**2012 EAA In-House Softball Rules**

# DIVISIONS

Grades apply to the school year in session at the time of registration.

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| Mites | K & 1st Grades |
| Minors | 2nd & 3rd Grades |
| Juniors | 4th & 5th Grades |
| Intermediates | 6 thru 8th Grades |
| Seniors | 9th thru 12th Grades |

# GENERAL RULES

1. Each team must have a minimum of 8 players available to play (Juniors & above), including substitutes, no later than 10 minutes after the scheduled starting time of each game. **ALL** players must have on their game jersey at game time or their team forfeits the game.

1. The four outfielders must be positioned at least 20 feet beyond the baseline at the start of each play.

3. All eligible players present at a game will bat, in order, round robin, for the entire game.

4. **EQUAL PARTICIPATION RULE:** No player will sit out an inning for a second time until all players at that game have sat out an inning once. This includes pitchers. No player will sit out a third inning until all players at that game have sat out two innings, and so on for the entire game. There are no exceptions. The penalty for violating this rule is immediate forfeiture of the game.

5. Any player who arrives at the game after the first pitch has been thrown will be inserted into the lineup at the bottom of the batting order.

1. In case of an injury, the batting order will remain the same less the injured player. If a batter is injured while at bat, the next batter in line will substitute taking over the injured batters existing ball and strike count.
2. Time may be called immediately by the Umpire in the event of an injury. It is the sole discretion of the Umpire to designate what base or bases the runner(s) should be awarded. **NO EXCEPTIONS!**
3. Leading off any base is illegal. When a pitcher has the ball and is in contact with the pitching rubber, and the catcher is in the catchers box, then all runners must be in contact with their base. Runners cannot leave their base until the ball is hit. **PENALTY:** The runner is called out. There is no appeal on this call. Umpires decision is final.

9. Pitchers must maintain contact with the pitching rubber until the ball is released.

1. In case of inclement or unseasonable weather, players are allowed to wear jackets, sweats, etc., over their uniforms if desired.
2. Balls and strikes are called in accordance with ASA standards. Umpires may use official EAA strike zone mats as guidance, however, the umpire has the final decision between a strike and a ball whether the pitch is flat, high, or hits the mat. Any pitch that passes through the strike zone may be called a strike, whether or not it hits the mat. Again, this is based solely on the judgment of the Umpire.
3. A base runner is out if a coach holds or pushes the base runner.
4. Jewelry such as rings, earrings, necklaces, watches, bracelets, hair clips, or body piercings may not be worn during a game.
5. ASA rules apply except where EAA rules overrule them.
6. The arc of the pitch must be at least the height of the average player but no higher than the backstop. This is the sole judgment of the Umpire. Coaches, team members, fans, and parents will not call strikes or balls. Anyone doing so can be asked to leave by the Umpire.
7. No alcohol or tobacco will be used by coaches, players, fans, or parents at a game. Anyone doing so will be ejected from the game and made to leave the area. Failure to leave by the offending party will result in a forfeit by the team.
8. Spectators will not sit directly behind home plate behind the backstop. Seating will be along each side well behind the line between home plate and 1st or 3rd base. The only exception is if there are permanent seats installed at the field, and they are located behind home plate. All other spectator seating, including blankets, lawn chairs, etc. will be limited to the prescribed areas. If an Umpire determines someone is not sitting in an appropriate area, time will be called until the person(s) move to the correct place.
9. Small children will not be allowed to disrupt a game by being left unsupervised by their parents or guardians. For safety reasons, children should not be allowed to go near the outfield, players bench, or hang on backstop fences. The Umpire will ask children who are causing disruptions to be escorted from the area.

# SUBSTITUTES

1. Substitutes are not eligible players unless there are fewer than 10 team members present.
2. To be eligible as a substitute, a player must be registered with EAA as an In-House Softball player.

3. If less than 10 members of a team are present for any scheduled game, then substitutions may be made with players from lower EAA divisions only. No more than 10 players can play, including subs. For example, if you have 9 team members and choose 2 subs from lower divisions, the 2 substitutes will have to alternate play each inning. One sub will play a complete inning, hitting and fielding, and the other sub will sit out. In the next inning, their position is reversed with the sub having sat out last now playing a complete inning, hitting and batting, while the first sub that just completed an inning sits out. At no time are more than 3 subs allowed to play in a game. If more than 3 subs are necessary to make up a legal size line-up, the game must be forfeited or rescheduled. If the 2 head coaches cannot agree on forfeiture or rescheduled, the Division Coordinator is to be contacted and the matter resolved between the Division Coordinator, the 2 coaches involved, and the League Director, if necessary.

4. Each Division Coordinator will obtain a list of coaches from the next lower division for the purpose of drawing substitutes for their division. The list should be shared with each coach in the division so that they can contact substitutes if necessary.

5. A substitute player may not be used in 3 consecutive games for the same team. **Exceptions:** Tournaments, which allow such substitutions in their rules and double headers. A sub may play both games of a double header if it is necessary in order for a team to play. If a team needs a substitute player, and a team member of the team who needs the player has a younger sister who is in the next lower division, and is a registered, paid EAA member of the slow pitch league, she may substituteas needed but she cannot be used to permanently fill out a roster on a team who looses a player(s).

