. No exceptions; however, this ejection will not prohibit them from playing in the next game providing proper cleats are worn. Subsequent violations by players will result in an ejection from the game which will prevent them from playing in the next game.
- **Catcher's Equipment:** Players must wear facemasks with throat protector, helmet, chest protector, and shin guards as provided by MERBSL Baseball and Softball for league play. Players warming up a pitcher are required to wear a face mask.
- **Helmets :** All players will wear helmets while batting and running the bases. Any oversight on a forgotten helmet will not cause the play to be called out if the helmet falls off accidentally. Time out will be called when noticed and the player will be required to put on a helmet. Any player who intentionally tosses off a helmet while running the bases shall be declared out. All strikes and balls, hits and outs will stand. MERBSL does require GA and GAA to wear as signed and issued facemasks.

- All equipment will be kept behind the benches or out of the playing area. No player, coach or manager may throw any equipment in anger and the umpire may eject the offending person from the game. In the umpire's judgment, a player flagrantly throwing the bat will be declared out and ejected from the game.
- **Balls:** Game balls are to be supplied by the home team.
- **Bats:**
 - Bats must be USSSA certified, that is, they have the 1.15 BPF stamp or meet the new USA Baseball standard (USABat) or be stamped with the BBCOR .50 Certified Mark or may be wood (solid, one piece).
 - As long as the bats meet the criteria stated above, there is no restriction on bat drop.
- Umpires will give players the opportunity to produce any needed equipment, with the exception of players being caught wearing metal cleats. Failure to do so will result in the player being ejected from the game.

Batting/Base Running

- Bat throwing: Coaches must teach their players to hold onto the bat when swinging through the ball. The accidental throwing of the bat by the batter will result in a warning by the umpire. Each team will be given one warning. In the umpire's judgment, subsequent offenses will result in any batter being declared out and play is dead.
- Collisions: Base runners should slide to avoid contact; with the one exception of first base.
- If the runner goes into a base standing up and runs into the defensive player the base runner will be declared out for interference provided the defensive the player has possession of the ball. If the runner interferes with the relay throw to another base the batter will also be declared out. If such contact is malicious or intentional, the runner shall be ejected from the game.
- Defensive players must have the ball, or the ball must be thrown to them. They cannot fake or bait runners into slides to reduce chances of advancing.
- Base runners must yield to the fielder when a ball is hit to them. If contact is made with a fielder in the act of catching a ball, it's an out, due to interference.
- Obstruction: If, in the opinion of the umpire, a fielder does not give the runner a piece of the base in which to slide prior to the fielder receiving the ball, obstruction will be called on the fielder. Catchers are allowed to block the plate but must have possession of the ball prior to blocking the plate. The catcher must give the runner access to the base if they don't have the ball.
- Fake Tag: When a defensive player fakes a tag without possession of the ball and impedes the progress of any runner, the umpire shall declare an obstruction and award the runner an additional base. On the second offense, the player will be ejected from the game.
- A batter becomes a batter runner with the right to attempt to score by advancing to first, second and third and then home plate in the listed order when: A. Hitting a fair ball. NOTE: Batter becomes a runner when entitled to run. B. Charged with a third strike. NOTE: if a third strike is caught before the ball touches the ground, the batter is out an instant after becoming a runner. C. A fourth ball is called the Umpire. D. A pitched ball, legally or illegal, hits the batter's person or clothing.
 - EFFECT: The ball is dead immediately.
 - EXCEPTIONS: 1. If the batter swings or the ball enters the strike zone, or the batter prevents the ball from entering the strike zone, a strike is called, and if it is the third strike, the batter is out. 2. If the batter intentionally moves to get hit by the pitch, it is a strike or ball depending on location of the pitch. NOTE: 1. If a batter's loose garment, such as a shirt that is not buttoned, is hit by a pitched ball, the batter is not entitled to first base. 44 16th Edition (Printed 1-2022) 2. It does not matter if the ball strikes the ground before hitting the batter. 3. The batter's hands are not considered part of the bat. 4. If a batter swings and the ball hits its hands which send it into fair or foul territory, the ball is dead immediately; A strike is called on the batter; and if it is the third strike, the batter is out

Scoring

- The official score will be kept by the home plate umpire.
- When a team scores five runs in an inning, the inning is over, with the exception of the last inning of the game. In the last inning a team may score until they have made three outs. In the event of extra innings within the time limit of the game, a team may score until they have made three outs. This does not apply to GAA.

