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# RULE 1

## DEFINITIONS

### **BALL.**

A ball is a legal pitch which is not swung at by the batter, and which does one or more of the following:

- a. never enters the strike zone;
- b. touches the ground before reaching home plate;
- c. touches home plate.

**NOTE:** It is the umpire's judgement whether a pitch enters the strike zone, and as such may not be questioned.

### **BASE ON BALLS.**

A base on balls permits a batter to gain first base without liability to be put out and is awarded to a batter by the umpire when four pitches are judged to be balls.

### **BASELINE.**

A baseline is a direct line between the outer corners of two successive bases, that is, between home and first, first and second, second and third, and third and home.

### **BASEPATH.**

A basepath is a direct line between a runner's position and any base she is attempting to reach at the time a defensive player is attempting (or about to attempt) to tag that runner.

### **BATTED BALL.**

A batted ball is any ball that hits the bat, or is hit by the bat, and lands either in fair or foul territory. No intention to hit the ball is necessary.

### **BATTER'S BOX.**

The batter's box is the area to which the batter is restricted while in position with the intention of helping her team to obtain runs. The lines are considered as being within the batter's box.

### **BATTER/RUNNER.**

A batter/runner is a player who has finished a turn at bat but has not yet been put out or touched first base.

### **BATTING ORDER.**

The batting order is the official listing of offensive players in the order in which members of that team must come to bat. All players on a team are in the batting order regardless of whether they are positioned in the field during a particular inning.

### **BLOCKED BALL.**

A blocked ball is a batted or thrown ball that is touched, stopped, or handled by a person not engaged in the game, or which touches any

object that is not part of the official equipment or official playing area.

**EFFECT:** The ball becomes dead; see Rule 9.

### **BUNT.**

A bunt is a ball that is intentionally tapped by the bat rather than swung at by the batter. Bunting is allowed only in Middle and Older Divisions, and is allowed whether a player/pitcher or a pitching machine threw the pitch.

### **CATCH.**

A catch is a legally caught ball which occurs when the fielder catches a batted or thrown ball with her hand(s) or glove. If the ball is merely held in the fielder's arm(s) or prevented from dropping to the ground by some part of the fielder's body, equipment, or clothing, the catch is not completed until the ball is in the grasp of the fielder's hand(s) or glove. It is not a catch if a fielder, immediately after she contacts the ball, collides with another player or wall or falls to the ground and drops the ball as a result of the collision or falling to the ground. In establishing a valid catch, the fielder shall hold the ball long enough to prove she has complete control of the ball and that her release of the ball is voluntary and intentional. If a player drops the ball while in the act of throwing it, it is a valid catch.

### **CATCHER'S BOX.**

The catcher's box is that area within which the catcher must remain until the pitch is released. The lines around the box are considered to be within the box.

### **CHARGED CONFERENCE. (Defensive)**

A charged conference takes place when the defensive team requests a suspension of play and a representative (not in the field) of the defensive team enters the playing field and delivers a message (by any means) to the pitcher.

### **COACH/PITCHER. (except Older Division)**

An adult that pitches to batters or (Younger and Middle Divisions) operates a pitching machine. See also **PLAYER/PITCHER**.

**NOTE:** The adult need not be a coach. Rules involving ball contact with the coach/pitcher do *not* apply to ball contact with a pitching machine. Pitching machines are part of the playing field, in fair territory, and the ball is live after contact with a pitching machine.

### **COLLISION.**

A collision is the act of a runner when she crashes into a fielder in possession of, or in the act of receiving, a batted or thrown ball. See also **OBSTRUCTION** and **INTERFERENCE**.

### **CROWHOP.**

A crowhop is the illegal act of a pitcher who steps, drags or hops off the front of the pitcher's plate, replants the pivot foot, establishes a

second impetus (or starting point), pushes off from the newly established starting point, and completes the delivery.

**DEAD BALL.**

Dead ball occurs when a call of "TIME" or "DEAD BALL" is made by the umpire making the ball "out of play." The ball is not in play again until the pitcher is holding the ball within the pitcher's circle and the plate umpire calls or signals "PLAY BALL."

**DEAD BALL TERRITORY.**

Dead ball territory is the same as the out-of-play territory.

**DEFENSIVE TEAM.**

The defensive team is the team in the field during the half inning when their opponents are at bat.

**DELAYED DEAD BALL.**

Delayed dead ball is a game situation in which the ball remains alive until the conclusion of a play. When the entire play is completed, the umpire shall rule a dead ball, and enforce the appropriate ruling.

