

**BABE RUTH SOFTBALL DISTRICT 7**  
**INTER-LEAGUE RULES- 8-UNDER DIVISION**  
**2024**  
***Effective February 2024***

\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE – The following rules are to be followed for all recreational play, regardless of where or who you are playing.

1. Playing time is no new inning after 1 hour & 30 minutes (finish the inning).  
\*For games scheduled to be played on “School Nights”, playing time is **1 hour, 30 minutes Drop dead stop.** **School Nights is defined as M, T, W, TH.** **Drop dead should be discussed at the home plate meeting to ensure everyone is aware.**
2. Jewelry will be permitted to be worn during games. However, hoops or hanging earrings are prohibited. NOTE: No jewelry may be worn on the pitching arm.
3. A complete inning will consist of 3 outs or 4 runs.
4. The umpire will run the machine for each inning. The machine may only be adjusted at the top of each inning.
5. The offensive team will bat the entire line-up. The pitching machine (BLUE machine is required to be set at 5-4-2, BLACK machine is required to be set at 6-4-3) will be placed at a distance of 35ft. and at a speed of approximately 32.5-mph  $\pm$  2.5 mph.
6. **Each batter will be given a maximum of 5 pitches to try to hit the ball into play.** No balls or strikes will be called.
  - a. At the start of the game each team will declare their preference, for their entire team, of machine or coach pitch. If both teams choose coach pitch no machine will be placed on the field. The umpire will run the machine if in use.
  - b. For coach pitch the coach must stand **just in front of the pitching machine or at ~30 ft** and stay in place after the pitch is thrown, unless moving to avoid a batted ball.  
NOTE 1: **If the coach (that is pitching) is hit by a batted ball the ball is dead.**  
NOTE 2: The coach that is pitching may not coach the batters or base runners.
  - c. After the batter receives 4 pitches, the 5<sup>th</sup> pitch may be the option of (1) from the coach or pitching machine (whichever has been in use) OR (1) off the tee, wherein this pitch is treated as a called 3<sup>rd</sup> strike in the other age divisions. If the batter fouls the 5<sup>th</sup> pitch, they will receive another pitch and continue to bat as long as they foul the pitch. If the batter bunts the 5<sup>th</sup> pitch foul, they are out the same as bunting the 3<sup>rd</sup> strike pitch foul in other age divisions **OR** (2) hitting the ball placed on a tee, the batter will have a maximum of 1 swings to hit the ball into fair play. If the ball has not been hit into play after 5 pitches, as defined above, the batter is out. Modification of this rule can only be made on a game-by-game basis through the agreement of both team managers PRIOR to the start of the game. Modification of this rule is discouraged so that all games are consistent, allow all players to have equal opportunities to participate and the games are time efficient.
  - d. NOTE: When coach pitch is in play, the umpire will set up behind the catcher and there will be no coach in that area.
7. In the event the batter is hitting off the tee, the pitcher is still to remain in position next to the pitching machine (not in front).
8. Bunting is permitted, **with machine pitch only**, if the batter shows bunt they must either bunt or take the pitch. The batter **may not** show bunt and then take a full swing. **If a full swing is taken after a bunt is shown, the batter will be called out.**

9. If a batted ball hits the pitching machine the ball will be declared dead and the batter awarded 1<sup>st</sup> base and other runners advance one base only if forced.
10. If a thrown ball hits the pitching machine the ball will remain a live ball unless the umpire has called time. The pitching machine, when hit by a thrown ball is considered part of the umpire and governed by the rule book. The umpire will also call time or dead ball where there is a safety issue, such as the ball coming to rest under or near the machine where it is dangerous to retrieve.
11. All offensive players must wear helmets with faceguards while on the playing field.
12. Offensive players are not permitted to leave the base until the ball has been **released from the pitching machine or coach** and advance once the ball is put in play. The umpire will provide one warning during a game, and any subsequent violation will result in an out. There is no stealing in 8U.
13. The catcher must wear catching equipment. The catcher position is required. *All defensive **infield** players must wear a protective fielding mask*
14. If coach pitch is in play, only one game ball may be on the field and the catcher must return the ball to the coach that is pitching.
15. Catcher Speed-Up rule can be used, at 2 outs or 3 runs. The courtesy runner used must be the last recorded out. Utilization of this rule is encouraged to save time.
16. The defensive team can play 10 players to include 4 outfielders. Players should field actual field positions. This includes only one pitching position at any time. If the available number of rostered players is greater than 10, the manager is to rotate players defensively so that no player sits more than one inning in a game, unless due to injury/illness.  
*Comment: Do not place entire infield up close to the batter, defensive players should be in their correct position of play. Outfielders must play in the grass or a minimum of 10ft. behind the base paths. One player as a defensive pitcher must play to the right or left of the pitching machine with at least one foot in the 8ft radius of the pitcher's circle and is permitted to move once the ball is released rather than once the ball is hit. Must remain in the circle but can move up in front of the machine. Infielders must remain in normal starting positions until the ball is released from the machine or coach unless bunt is shown.*
17. One manager and/or coach are to take the field with the players for instructional purposes only. A manager/coach should be placed behind the catcher. This manager/coach will provide the tee if needed (as the umpire will be at the machine).
18. Ball size is 11" official softball.
19. Bases should be at 60 feet.
20. Dead ball:
  - a. The ball will be declared dead when the defensive team stops **all runners or they abandon** the effort to advance. Once play has been stopped, no other runners may advance beyond the last base tagged. Please note: There is no half-way rule. The player must be touching the base at the time the play is declared dead to advance.
  - b. The ball will be declared dead when a player is injured and in the umpire's judgment is unable to continue the play.

21. Each team may play a game with 8 players. Teams may borrow players from other teams in the same age division, or lower, if properly registered in 1 (one) of the inter-league associations. The team may not borrow players in excess of a lineup of 10 players (including any substitutions). Borrowed players will not pitch or catch and must bat at the end of the batting order.
22. End of Season Tournament:
  - a. Game play will be single elimination.
  - b. Regular season rules will apply.
  - c. Umpires will be provided by the host field.
  - d. A team MAY NOT borrow any players.
  - e. A team MAY play with 8 players without penalty. In the event a team has less than 8 players they will forfeit their game.
  - f. There are no ties. In the event of a tie, additional innings will be played until a winner is determined.

**The basic concept of the Rookie (6U-8U) program is to make the game safer, more interesting and more fun for our younger players and keep their interest active in playing softball. Ensuring the development of the players in hitting, fielding, and running bases is the primary objective, and keeping all players safely in the game our primary concern.**