

Welcome to the Titans Fastpitch Association Registration for 2024 Summer Program!

Titans Fastpitch Association (TFA) Philosophy:

To grow and develop competitive athletes in our community by providing the appropriate level of training and competition for each athlete. By offering and delivering a positive fastpitch softball experience for our players at every age level, we can make a positive difference in the lives of our athletes and the community.

Program Goals

- Provide effective, high quality softball training for players and coaches at all levels, by providing competitive opportunities and developing athletic skills for advancement to higher levels.
- Provide a structured program that is cooperative with and respected by other community programs.
- Create a fun and entertaining environment for the players, families, coaches and community.
- Seek to maximize the potential of every player in the program.
- Develop players and teams that are able to compete at a high level.
- Encourage and foster player participation for the full length of a player's youth sports career.
- Foster the importance of teamwork and the understanding that all team members play an integral part in the success of the team.
- Promote skill development and create positive self-esteem for every player

TFA is a non-profit organization and 100% of the funds/fees collected by TFA go directly back into softball programs & player development within our community.

The 2024 Fastpitch softball season runs from April to July for all teams. Once teams are formed in March, team practices will start in April and the first league games begin at the end of April.

***League games for 14U and older late May and HS will start in early June.

This is a traveling league with weekend tournaments and players must be able to attend all games and tournaments during the season.

*** 8U teams use a pitching machine in the games so all pitches are consistent and the same speed. These teams have the option to participate in tournaments outside of league, but not required.

2024 Dates of Play:

- 8-Under Wednesday. *Double Header the last 2 games of the regular season.*
 - May 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29, June 5th, 12th, 19th & 26th
- 10-Under Tuesday and Thursday. Thursday games do not start until the week of June 2nd.
 - April 30th, May 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th, June 4th, 6th, 11th, 13th, 18th, 20th
- 12-Under Monday and Wednesday.
 - April 30th, May 1st, 6th, 8th, 13th, 15th, 20th, 22nd, 29th, June 3rd, 5th, 10th, 12th, 17th, 19th,
- 14-Under Tuesday and Thursday.
 - June 4th, 6th, 11th, 13th, 18th, 20th, 25th, 27th, July 2nd, 9th, 11th
- High School Monday and Wednesday
 - June 3rd, 5th, 10th, 12th, 17th, 19th, 24th, 26th, July 1st, 3rd, 8th, 10th

WEEKEND TOURNAMENTS

The registration fee for 10U, 12U, 14U & HS includes Big West league games, **3 REQUIRED TOURNEMENTS** (**one preselected tournament**, State Qualifier Tournament, State Tournament - must qualify). The registration fee for 8U includes Big West league games and the State Tournament. (<https://mnsoftball.com/pages/cms/big-west>)

- 8U: State Tournament: June 29 – 30
- 10U and 12U State Qualifier Tournament (**Required**): June 22 – 23
- 10U and 12U MMFL State Tournament (**Required**): (team must qualify): June 29 – 30

- 14U/HS State Qualifier Tournament **(Required)**: July 13 – 14
- 14U/HS States Tournament **(Required)**: (team must qualify): July 20 – 21
- All Age Levels **(Optional)**: Teams can select more tournaments but each team will be required to pay for them

Other Important Dates:

- Monsta 10U - July 25-28, 2024
- Monsta 12U/14U/HS - August 1-4, 2024
- **First day of tryouts – August 5, 2024**
- USA Softball Selects - TBD
- Parade of Champions Event at Target Field – August 11, 2024
- Fall Ball Week 1 - August 24-25
- Fall State - September 28-29

REGISTRATION FEES – DEADLINE TO REGISTER FOR TRYOUTS IS March 17th!!!!!!

<https://www.titansfastpitch.org>

2024 Registration Fee:

- \$75 - 8U
- \$200/10U
- \$200/12U
- \$200/14U
- \$200/HS

NOTE: All registration fees are non-refundable once a player is placed on a team (Medical exceptions may apply).