**EJECTION FROM THE GAME.**

Ejection is the act of any umpire ordering a player, official or any team member to leave the game and the grounds.

**FAIR BALL.**

See Rule 7, Sec.9.

**FAIR TERRITORY.**

Fair territory is that part of the playing field within, and including, the first and third base foul lines from home base to the bottom of the extreme playing field fence and perpendicularly upwards.

**FAKE TAG.**

A fake tag is a form of obstruction on a runner, while advancing or returning to a base, by a fielder who neither has the ball nor is about to receive the ball, who pretends to administer a tag, and which impedes the progress of the runner. The runner does not have to stop or slide. Obstruction occurs even if the runner merely slows down when a fake tag is administered.

**FIELDER.**

A fielder is a member of the defensive team.

**FLYBALL.**

A flyball is any ball batted into the air.

**FORCE OUT.**

A force out is an out which can be made only when a runner loses the right to the base which she is occupying because the batter becomes a runner, and before the batter or a succeeding runner has been put out.

**FOUL BALL.**

See Rule 7, Sec.10.

**FOUL TIP.**

A foul tip is a batted ball which goes directly from the bat, not higher than the batter's head, to the catcher's hand or glove and is legally caught by the catcher. A foul tip has the effect of a strike.

**HALF-WAY LINE.**

A half-way line is a line drawn across the baselines half-way between first and second, second and third, and third and home bases to determine, when "TIME" is called, whether the runner returns to the last base achieved or advances to the base she is approaching.

**HOME TEAM.**

The home team is the team designated in the schedule as the one that bats second in an inning. The home team supplies the bases and lines the field. It is customary but not required that the home team occupy the third base dugout. This means:

- a. If both teams arrive at the same time, the home team gets to choose their dugout as long as they make their choice known right away to the visiting team.
- b. If the visiting team arrives first, or if the home team doesn't make a choice right away, the visiting team must put their stuff in the first-base dugout, and the home team loses their choice.

**ILLEGALLY BATTED BALL.**

An illegally batted ball occurs when the batter hits the ball fair or foul and when:

- a. at the time the bat makes contact with the ball, the batter's entire left or right foot is completely outside the lines of the batter's box and on the ground.
- b. at the time the bat makes contact with the ball, any part of the batter's left or right foot is touching home plate.
- c. an illegal bat is used.

**IN FLIGHT.**

In flight is the term used for any batted, thrown or pitched ball which has not yet touched the ground or some object or person other than a fielder.

**INFIELD.**

The infield is that portion of the field in fair territory which includes areas normally covered by infielders.

**INFIELD FLY. (Applies only to Older Division)**

A fair flyball (not including a line drive or an attempted bunt) which can be caught by an infielder, or any player stationed near the infield, with ordinary effort, when first and second bases or first, second and third bases are occupied before two outs. The umpire shall immediately call, "INFIELD FLY," when the ball is in flight, and the batter is out regardless of whether the ball is caught. The ball is live and runners may advance in jeopardy once the ball is caught or

touched. If the declared infield fly becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul ball.

#### **INFIELDERS (INFIELD POSITIONS).**

Infielders are the players who play the six positions of Pitcher; Catcher; First, Second, and Third Bases; and Shortstop.

#### **IN JEOPARDY.**

In jeopardy is any situation when the ball is in play and a runner (or batter/runner) is in liability to be put out.

#### **INNING.**

An inning is that portion of a game within which the teams alternate on offense and defense and in which there are three outs for each team. A new inning begins immediately after the final out of the previous inning.

#### **INTERFERENCE.**

Interference is the act of an offensive player or team member, umpire or spectator which impedes, hinders, or confuses a defensive player attempting to execute a play.

- a. Interference can be verbal as well as physical. Interference occurs when offensive players, coaches, or affiliated spectators call out instructions to defensive players.
- b. Coach interference also occurs when a base coach physically helps a runner return to or leave a base.
- c. Coach/pitcher interference occurs when a fair ball touches the coach/pitcher (not the pitching machine) in fair territory before touching a fielder.
- d. Umpire interference occurs when an umpire hinders a catcher's throw to prevent a stolen base, or when a fair ball touches an umpire on fair territory before touching a fielder.
- e. Spectator interference occurs when a spectator reaches out of the stands, or goes on the playing field, and touches a live ball. See also part (a), above.

