

2018 Rules for 7/ 8 softball.
Focus is on fun.

Game outline:

- Game is 6 innings or 1:45 min drop dead.
- A player may only play in one position for 2 innings in a game. Example: Player A can play SS for 2 consecutive or 2 non-consecutive innings but cannot play SS for more than 2 in any one game. This is to promote all players getting the opportunity to play infield unless there is a safety issue.
- For the in house tournament at the end of the season the 2 inning max position rule will be suspended and coaches can play whoever they choose.
- Field lining is responsibility of the home team.
- Batters box, 8' circle around pitching rubber, foul lines and a line halfway between first-second, second-third and third and home.
- Coach should pitch with at least one foot in the circle. But use discretion the goal is to get the kids to hit if a coach is struggling to hit "sweet spot" opposing coaches should accommodate. The goal is to get the ball in play. Nothing is gained by either team with a strike out.
- Play stops when pitcher has control of the ball in the circle. Runners not past the half way line between bases need to return to previous base.

- 5 runs max per inning. No catch up last inning if home team is up by more than 5 the game is over.
- One base on an overthrow.

For example: Fielder throws ball past first baseman. All runners advance one base. Lead runners cannot advance beyond one base. If runner began play at second they get third, third to home.

- Batter gets 6 pitches. If batter fouls off the 6th pitch they get another. If they foul off the 1st through 5th pitch and do not make contact on 6th pitch they are out.
- Coaches at first and third must be competent and confident. They are to make the calls on the field and be treated same as an umpire. Managers on both teams need to back the calls. If there is a question please discuss discreetly between innings.
- Managers are to keep parents under control.
- Focus is on the kids. Improving and understanding the positions on the field and the flow of the game. Defensive coaches are permitted to coach from the outfield and should make the calls at second base.
- Infielders should wear masks or helmets on defense.

Perspective and common sense need to be practiced by Managers, parents and coaches. There will be zero tolerance for escalated conflicts during the games and in front of the kids.

Note: The 7/8 division more than any other can be stressful for all involved. Coaches are part of the game, making calls, pitching and trying to run the team. Parents are completely invested in every pitch and play at every base. Many may have little experience of the rules of the game or in contrary try to apply USSSA rules which can create a vacuum of tension that has unfortunately resulted in the police being called in the past. Being aware and quashing it early is my best advice.