AGE DIVISIONS:

Level of play is determined by the player's age on September 1, 2023. For example, if your daughter was 8 years old on September 1st and she turns 9 in January, she would play at the 8U level. If she was 11 on September 1st, she would play at the 12U level.

- 8U - Player must be 8 years of age or younger on September 1, 2023.
- 10U – Player must be 10 years of age or younger on September 1, 2023.
- 12U – Player must be 12 years of age or younger on September 1, 2023.
- 14U – Player must be 14 years of age or younger on September 1, 2023.
- HS – Player must be 15 years of age or **older** on September 1, 2023.

*** Regarding 8U aged Players: If your child has played 8U for at least TWO seasons, and ***you feel as a parent*** that your child is physically & mentally ready to be moved to the next age level (10U) based on their skills, your child has the option register for the 10U age level.

Steps to take:

1. Register your player for 10U, including, paying the \$200 age level fee.
2. Prepare your child for playing at a higher age level.
3. If the Board feels confident that your player will be ***successful*** in the older age level, they will be placed on the team decided by the Board. If they are not placed on a 10U team, you will be refunded the portion of the fee between the two age levels.
4. ***This EXCEPTION of moving players will only be available at the 8U age level for players that have already played a minimum of TWO seasons at the 8U age level.***

******TFA does not plan to cut players from any age level. Our goal is to place every player on a team who registers. However, if needed to fill a team, players may be moved onto a higher age level of play, as determined by the TFA Boards Discretion******

COACHING

If you are interested in being a parent coach, volunteer or team helper this summer, please complete the information when registering your child on the TFA website. Please note: **ONLY Three coaches/adults will be allowed on the bench.** At least one coach must be ACE educated. **All bench coaches/adults must have a background check and be SafeSport trained.**

COACHES MEETING DATES: (Medina Entertainment Center)

- 10U & 12U – April 8th, 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
 - 14U & HS – April 8th, 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm
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FUNDRAISING

Fundraising provides additional funds for equipment, training tools, and other related expenses – TFA will be hosting a Butter Braid & Heggies Pizza Fundraiser. **It is a minimum expectation to sell at least 15 butter braids/pizzas ANNUALLY per child OR there is a \$75 buyout option (per child).** If the minimum is not met, families will be responsible for the difference of shorted sales (\$5 per butter braid/pizza). There will be prizes awarded for the top three individuals in sales. 2024 Heggies Pizza Fundraiser: **Sell Dates April 8 – 28, PICK UP MAY 14TH @ The Varsity Softball Game**

JERSEY AND UNIFORM GUIDELINES

Jersey Fee 2024: **WAIVED (8U & Up)**

Starting in the 2024 season, the Board has voted to get new jersey tops each year. The players will KEEP their existing number. If you do not know your players number, please contact Kelly Jo. There is a master listing of number assignments we can refer too. New players will be assigned on OPEN number after registration is complete. Numbers will range from 00 to 99. Last names are also on the jerseys so make sure last names are correct on registration.

****Please keep in mind the smaller the size, the harder it may to but bigger numbers on.***

Additional items needed at all ages:

- Black Softball pants (if you need a belt- make it Titan (Columbia) blue or black)
- Black Socks
- Helmet
- Fielder's Mask
- Softball Glove
- Tennis Shoes or **Softball Cleats** (Soccer cleats are not allowed! *Please note metal cleats can only be worn by 14U & up players!*)

TFA does have used helmets and bats, we are working on setting up a day for everyone that needs items to come and see what we have.

Attendance Policy: As noted, teams can select tournaments but each team will be required to pay for them. In order to ensure that each team has enough players rostered for EVERY game, it is extremely important that you or your player contacts the coach as soon as possible if they know they will be missing a game or tournament.

Players Birth Certificates: Once you are added to a team on the MN Softball Website, you will need to upload your child's birth certificate. You only need to do this one time and it will carry through for the rest of their playing year with the league.

TRYOUTS

Tryouts will be held on **two days** for all age groups 10U – 12U; your player **MUST** attend one of the two dates. Players will be evaluated and scored during tryouts. In the event that a player is not able to attend tryouts, they will be placed on a team based on previous coaches and board member recommendation. At this time, no third tryout date is set but is subject to change. Teams will be determined in March and players/parents will be notified.