**NOTE:** On any interference call, the ball is dead.

#### **LEGAL DELIVERY.**

Legal delivery occurs when the pitcher complies with the provisions of Rule 6 when pitching the ball.

#### **LINE DRIVE.**

A line drive is a flyball that is batted sharply and directly into the playing field.

#### **NO PITCH.**

"NO PITCH" is called by the umpire when the pitcher pitches the ball when "TIME" has been called and play has been suspended.

#### **NO PLAY ARC (Micro Division only).**

An arc in fair territory twenty feet out from home plate.

- a. A ball batted off the tee must pass the arc to be a legally hit

ball.

- b. Defensive players must stay behind the arc until the ball has been hit.

#### **OBSTRUCTION.**

Obstruction occurs when:

- a. A defensive player or team member takes an action which hinders or prevents a batter from striking or hitting a pitched ball.
- b. A fielder while
  1. not in possession of the ball,
  2. not in the act of fielding a batted ball, or
  3. not about to receive a thrown ball,
 impedes the progress of a runner or batter/runner who is legally running the bases.

#### **OFFENSIVE TEAM.**

The offensive team is the team at bat.

#### **ON-DECK BATTER.**

The on-deck batter is the offensive player whose name follows the name of the batter in the batting order.

#### **OUT-OF-PLAY TERRITORY.**

Out-of-play territory (dead ball territory) is territory beyond the established boundary lines of the playing field. A player may reach into out-of-play territory to make a legal catch.

#### **OUTFIELD.**

The outfield is that portion of the field which is outside the diamond formed by the baselines or the area not normally covered by an infielder and within the foul lines beyond first and third bases, and boundaries of the grounds.

#### **OUTFIELDERS.**

An outfielder is a fielder who plays in right, right center, left center, or left field positions. **NOTE:** Middle and Younger Division outfielders must play at least 20 ft out from the baselines.

#### **OVERSLIDE.**

An overslide is the act of an offensive base runner who slides beyond and loses contact with the base she is attempting to reach. She is then in jeopardy. **NOTE:** The batter/runner may overslide first base without being in jeopardy if she immediately returns to that base.

#### **OVERTHROW.**

An overthrow is a play in which a ball is thrown from one fielder to another to retire a runner who has not reached or is off base, and which goes beyond the boundary lines of the playing field, or becomes blocked.

#### **PASSED BALL.**

A passed ball is a legally delivered ball that should have been held

or controlled by the catcher with ordinary effort.

**PITCH.**

The act performed by the player/pitcher in throwing the ball to the batter.

**NOTE** (Middle and Older Division): If the pitch becomes blocked or goes out of play, one base is awarded all runners who were entitled to steal on that pitch.

**PITCHER'S CIRCLE.**

The pitcher's circle is the area within an 8 ft radius of the pitcher's plate. The lines are considered within the circle.

**PITCHING MACHINE. (Younger and Middle Division only)**

A mechanical device, operated by a coach/pitcher, which pitches to batters. The pitching machine is considered a permanent part of the grounds (like a base), and is in fair territory.

**PIVOT FOOT.**

The pivot foot is that foot with which the pitcher pushes off the pitcher's plate.

**A PLAY.**

A play is an attempt by the defensive team to put out a runner.

**PLAY BALL.**

"PLAY BALL" is the term used by the plate umpire to indicate that play shall begin or be resumed which can only occur when the pitcher holds the ball within the pitcher's circle. All defensive players, except the catcher, who must be in the catcher's box, must be in fair territory to put the ball in play.

**PLAYER COACH.**

A player coach is a member of the team at bat who takes her place within the coaches' lines near first and third base in foul territory to direct the players of her team in running the bases. Two such coaches are allowed. (Player coaches must wear helmets.)

**PLAYER/PITCHER. (Younger and Middle Divisions only)**

A player/pitcher is a girl who plays the defensive pitcher's position during machine pitch, and who may (in Middle Division) pitch to batters. See COACH/PITCHER.

**QUICK RETURN PITCH.**

A quick return pitch is one made by the pitcher with the obvious attempt to catch the batter off balance either before the batter takes her desired position in the batter's box or while she is still off balance as a result of the previous pitch.

**REMOVAL FROM THE GAME (BENCHING).**

Removal is the act of the umpire declaring a player ineligible for further participation in the game as a result of an infraction of the rules.

**NOTE:** Any player so removed may continue to sit on the bench but shall not participate further in the game.

**REPLACEMENT PLAYER.**

A replacement player is a player required to enter the game for a period of time to replace a player who must leave the game to attend to an injury.

