

BALL DIAMOND BOOSTERS ASSOCIATION / GREMLINS BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL PARENT HANDOUT

Thank you for being part of the Ball Diamond Boosters Association and Gremlin baseball / softball family! The goal of Gremlins softball & baseball is to provide a fun, safe and competitive environment for all players that play baseball & softball in the Grafton area.

Our mission is to provide the absolute best player development no matter what age group players fall into. This handout is meant to provide information to families so they can have the best experience possible especially when they are new to the program.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Registration will be completed on the Gremlins Baseball/Softball website: www.gremlinsball.com. Data collected during the registration process will be viewed by the Ball Diamond Boosters Association Board, Coaches Committee and Coaches. The information will not be shared with any 3rd parties. Please have your child registered before **March 31st, 2026**. The child may not practice unless they have registered. When registering your child please follow the age parameters defined by Cal Ripken Youth Baseball age grouping (May 1st cutoff date) and American Softball Association Youth Softball age groupings (August 31, 2025)

EQUIPMENT NEEDS AND WHERE TO BUY THEM

Players need a certain amount of equipment to play. Some is provided by Ball Diamond Boosters Association and the rest is up to the parents.

Glove: Player or Parent's responsibility - Everyone needs to have their own baseball glove. You do not need to purchase a catcher's mitt. This is provided with every equipment bag.

Jersey: All Players in T-Ball, 8U baseball and 8U softball will have a T-shirt style jersey purchased for them. All other age groups (10U baseball, 12U baseball, Babe Ruth baseball, and 10U – 18U softball) will have the option to purchase a jersey personalized with the number of choice and name on the back for a fee. If they chose NOT TO purchase their own, BDBA will have jerseys to use for the season but must be turned in at the end of season.

Baseball Cap: Baseball caps can be purchased through the concessions of the BDBA. We do not handle personalized orders for caps.

Pants and belt: Starting at the 10U Cal Ripken baseball age, players are required to have baseball pants (color scheme shall be determined by the coaches) belt is optional. Starting at 12U and up Softball players are required to have pants (color scheme shall be determined by the coaches) belt is optional.

Cleats: Baseball / Softball cleats are not a required item, although they are highly recommended. Metal baseball cleats are not legal until players reach the Babe Ruth age group (13-15 years old).

All bats, batting helmets, catcher's gear and baseballs are provided by Ball Diamond Boosters Association. Some parents opt to buy a bat for their child. If you decide to buy a bat for your son or daughter, please be sure to adhere to Cal Ripken and Babe Ruth bat standards. If bats are not legal by these standards, they cannot be used at practice or during games. An expectation of personally owned bats brought to practice or games is they will be shared unless specifically stated by the coach they are not.

PARENT PROGRAM COMMITMENTS

With most youth activities, there is a certain level of parent commitments that need to be met to ensure the best possible program for our players. The following requirements are necessary to make that happen.

1. Parents are highly encouraged to participate in the fundraising campaigns of the BDBA over the course of the season. All proceeds from the fundraising efforts are used to provide direct benefit to the Gremlins baseball or softball programs.
2. Parents are **REQUIRED** to volunteer to work concessions and/or help out at practices whenever requested. DIBS will be set up to assist in this process.
3. Parents are responsible for letting coaches know if their player will not be at games or practices. Coaches will make arrangements with their teams on how they would like this communication to take place.

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

As stated in the opening, the mission of Ball Diamond Boosters Association is to give all players the best opportunity to have fun and develop skills to their maximum potential. There are several key factors that our organization feels are key to reaching that potential. Hitting a baseball or softball is one of the most difficult things to do in all of sports. The importance of taking cuts in the batting cage cannot be stressed enough. There are typically several opportunities to get time in the batting cage before regularly scheduled practices begin. These sessions are not mandatory but are highly encouraged.

Tournament play outside of our regular season league schedule is another important building block for our players. We feel it is important for their growth as individuals and a team to play in these environments. Playing against larger towns and in highly competitive environments gives our players the confidence and knowledge that they can compete with anyone.

Pitching is of utmost importance to a successful program. Gremlins/Spoiler Baseball or Softball has always felt this way and this philosophy has become even more important with the addition of a pitch count at all levels of play starting at the Cal Ripken level or Impact Softball League levels. We want every kid that has even the slightest inkling of pitching to have the opportunity to try and do so. The more players that can pitch, the better off each team is.

ROSTER AND PLAY UP POLICY

Ball Diamond Boosters Association and Gremlins Baseball / Softball requires a policy where players can be moved to a different level of play other than the level dictated by the player's date of birth. Moving players to a different level of play enhances playing opportunities for the affected player(s), and also the affected team(s). Rostering of players is held by the Ball

Diamond Boosters Association Coaches Committee to be consistent and beneficial to players, teams and the baseball and softball program as a whole. The Coaches Committee will be the entity that determines who, when, if and where players are placed on rosters with Ball Diamond Boosters Association and Gremlins Baseball / Softball rosters. This will include determining sizes of rosters at each level of play. List of registrants will be collected by Ball Diamond Boosters Association then provided to the Coaches Committee or delegate for rostering and placement.

The term roster includes in house, league and travel rosters. The term travel roster includes State advancing and beyond. Ball Diamond Boosters Association and Gremlins Baseball / Softball will roster players on their respective rosters based on the age parameters defined by Cal Ripken Youth Baseball age grouping and American Softball Association Youth Softball age groupings.

PLAY UP POLICY:

The Ball Diamond Boosters Association and Gremlins Baseball / Softball reserve the authority to allow a child to play up but it will be based on the following criteria:

1. There is a need of players to field a team or needs of the program, **OR**
2. The child has or will be assessed by the coaches committee to determine skill level and to mitigate any safety concerns. **AND**
3. The parents of the child will allow the child to play up. **AND**
4. The playing of the child up doesn't deter the team from participating in any league or tournament. **AND**
5. It may include consideration of a sibling on a team of adjacent level of play.

Application of the above mentioned criteria will be held solely by the Coaches Committee with input from the Executive Committee of the Ball Diamond Boosters Association.

Everyone involved with Ball Diamond Boosters Association, Gremlins Baseball / Softball and Grafton Parks and Recreations would like to thank you for registering to play this great sport. Baseball and Softball seasons are relatively quick in our region and we try to maximize the time we have to play the game. Having a strong support group of parents is vital to a successful program. Please do your best to come and cheer for our teams, volunteer to work during hosted tournaments and support our coaches. Please thank the folks that make this happen; Coaches, Ball Diamond Booster Board Members, Park Board Directors, grounds crew and all those who volunteer. We hope that you have a fun and fulfilling season with Gremlin's Baseball and Softball.

WELCOME TO THE FAMILY!