Free substitution

- Free defensive substitutions are allowed at the half inning only. During an inning a player from the bench may enter the game only as a pitcher or in the event of an injury. In addition, a defensive replacement will be allowed during an inning if a player is warming up to pitch.

Equitable Playing Time

- It is to be considered a MERBSL Baseball and Softball guideline that all players are given an opportunity to play in every game.
- All players in league play must participate in a minimum of three innings in a seven- inning game and two innings in a five-inning or six-inning game. Failure of any team to comply with this rule will result in forfeiture of the game. If a game is terminated for any reason (including a ten-run lead) before 5 innings has elapsed, failure of either team to use all of its players shall not be a violation of this rule.
- It is also considered to be a MERBSL Baseball and Softball guideline that all players be given the opportunity to play infield at least one inning per game by the third inning in the Tee Ball, Instructional, Rookie and "A" divisions. Failure by any team in Rookie through "A" divisions to comply with this rule will result in forfeiture of the game. MERBSL Baseball and Softball recognizes the problem with tracking such activity during a game; so if resolution cannot be achieved at the game site, "Rule G20. Protests" can be pursued.

Pitching

- See Division summary pages for specific pitching rules.
- Pitching changes:
 - If a manager or coach calls timeout to talk to the same pitcher more than once in a half inning, a pitcher change must be made.
 - In Baseball divisions, a pitcher removed from the pitching position cannot re-enter the game in the pitching position. In Softball divisions, a player may return to the pitching position as long as the inning limit has not been met.
- Intentional walks will NOT be allowed.

Forfeits

- Failure to have a minimum of eight players available results in a forfeit. A game can be started, continued, and finished with a minimum of eight players.
- Should either team not be ready to start the game within fifteen minutes after the scheduled game time, the Head Umpire shall forfeit the game to the opposing team. In order for a team to be credited with forfeit victory, the team must be present at game time with the minimum number of players to play a game. Should both teams violate the rule, each shall be charged with a loss.

Makeup Games

- All makeup games will be rescheduled by the Scheduling Director in connection with the Head Umpire and posted at the Concession Stand. Divisions Directors will contact each team with the makeup game date and time.

Inclement Weather

- For the most accurate and timely updates, teams are encouraged to check: MERBSL FaceBook Page or www.tritownshippark.org. Links are provided to other parks for offsite fields. Any game stopped due to wet or dangerous conditions where 2 or more innings have been completed shall be deemed "suspended."
- Any "suspended" game will be continued at a later date from the point of which the game was deemed "suspended."
- Any game stopped due to wet or dangerous conditions where less than two innings have been completed shall be deemed "canceled" and made up at a later date from the
- beginning of the game.
- If at least 3 1/2 innings have been played and the "home team" is winning at the time of play stoppage, the game shall be deemed completed and recorded as such.

League Playoff Championship Games:

- Where scheduling and facilities allow, all playoff championship games will waive the 3 1/2 innings rule. Every possible attempt will be made to complete these suspended games, with the league scheduler having the final say on when suspended games will be made up.
- When the original play is suspended, the games will be "frozen in time" with managers signing each other's scorecard and/or scorebook. If and when the game continues, pitching limits will be maintained; pitchers cannot benefit from the rule rest; as if the game is continued on the same day as when the original game was suspended.
- The same lineups for batting and fielding apply.
- If any players from the suspended game cannot attend the makeup game, their batting spot is skipped; no out is recorded.
- Conversely, if any players attend the makeup game that didn't attend the suspended game, they are added to the bottom of the batting order.
- Regular season time limits apply to all post season games with the only exception being that play-off games will be played until there is a winner.
- Players must have competed in >50% of the games to be eligible for playoffs.

Protests

- The MERBSL Baseball and Softball Coordinator and Athletic Committee shall have the authority to act on all rule violations and protests involving teams, players, managers, or coaches under its jurisdiction.
- If games are to be put under protest because of an infraction of the official rules, the following steps should be taken (no protests will be allowed when it involves a question of an umpire's judgment).
- The notification of the intent to protest must be made immediately before the next pitch, concerning infraction of given rule.
- The manager of the protesting team must immediately notify the umpire and the opposing manager that the game is being continued under protest.
- The umpire will notify both scorekeepers that the game is under protest and both scorebooks will be initiated by the umpire indicating the point at which the protest occurred.
- The protest of any game shall be made in writing and filed with a fee of \$25 to the
- MERBSL Baseball and Softball no less than 24 hours after the game in which the alleged rule violation occurred.
- The letter of protest must include the date, names of umpires, and all matters pertaining to the alleged infraction, citing which rule(s) were violated. The letter of intent must be generated by the protesting manager and accompanied by the \$25 fee.
- All specifics relating to a protest must be included in the scorebook:
 - player at bat