**ROTATION CHART.**

The rotation chart is a League form (or facsimile thereof) to be filled out in triplicate showing (i) the batting order; (ii) planned defensive positions of players inning by inning (in accordance with League rotation rules); and (iii) actual defensive positions of players inning by inning. A copy of the chart is to be given to the scorekeepers (showing planned information) and League officials (showing actual information), and the chart is always open to inspection by the opposing coach.

**RUN-DOWN.**

A run-down occurs when fielders attempt to tag a runner out on the basepath by running at her with the ball and, if she changes direction, throwing the ball beyond her to another fielder on the basepath.

**RUNNER.**

A runner is a player of the team at bat who has finished a turn at bat, reached base, and has not yet been put out.

**STEAL. (Middle and Older Divisions only)**

A steal is the act of a runner attempting to advance during a pitch to the batter.

- b. Middle Division: Players on first and third bases may not steal. Players on second base may steal only one base, and may not advance home on a steal, even if a play is attempted.
- c. Older Division: Runners may steal one base only, unless played on, from any base.

**STRIKE.**

See Rule 7, Sec.6.

**STRIKE ZONE.**

The strike zone is that space over any part of home plate between the batter's arm pits and the top of her knees when the batter assumes her natural batting stance.

**TAG.**

A legal tag occurs when a runner not touching a base, or the second runner who simultaneously occupies a base, is touched by a securely held ball or glove securely holding the ball. The ball is not considered to be securely held if it is juggled or dropped by the fielder after tagging the runner, unless the runner deliberately knocks the ball from the hand of the fielder.

**TOUCH.**

A legal touch occurs when a defensive player, who has control of the ball in her hand or glove, touches a base with the ball, the glove holding the ball, or any part of her body.

**TEAM MEMBER.**

A team member is any person authorized to sit on the team bench.

**THROW.**

A throw is the act performed by a fielder when throwing the ball to another fielder.

**NOTE:** If the throw becomes blocked or goes out of play, two bases are awarded all runners from the last base touched at the time of the throw.

**THROWN BAT.**

A thrown bat is the release of the bat by the batter after a turn at bat in a way considered by the umpire to be dangerous to any person(s).

**TIME.**

“TIME” is the term called out by the umpire to suspend play and make the ball dead.

**TRAPPED BALL.**

A trapped ball is a legally batted flyball, including a line drive, which touches the ground momentarily before being taken by a defensive player and is therefore not an out.

**TURN (TIME) AT BAT.**

A turn at bat begins when a player first enters the batter’s box and continues until she is put out or becomes a batter/runner.

**WEEK.**

For League purposes, the week begins Monday at 12:00 AM and ends the following Sunday at 11:59 PM.

**WILD PITCH.**

A wild pitch is a legally delivered ball so high, so low, or so wide of the plate that the catcher cannot or does not stop and control it with ordinary effort.

## RULE 2 THE PLAYING FIELD

**Sec.1. GROUND OR SPECIAL RULES:**

The opposing coaches and the umpire will confer before the game begins to establish the limits of the playing field taking special note of obstructions within the prescribed area. Any obstruction on fair territory less than 200 ft from the plate should be clearly marked for the umpire’s information.

**Sec.2. THE OFFICIAL DIAMOND SHALL HAVE BASE LINES AS FOLLOWS:**

- a. Micro Division shall play on a 50 foot diamond.
- b. Younger Division shall play on a 60 foot diamond. Lines two ft in length shall be drawn across the basepaths half-way between 1st and 2nd, 2nd and 3rd, 3rd and home. (The HALF-WAY LINES, see below)
- c. Middle and Older Division shall play on a 60 foot diamond.

**NOTE:** If, during the game, the base or pitching distances are found to be wrong, correct the error at the start of the next full inning and continue playing the game.

**Sec.3. THE LAYOUT OF THE DIAMOND.**

Also refer to the drawing in the center of this rule book showing official dimensions of the softball diamond. When possible, check distances with a measuring tape or cord. The lines that define an area are part of that area.