*****If your player can not attend either set tryout date – please contact TFA as soon as you can.*****

14U & HS Players – You **MUST** also register by the March 17th Deadline! Because of number projections, **YOU WILL NOT HAVE A TRYOUT**, BUT you are **REQUIRED TO HELP AT LEAST ONE OF THE TRYOUT DATES!!!!** You need to contact the board and let us know what date you will be helping at, email titansfastpitchassoc@gmail.com ASAP and let us know so we can coordinate tasks and get a proper food order number together.

*****NEW FORMATS*****Tryout dates and times are as follows:

Friday, March 22, 2024:

Location – **Le Center Middle School**

10U – Check In & Stretching @ 6:15. Tryouts start at 6:30. – **Hitting, Fielding, Timed Run, Throwing Speed ONLY**

12U – Check In & Stretching @ 7:30. Tryouts start at 7:45. – **Hitting, Fielding, Timed Run, Throwing Speed ONLY**

Friday, March 22, 2024: PITCHING & CATCHING TRYOUTS

12U - Check In & Warm Up @ 6:15 - Tryouts start at 6:30, then proceed to your age group regular tryout

10U - Check In & Warm Up **AFTER** your age group regular tryout

Saturday, March 23, 2024:

Location – Le Center Middle School

ALL AGES: Check In & Warm Up @ 8:30/8:45 - Tryouts start at 9:00

Saturday, March 23, 2024 PITCHING & CATCHING TRYOUTS

ALL AGES: AFTER your age group regular tryout

PARENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED INTO THE GYM DURING YOUR PLAYERS TRYOUT. ALTHOUGH, A PITCHER'S PARENT NEEDS TO BE READY TO WARM UP YOUR PITCHER BEFORE TRYOUTS IF WE NEED YOU TOO!!!! BRING YOUR GLOVE!!!!

Pitching & Catching Evaluations:

All girls that would like to be placed as a pitcher or catcher this summer will have to do the evaluation at their respective tryout time and indicate when registering and confirm at tryouts.

******* The Board has determined that it is up to the parent/player on how they would like their player evaluated for team placement. Parents will have the option at registration to have your player placed on a team based on either their pitching/catching evaluation score OR their overall skills evaluation score. Things to note:

- As you register your player, please keep in mind that if your child does **not participate** in a pitching/catching evaluation at tryouts, your player may not be used as a pitcher/catcher during the season. By not having your player evaluated at these positions, you are agreeing to them not being utilized in those positions during the season. Please know this upfront.
- If your player would like to be evaluated as a pitcher/catcher, but would like to still be placed on a team based off overall skills evaluation score, the Board will take that into consideration when teams are being formed.
- Please note that it is the Boards goal to ensure all teams have proper & adequate pitching and catching to give teams the best chance at success. Please consider that the top pitchers and catchers from evaluations will be placed first on teams, and then the other players will be added to teams based on overall scores and Board/Coaches discretion.

TRYOUT EVALUATIONS

The tryout drills are predetermined and intended to demonstrate specific skills to the evaluators. Evaluator's rate various skills on a predetermined point scale. Points are accumulated and plugged into a ranking program by the TITAN FASTPITCH BOARD. **All tryout results are confidential. NO ONE outside the TITAN FASTPITCH BOARD is allowed to see the final results.** Not even the evaluators see the score sheets of other evaluators or the final results. Tryout evaluation numbers are entered into a ranking program by TFA BOARD MEMBERS ONLY!!!

The information accumulated helps determine the number of teams, the level of play, and how to best support the program. Pitchers and catchers will be placed based on tryout scores or overall score depending on parent choice indicated at registration and confirmed at tryout check-in. Players are notified by email, coordinated so all players are notified at the same time. PLEASE REMEMBER, IT IS NO FUN FOR ANYONE IF TEAMS DO NOT HAVE QUALITY PITCHING & CATCHING!!!