- inning
 - balls
 - strikes
 - name of pitcher
 - number of outs
 - and the bases on which there were runners.
- All protests shall be acted upon by the MERBSL Baseball and Softball Coordinator and Athletic Committee. The decision of the "Committee" is final.
 - The \$100 protest fee will be applied to the MERBSL Baseball and Softball Athletic Fund if the protest is denied. The \$100 fee will be reimbursed to the protesting manager if the protest is won.

Play Area

- The "Live Ball" area or "Play Area" is defined as the area enclosed by the line that extends from the end of the backstop and runs parallel to each foul line. For safety reasons, spectators will not be allowed in the official playing area.
- Overthrow advancement rules are defined in the Division Summary pages.
- If a pitched ball delivered by the pitcher goes through or under the backstop or is lodged in the backstop, the runner(s) shall be awarded one (1) base provided stealing is allowed in the division.

Players on Bench

- All players will stay on or behind benches when not in the field.
- Except player at bat and player on-deck batter.
- Only one coach per coach's box.

Individuals behind Backstop

- No managers, coaches, players, or fans are allowed directly behind the backstop during the progress of games. If in the opinion of the umpire, individual(s) are bothering the pitcher, catcher, or umpire, the umpires on duty have the authority to ask the individual(s) to relocate to another portion of the unofficial area.

Field Usage Before Game Time

- The visiting team will have the infield from 30 minutes before game time until 15 minutes before game time.
- The home team will have the infield from 15 minutes before game time until the game starts.
- This example will be used for all start times.
- No batting practice on the infield. All batting practice should be conducted in the outfield. The team will use either the first base side of the field or the third base side.
- Warmups will be simultaneous for both teams. (No pre-game warmups allowed in the spectator areas). There will be no warming up on the spectator side of the out of play areas on any diamond while spectators are watching an ongoing game.

Dugouts During the Game

- The home team is always entitled to the first base dugout.
- Visitors use the third base dugout.
- The home team is listed on the game schedule second, whereas the visitor is always listed first. For example, if the game schedule shows 1 vs. 2, then team #1 is the visiting team and #2 is the home team.

Umpire's Scorecard

- Both team managers and umpires must legibly sign and date the official game scorecard. This is necessary to ensure that team standings and umpire pay is recorded correctly.

Infield Fly Rule

- The infield fly rule will be enforced for Boys/Girls A, and Girls AA Divisions.
- The infield fly rule will NOT be enforced in all other divisions.
- The infield fly rule is defined as: The batter is declared out when there is a catchable routine fly ball on the infield, with runners on first and second, or bases loaded and less than two outs. Base runners may advance at their own risks.

Miscellaneous Rules:

- NO MODIFICATIONS WILL BE ALLOWED. Plate discussions can be rule clarifications ONLY. No modifications, no differences at different parks. ALL PLAY BY SAME RULES.
- Borrowing Players (Regular Season Only!):
 - Teams may borrow up to 2 players to get up to eight, the minimum required for regular season games (games may occur with <8 players if agreement by coaches is reached).
 - These players must come from the same division (or younger), and they should wear the team's Jersey from which they are from.
 - The Borrowed players must bat at the bottom of the order.
 - Borrowed players are not allowed to pitch or catch.
- Players must play 50 percent of league games to play in playoffs/tournament.
- A maximum of three shirted coaches. Parents and others should be welcome to help but only 3 shirted coaches are allowed. A team of 6 shirted coaches is intimidating to teams with one coach that has no help.
- Sportsmanship rules: no player, coach, or parent may make comments at or about any other player, coach, or parent or purposefully try to intimidate players or coaches. For repeat offenses permanent removal.
- All rosters must be posted/shared at the start of the season. A copy must be kept with coaches for each game along with their player number assigned.
- Walk-up music along with loud warm up music is not allowed.
- Use of the pitching machine before a game is prohibited.
- VIDEO TAPING-Sidelines ONLY by parents.

SPECIAL DIVISION RULES

The MERBSL Baseball and Softball has developed a program which concentrates on teaching baseball/softball fundamentals in the early years and developing baseball/softball skills in the later years. During the early years, the MERBSL Baseball and Softball rules have been modified to help foster learning the game. The intent of the rule modification is to provide all of the younger players with every opportunity to learn the game and to encourage participation in the program in the later years. The Division Summary illustrates how the rules are modified in the early years of the program. It is also provided for quick references for umpires, managers, and coaches.