- a. (Middle and Older Divisions) The 3 FOOT LINE is drawn parallel to and 3 ft from the baseline (in foul territory), starting at a point halfway between home plate and first base and extending to first base. It defines the runner’s lane.
- b. The BATTER’S ON DECK CIRCLE is a 5 ft (2 1/2 ft radius) circle, placed adjacent to the end of players bench or dugout area closest to home plate, but far enough from home plate so as to be safe.
- c. The BATTER’S BOX, one on each side of home plate, shall measure 3 ft by 7 ft. The inside lines of the batter s box shall be 6 in. from home plate. The front outside corner of the box shall intersect the baseline, and effect which can be achieved by placing the front line 4 ft in front of the point where the plate starts to narrow.
- d. The CATCHER’S BOX shall be a 3-sided rectangle 10 ft in length starting from the rear outside corners of the batter’s boxes and shall be 8.5 ft wide. The catcher’s box does not connect the two batter’s boxes, as it has no front side.

- e. The two COACH'S BOXES are the 15 ft lines drawn outside the diamond, parallel to and 6 ft from the baselines that extend from first and third bases to home plate. The outer edge of the coaches box aligns with the outer edge of the base.
- f. The HOME PLATE shall be a rubber pentagon. The edge facing the pitcher shall be 17 in. wide. The sides that are parallel to the inside lines of the batter's box shall be 8 1/2 in. long. The sides of the point facing the catcher shall be 12 in. long.
- g. The PITCHER'S CIRCLE is the 16 ft diameter (8 ft radius) circle drawn around the pitcher's plate.
- h. The PITCHER'S PLATE shall be a level rubber rectangle 24 in. long and 6 in. wide. The long edges of the pitcher's plate shall be parallel to the front edge of home plate.
- i. PITCHING DISTANCES: The pitching distance is always measured from the front edge of the pitching plate to the back point of home plate, and varies as follows:
  1. The pitching distance for the Micro Division (Coach Pitch) is 30-35 feet.
  2. The pitching distance for Younger Division pitching machines (measured from front edge of the machine to back corner of the plate) is 30-35 feet.
  2. The pitching distance for Middle Division player/pitchers is 35 feet. The pitching distance for Middle Division pitching machines (measured from front edge of machine to back corner of the plate) is 40 feet.
  3. The pitching distance for Older Division (player/pitchers) is 40 feet.
- j. The HALF-WAY LINES (Younger Division only) are lines 2 ft. in length drawn across the basepaths halfway between first and second, second and third, and third and home bases.
- k. NO PLAY ARC (Micro Division only): A curved line in fair territory twenty feet out from home plate that a ball batted from the tee must pass to be considered legally batted and behind which defensive players must play.

## RULE 3

### EQUIPMENT

#### Sec.1. THE OFFICIAL BAT.

Player-supplied bats and bats newly purchased by the League shall be ASA approved. All league-supplied bats are legal bats.

#### Sec.2. THE OFFICIAL SOFTBALL.

League play shall use balls as supplied by the League, specifically:

- a. Micro: shall use a 9 in. safety softball (i.e. Incrediball, RIF ball, or equivalent).
- b. Younger: shall use an 11 in. safety softball (i.e. Incrediball, RIF ball, or equivalent).
- c. Middle: shall use an 11 in. standard softball.
- d. Older: shall use a 12 in. ASA Junior Olympic 14U regulation softball of one color.

#### Sec.3. SHOES.

Softball or soccer shoes are recommended for all players. No metal, hard plastic, or detachable cleats are allowed.

#### Sec.4. GLOVES.

Softball gloves and mitts should be purchased to fit the ball while taking into consideration the size of the hand. "Toy" gloves are discouraged. All players must wear a glove when playing in the field.

#### Sec.5. BODY PROTECTORS.

- a. MASKS. All catchers must wear a helmet with mask and throat protector, body protector, and shin guards.  
**NOTE:** Catchers (or other members of the defensive team) must wear a helmet with mask and throat protector while receiving warm-up pitches, whether they are on or off the field.
- b. HELMETS. ASA-approved batting helmets with face cages are mandatory for batters, on-deck batters, batter/runners, runners, catchers and player/coaches in the first and third base coaches' box. All offensive players will wear a batting helmet with face cage whenever they are outside of the dugout.

#### Sec.6. OTHER CLOTHING.

- c. CAPS. Defensive players may wear caps or visors provided by the League.
- d. Wearing SLIDING PANTS AND PADS is not mandatory to play, but is mandatory for players who attempt to slide. (See Rule 8, Sec.7.) Sliding pants may not be worn as an outer layer: shorts or pants must be worn over them.
- e. RAGGED, FRAYED, OR SLIT PANTS may not be worn in practice or games.
- f. CASTS, JEWELRY, or ACCESSORIES judged dangerous by the

umpire may not be worn in a game.

