



Bismarck Youth Fastpitch Softball Association 8U League Game Rules

The 8U division focuses on player development and having fun. It is important that players learn the basic skills of the game (throwing, batting, game rules, etc.) and leave this season with a positive experience which will promote them to return the following season. The rules listed below are intended to provide for a learning atmosphere and introduce players into healthy competition while still focusing on fun and basic skills.

Rules

1. There will be one game each week and one scheduled practice night. On game night there will be sufficient time provided for a team warm up prior to the start of the game. Warm up suggestions will be provided with coaching aids. Games are five innings or 60-minute time limit (whichever comes first).
 2. Practice days and times will be assigned based on availability of fields.
 3. Players will use an 11" hard softball.
 4. Coaches will pitch to batters from the pitching rubber placed at 35 ft. Coaches will pitch underhand to mimic fastpitch, no wind up required but encouraged. If the coach is unable to get the ball across the plate, they may take a step towards the batter, as long as both feet are still inside the pitching circle. Batters will have five pitches from the coach to try and hit the ball. If they foul off the ball it will not count towards their 5 pitches. If the batter doesn't swing at a pitch that is hittable, it will count towards their 5 pitches. If a player doesn't swing at a truly bad pitch, determined by the coach, the coach may have 2 additional pitches. If the coach is unable to throw a hit-able pitch still after the additional 2 pitches, then the player will move to the tee. If a batter is unable to make contact after the 5th pitch, then a tee may be used to put the ball into play.
- **The goal being that a tee won't be needed at the end of the season****
5. An inning is over after one of the following scenarios takes place: all players bat, 6 runs are scored, or 3 outs are made by the defense. A book will be kept each game to assist in keeping track of this.
 6. Coaches are encouraged to be in the field to instruct players but are not to interfere with the game, please stand in the outfield or foul territory.
 7. Catchers are required to wear all gear (helmet, chest guard, shin guards, etc.).
 8. Facemasks are **STRONGLY RECOMMENDED** for all players.
 9. 3 Outs: players can make an out by fielding the ball and throwing to first base, or any base there is a force out; beating out the runner to the base, tagging a runner in the baseline, or catching a pop up.
 10. The infield fly rule is not in effect.
 11. Coaches will be pitching to batters.
 - a. All pitching will be off the pitching rubber (set at 35'). If the coach is unable to pitch from the rubber they may step forward as long as both feet are still in the pitching circle.
 - b. Each player will get 5 pitches to attempt to put the ball into play.
 - c. If after 5 attempts the ball is not put into play, the coach will bring in the batting tee and allow the player to put the ball into play.
 12. **NO** bunting, walking, stealing, advancing base runners on overthrows to the pitcher from the catcher, advancing base runners on passed balls by catcher.



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13. It is required to rotate your batting lineup and field positions.
- We want to encourage player development of multiple positions and skills, without causing too much confusion. It is recommended to set your lineup and fielding positions ahead of time, as to not delay the game.
 - Rotate batting line up each game.
 - Rotate fielding positions every other inning. Infield can play the same position for 2-3 innings, if you have extra girls on the bench then rotate them in with outfield if needed.
 - Extra players will sit on the bench. 10 players on the field at a time.
 - A player cannot sit the bench 2 innings in a row.
 - Players must play both infield and outfield throughout the game.
14. Scores will be kept for coaches' purposes only, the use of the scoreboard is not needed.
15. No umpires are provided during games. Decisions are left up to coaches of each team. Coaches may designate a parent umpire or a specific person to be the umpire if preferred.
16. The focus of fielding will largely be to field the ball and throw to first base to make the out. Outfield will field the ball and make a play at second base, then second base or shortstop will throw the ball to first base or back to the pitcher. If the ball is overthrown at first base, runners may advance one base.
- ** The goal is to encourage the girls to field the ball and make a play****
17. When a batter hits the ball, the batter can run as many bases as they can, until the ball makes it to the pitcher. Once the ball is in the pitcher's hands the play is over. If the ball is fielded and thrown to first to make a play and overthrown, the runner may only advance to second base.

Go to www.bismarckfastpitch.com for coaching aides.

Note: We are trying to develop pitchers at this age level. Pitching at this age will provide for an opportunity to work on the motion of Fastpitch softball and will hopefully better develop pitchers for the 10U division later down the road. The goal for players at this age level is to learn the correct mechanics of the pitch. Coaches should start teaching the proper mechanics early in the season, so they can be applied at the halfway point. For games, coaches are to look for pitchers that are able to get the ball across the plate so it is hittable. Do not worry if there is an arc on the ball, it just needs to cross the plate in a way that is hittable by the batter. Any player who wants to learn the motion is allowed to work on pitching during practice time. Pitching is a specialized skill and coaches should stress to players and parents that extra practice time at home may be needed to be successful.

Code of Conduct

It is the coach's responsibility to ensure all players, parents, and spectators are following the league's code of conduct to be respectful of umpires, coaches, players, and other fans.