RULES BY DIVISION SUMMARY

	TB & CP	BI	BR	BA	GI	GR	GA	GAA
Equitable Playing Time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Equitable Infield Play	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Keep Score	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Standings	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Innings	3	6	6	6	6	6	6	7
Outfielders	Many	4	4	3	4	4	3	3
Pitching	No	Machine	Yes	Yes	Machine	Yes	Yes	Yes
Balk	No	No	Warning	Yes	No	No	No	No
Pitch Count	N/A	N/A	50	85	N/A	3 Innings	4 Innings	N/A
Pitch Rest	N/A	N/A	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Lead offs	No	No	No	Yes	No	After Pitch	After Pitch	
Stealing	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Stealing Home	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Advance on overthrows	No	No	1 Base	Yes	No	1 Base	Yes	Yes
Dropped 3rd Strike	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Infield Fly	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Bunting	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Dead Ball	Infield	Infield	Infield Possession	X	Infield	Infield Possession	Pitchers Circle	Pitchers Possession

Girls A

General

The A division is intended for players currently in 5th and 6th grade. Scores are kept and an end of season playoff is utilized. Rules that are specific to our recreational league are mentioned in this document. Any rules not specified here will follow the current [USSSA standard](#).

Game Length

- Games are 6 innings
- An inning is 3 outs or 5 runs scored, whichever comes first.
- All innings are played with a 5-run limit except the last inning which is unlimited.
- No new innings after 1 hour 30 minutes. Umpires (or coach consensus) have discretion to call “last inning” in an attempt to keep games close to the 1 hr 30 minute total length.
- A mercy rule is in effect. If Ywea team is leading by 15 or more runs after 4 innings or 10 runs after 5 innings, the game is over.

Equipment

- Only fastpitch softball bats may be used. Must be labeled as ASA or USSSA. No baseball bats.
- Helmets must have a facemask
- Fielding masks are highly recommended but not required.

Batting and Baserunning

- Leading off and stealing are allowed at all times. This includes stealing home on passed balls.
- Runners cannot lead off or steal until the ball has left the pitcher’s hand. Runners who leave early will be called “out” by the umpires.
- If an overthrow occurs, players may take the next base at their own discretion. If umpire determines that the ball has left the field of play, players will be awarded one base.
- Runners are not required to slide on every play at a base. However, runners that do not slide and make contact with a defensive player who is making a defensive play may be called out by the umpire. This is judgment call by the umpire. If a player makes intentional contact with a defensive player and does not slide may be removed from the game. This is also a judgment call by the umpire.
- The dropped third strike rule is in effect. The batter/runners can advance on a dropped third strike, if first base is not occupied with less than two outs, or with two outs and any base occupied. If the batter “commits” to going to their dug out they will be called out. (Committing is defined as leaving the batter’s box with the intent of returning to their dugout.)
- Bunting/slapping is allowed.
- Courtesy runner for the catcher with two-outs is allowed to help speed up the game.

Defense

- A total of 9 players are used on defense. 3 outfielders, infielders, and a catcher.
- All players must be given an opportunity to play an infield position for a minimum of 1 inning.
- Outfielders should be positioned in the grass or a minimum of 10 feet behind the infielders if the dirt infield is large.
- Each defensive position must be occupied by a single player (e.g. only one pitcher allowed).
- The infield fly rule is in effect.

- The play is dead when the pitcher has possession of the ball inside the pitcher's circle.

Pitching

- Pitcher's may throw a maximum of 4 innings per game. These do not have to be consecutive innings. Pitcher's who are relieved may re-enter the game as a pitcher as long as their 4 inning requirement has not been met. The throwing of a single pitch in an inning constitutes an "inning pitched"

Umpires

- Umpires will be provided by each park.

Playoff Policies

- All games will be 6 innings.
- Seeds will be determined by team records as of specified date declared by MERBSL.
- Last inning will be played with unlimited runs to ensure a winner is established.
- Players must have played in 50% of the regular season games to participate.
- Umpires will be provided by each park.
- A mercy rule will be used in the playoffs. If a team is leading by 15 or more runs after 4 innings or 10 runs after 5 innings, the game is over.
- There is no requirement for all players to play the infield. All players must play a minimum of 3 innings and all players in attendance will be in the batting order