# CONDUCT

1. ANY softball committee member in attendance at a game has the authority to enforce conduct rules, but not to interfere unless necessary.

2. Profanity by players, coaches, fans, or parents will not be tolerated. **PENALTY:** Ejection from the remainder of the game and suspension from the next game. All suspensions, for any reason, must be submitted to the Division Coordinator, the League Director, and the parents. A second offense could lead to an appearance before the softball committee.

 3. Any game in which a team uses an ineligible player is declared a forfeit by the offending team. If both teams are found to be using an ineligible player(s), a “no contest” is called and the game will not be replayed. Both teams will have a loss added to their record.

 4. There will be no harassment of the opposing teams players by any coach, player, fan, or parent. This specifically includes chanting, jeers, and derogatory remarks. **PENALTY:** Individual may be ejected from the game or the team may forfeit the game.

1. Harassment of the umpires by ANYONE, player, coach, fan, or parent, will not be tolerated. Anyone who violates this rule will be asked to leave the area. Failure to comply will result in the team with whom they are associated with to forfeit the game. This rule is not subject to protest and the Umpire does not need to issue any warning prior to enforcing this rule.

6. Any coach or player who verbally attacks or abuses an Umpire will be expelled for the remainder of the game and suspended from the next game.

1. Any coach who hits any Umpire, player, or opposing coach will be removed as a coach – Permanently!
2. All players when not on the field or at bat, are to remain on the bench or behind the bench area.
3. All equipment must be kept behind the bench in an orderly manner and not on the playing field.
4. Coaches may not mutually agree to suspend or alter a rule for any reason.
5. The Umpire will give all warnings for players, coaches, fans, and parents to the coach of the team being warned. That team will have five (5) minutes to fix the problem or forfeit the game.
6. The head coach of a team is the only person who will talk to an Umpire. It is ideal to have both head coaches and the umpire discuss the situation together. The head coach can then pass that information on to the players and/or other coaches/parents as needed.

13. All city, park, and EAA rules concerning drugs, alcohol, smoking, and pets are in effect at all fields during all games. **Because of past problems, no dogs are allowed on the field or in the playing area. The dogs’ owner will be asked to leave the area.**

# POSTPONED GAMES

1. If a coach or Umpire determines that playing a game is not good for the health and safety of the players because of weather (rain, etc.), the game will be rescheduled for a later date for Juniors, Intermediates, & Seniors. This decision does not require the agreement of both coaches. The decision of a Coach or Umpire to not play a game because of player safety concerns or weather related issues takes precedence over a coaches preference to go ahead and play the game. When the Umpire or Coach determines that a game has become hazardous or unplayable, they must call the game immediately. Such conditions for calling a game are, but not limited to, rain, lightening, darkness, and the sounding of warning sirens. Coaches or parents may stop a game if lightening is sighted. No time lapse or waiting period is required. In all cases, the primary consideration will be the safety of the players, coach, fans, and parents when deciding weather or not a game is called for reasons like those outlined above.

2. No game shall be postponed for any reason, except weather and field conditions, without the permission of the Division Coordinator or the League Director.

1. Field assignment for any makeup games must be coordinated through the Division Coordinator.
2. If, at the time of the postponement, the game is not a legal game, it will be replayed (if scheduling permits) starting over from the first inning.
3. If, at the time of the postponement, the game is a legal game, the winner is determined by the score of the last complete inning. Note the score at the time of the postponement.
4. Postponed games should be rescheduled within 5 days. If the coaches cannot agree to a makeup date, one coach may contact the Division Coordinator, who will set a makeup date and notify both coaches. If a team fails to show up for that game, it receives a forfeit. If neither team shows up for the game, both teams are given a forfeit. Rescheduling a game for any reason other than weather requires the Division Coordinator be informed. The coach requesting the change is responsible for getting the field and Umpires. No changes will be made during play-offs without the approval of the Division Coordinator. The only exception to this shall be weather cancellation.

# EQUIPMENT & UNIFORMS

* 1. EAA issued uniforms must be worn to all scheduled games. Players not in uniform may not be allowed to play.

2. No metal cleats allowed in any division.

3. Mites do not use batting helmets, but do use a catcher’s mask. For all other divisions, batting helmets are required for all batters and base runners. Each team is issued 5 helmets.

1. Equipment turn-in will take place within 2 weeks of the end of the season. During equipment turn-in, coaches will clean out the bags and sort equipment as needed.

# START/END TIMES

1. All weekday games will start at 6:30 PM for Mites & Minors, and 6:45 PM for Juniors & above.

2. Teams are entitled to the field ½ hour before a scheduled game. It is the responsibility of the home team to ensure that the field has been set up by that time. The home team also provides the game ball.

3. The home team is allowed use of the infield for warm-ups for the first 15 minutes of the pre-game half hour. The visiting team is allowed the infield for the second 15 minutes of the pre-game half hour to warm up.

4. For Mites and Minors, no inning of a regular season game may begin more than one and one-quarter (1 ¼) hours after the first pitch is thrown.