- 1 = A level player
- 2 = A-B level
- 3 = B level
- 4 = B-C level
- 5 = C level

Low score is highest rated. All scores are added and averaged per player for an overall rating.

TRYOUT ASSESSMENT

FIELDING

***All fielding drills will take into account throwing mechanics (hand on top of ball/palm back at T position, elbow up, follow through), also speed and accuracy of throw.

Fly Balls: DRILL – 5 Fly balls will be thrown Left/ Right/ Front/ Back/ Straight at them, appropriate in height for the age level being assessed. Players will start in same location for each thrown ball. After catching the ball, players will throw the ball to a player at Home base.

- **Evaluators looking for:** Proper use of the drop step, glove position at the point of the catch, position of feet at the time of the catch (getting behind the ball to make a good throw), arm strength and accuracy of the throw after the catch, along with verbal announcement of calling for the ball. **One score for all five fly balls and one score for all five throws.**

Ground Balls: DRILL – 5 Ground balls will be hit/tossed to the player. Balls will be hit left/right/straight at/short hit. After fielding the ball, players will throw to a player on first base.

- **Evaluators looking for:** Fielder's ready position (athletic, knees bent, legs wide and player being on the balls of her feet) Lateral movement left and right, charging in on a bunt, glove to hand transfer, strength and accuracy of the throw. **One score for all five ground balls and one score for all five throws.**

HITTING

Live Pitching: DRILL – Players will receive pitches from a live pitcher. Appropriate speed: 10U, 12U, 14U

- **Evaluators looking for:** Contact along with proper fundamentals. Players should strive for line drives and hard ground balls, trying to avoid fly balls. Correct mechanics being used including: weight transfer, stacked body position (head is centered over the shoulders, shoulders over the hips, and hips over their base/feet), hands inside ball, and extension. **One score per five swings. Ten total swings.**

Bunting: DRILL – The player will receive 5 balls to bunt. Attempt to bunt the first 2 balls to the left without going foul, and the next 2 to the right, 1 either way without going foul.

- **Evaluators looking for:** Proper balance when squaring up, hand position on the bat, bat position when attempting to bunt. Ability to place bunts to the center, left or right sides of the infield. Ability to keep the ball fair. **One score for all five bunts.**

THROWING SPEED

Player will make 3 throws that are RECORDED via radar gun. Score will be an average of the 3. (3 WARM UPS)

RUNNING

Timed run from 1st to 2nd base twice, with speed averaged. This time will only be factored into the final assessment process if a player's overall does not clearly define their team placement (bubble score).

ATTITUDE AND EFFORT

Evaluators looking for: Listening, no talking during instructions, hustling to stations, hustling after missed balls. SMILING! CHEERING ON TEAMMATES! CONFIDENCE! No actual scores assigned for Attitude and Effort, but will notate in comments for the TITAN FASTPITCH BOARD to review.

PITCHING

1. Each pitcher will be given time to warm up with a catcher
2. Pitchers will be evaluated on the following items:
 - a. Control of 8 Pitches (Basic Fastpitch)
 - b. Mechanics of 8 Pitches (Basic Fastpitch)
 - c. Speed tested on 3 Pitches (Basic Fastpitch)
 - d. Given the opportunity to throw UP TO 3 optional pitches with a speed evaluation on change up's

CATCHING

Evaluation will be based on the following items:

1. Stance/Footwork/Blocking
 2. Catching/Ball Framing
 3. Throwing Mechanics & Accuracy
 4. Arm Strength
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TEAM FORMATION PROCESS

1. Numbers of players per age group/team
2. Pitcher and/or catcher tryouts.
3. Skills based tryout assessment
4. Coaches' evaluations from previous season if needed.

The team formation process is one of the most important functions of the TITAN FASTPITCH program. Our goal is to provide a tryout environment that is fair to all players and allows them to demonstrate their abilities to a group of qualified evaluators.

PLEASE REMEMBER, IT IS NOT FUN FOR ANYONE IF TEAMS DO NOT HAVE QUALITY PITCHING & CATCHING!!!