For all other Divisions, no inning of a regular season game may begin more than one and one half (1 ½) hours after the first pitch is thrown. The game is over at the conclusion of the inning then in progress. It is the duty of the Umpires and coaches to keep the game moving.

5. Extra practice times must be scheduled through the Division Coordinator.

# PLAYOFFS (for 4th thru 12th grades only)

1. Each division will have their own season-ending weekend tournament.

* 1. The Umpire will determine the home team by a coin toss.
	2. Games will be two hours, or seven innings for Intermediates & Seniors. Juniors will play 1 3/4 hours, or 6 innings. Individual playoff rules put out by each Division Coordinator will govern that particular division.

**SLOW PITCH SOFTBALL RULES BY DIVISION**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Rule** | **K-1st** | **2nd & 3rd** | **4th & 5th** | **6th thru 8th** | **9th thru 12th** |
| Innings | 6 | 6 | 6 | 7 | 7 |
| Legal game | N/A | N/A | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| Base Line | 35 ft | 35 ft | 50 ft | 65 ft | 65 ft |
| Pitching distance | N/A | N/A | 31 ft | 46 ft | 50 ft |
| Infield fly rule | No | No | No | No | No |
| 15 run after 5th  | No | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Run limit per inning | N/A | 7 | 10 | 10 | N/A |
| Balls used | 10” (\*) | 10” (\*) | 11” | 11” | 11” |
| Players per team, min. | N/A | N/A | 8 | 8 | 9 |
| Players per team, max | 12 | 14 | 15 | 15 | 16 |

(\*) Mites and Minors use a safety ball (also known as an “Incrediball”)

**SPECIAL RULES FOR MITES & MINORS:**

**BOTH:**

1. Mites and Minors are instructional leagues. Emphasis should be placed on teaching the rules and skills of softball. No standings are kept during the season.

2. Batting order is round robin.

3. A maximum of 2 coaches can be in the field during a game for the purpose of instructing their players.

4. The home team will umpire the game or select a parent to Umpire. Only adults are allowed to umpire.

5. Catchers must wear a catchers helmet at all times when catching.

6. All players may be in the field each inning but there may be only five infielders. All “extras” will be placed in the outfield.

**MITES ONLY:**

1. Players hit off a batting tee to begin the season. After 2 games, coaches can start pitching to their own players (if the player wants to). Each player will get 3 pitches and if the ball is not put into play, the tee will be utilized.

2. Batters/ base runners do not have helmets because they use a safety ball.

3. Coaches act as the umpire for that half of the inning.

4. No runner may advance more than one base on an infield hit. No runner may advance more than 2 bases on a hit to the outfield. It is the Umpires sole decision on what type of hit is made.

5. Mites remain at bat until 6 of the players have batted.

**MINORS ONLY:**

1. Coaches will pitch to their own team and act as the Umpire for that half of the inning.

1. Each batter will receive a maximum of 6 pitches. After 6 pitches, the batter is out and the next player comes up to bat. NO EXCEPTIONS. Three strikes is an out.

3. No runner may advance more than 2 bases whether the ball is hit to the infield or the outfield.

4. Minors remain at bat until three (3) outs have occurred or 7 runs have scored, whichever comes first.

**SPECIAL RULES FOR JUNIORS ONLY:**

1. Games tied at the end of regulation play shall remain a tie.

2. Every player has to play an infield position and an outfield position by the 5th inning.

3. A rubber mat will be used to help the pitcher and Umpire judge the strike zone.

4. Time shall be called during the game when the defensive team has control of the ball in the infield area. A player can advance to the next base at their own risk, but cannot advance any further unless there is a play on them or another base runner.

5. Pitchers may only walk 2 batters per inning. After 2 walks, only strikes will be called. Balls will count toward the rule in #6.

6. Pitchers will be allowed 8 consecutive balls or 3 consecutive walk counts, and then must be replaced. Pitchers who are pulled may return later in the inning or later in the game.

7. If a pitcher is pulled out of any inning, either another pitcher is put in or the coach can pitch the rest of the inning. If the coach pitches, only strikes are called.

8. **Umpires will be used for all games.**

9. No player can stay in the same position more than 2 innings in a row except for the pitcher. The pitcher may stay in that position for a maximum of 3 innings.

10. There will be a tournament week-end at the end of the regular season. All teams will play.

**SPECIAL RULES FOR INTERMEDIATES / SENIORS ONLY:**

**BOTH:**

1. There will be double elimination playoffs at the end of regular season play. All teams will play.

2. Games tied at the end of 7 innings will continue to determine a winner. To begin each extra inning, the last batter out from the prior inning will start out on 2nd base.

3. Batters start each at bat with a 1-1 count.

4. The last two batters each inning are able to coach the bases if appropriate. When it is their turn to bat, they shall be replaced with another player.

**INTERMEDIATES:**

1. Every player must play an outfield position by the 5th inning.

2. No player can stay in the same position more than 2 innings in a row except for the pitcher. A pitcher may stay in that position for a maximum of 3 innings, although it doesn’t have to be consecutive innings.