- g. Clothing emblazoned with the ABGSL Sting name or logo may not be worn to recreational season practices, clinics, games, or events. Sting gear is for use at Sting program events only.

#### **Sec.6. ALL EQUIPMENT.**

The League reserves the right to withhold approval of any equipment which significantly changes the character of the game, affects the safety of participants or spectators, or renders a player's performance more a product of her equipment rather than of her individual skill. All umpire decisions on equipment are final.

## **RULE 4 PLAYERS**

### **Sec.1. FIELDERS**

- a. Micro Division shall place the whole team not at bat on the field, with players positioned at Catcher, Pitcher, First Base, Second Base, Shortstop, and Third Base. The remaining defensive players will be placed on the outfield.
- b. Younger Division shall field 10 players on defense: Catcher, Pitcher, First Base, Second Base, Shortstop, Third Base, Rightfield, Right Centerfield, Left Centerfield, and Leftfield.
- c. Middle Division shall field 10 players on defense: Catcher, Pitcher, First Base, Second Base, Short-Stop, Third Base, Rightfield, Right-Centerfield, Left Centerfield, and Leftfield.
- d. Older Division shall field 9 players on defense: Catcher, Pitcher, First Base, Second Base, Shortstop, Third Base, Rightfield, Centerfield, and Leftfield.
- e. Younger and Middle Division outfielders will be positioned at least 20 feet out from the bases or base paths.
- f. Younger and Middle Division player/pitchers when not pitching shall be positioned inside the pitching circle. Coach/pitchers shall make every effort to get out of the way of any play.
- g. Older Division fielders may be stationed anywhere on fair territory, except the catcher, who must be in the catcher's box, and the pitcher, who must be in a legal pitching position within the pitcher's circle at the start of each pitch.
- h. A team must have the required number of players present in the team area to start or continue a game unless both opposing coaches agree otherwise.

**NOTE.** All players will maintain their place on the batting order regardless of whether they play in the field in any particular inning.

### **Sec.2. ROTATION RULES**

League policy requires that all girls learn and play all defensive positions as equally as practical over the course of the season.

Coaches shall strive to give each player the opportunity to play each position. Placing players in the key positions during the later, seldom played, innings of games does not represent compliance with the term "equally" above.

Coaches may modify the rotation rules only when there are insufficient players to make the rotation positioning mathematically possible, or if a player's safety would be jeopardized in a particular position because of her inability to protect herself from a thrown or batted ball. In the latter case, coaches must make every attempt to

train the player to play the position as soon as possible in the season. The names of the players considered by a coach to be unable to play any position in a particular game due to insufficient skills shall be approved in advance by a Commissioner for the division and noted on the Rotation Chart for that game.

A Rotation Chart that reflects how players are planned to be positioned during a game must be completed and a copy submitted to the scorekeeper before each game begins. During each game, coaches must update the Rotation Chart to reflect the actual defensive positioning used, inning by inning. Sometime after each game, a copy of the final (actual positioning) Rotation Chart must be delivered to the League Commissioner. Both the planned and actual Rotation Charts are available for inspection by the opposing coach, and the final Rotation Chart for each game must be retained in the coach binder and kept available for inspection at all future games.

In Middle and Older Divisions, coaches must give all girls who go to the pitching clinics and show a minimum proficiency (defined as the ability to deliver 4 of 7 catchable pitches that would not unduly threaten a batter) an opportunity to pitch during the season. See Rule 6 for limitations that apply.

- a. Micro Division Rotation: The goal for coaches shall be to train and play all girls equally in all positions, unless her safety would be jeopardized by doing so, or she strongly objects to playing a certain position and her parent agrees to the exception.
- b. Basic Rotation Rules for Younger, Middle, and Older Divisions:
  1. A player shall play an outfield position at least once in the first 4 innings of each game and not more than 3 times in any 6 innings (even counting across games).
  2. A player shall play an infield position at least twice in the first 4 innings of each game and at least 3 times in any 6 innings (even counting across games).
 

**NOTE:** Any girl who moves to an infield position during an inning, including Catcher or Pitcher, shall be considered to have played the infield *but not the outfield* in that inning, except if the change in position was required by injury,
  3. Players shall be positioned on the bench an approximately equal number of times during the season.
 

**NOTE:** Bench is neither an infield nor an outfield position.

    - i. A player who starts on the bench and then plays a position is not considered to have been benched unless they are replacing an injured player.
    - ii. No player may be positioned on the bench a second time during a game until all players in the batting order have been on the bench at least one inning.
    - iii. No player may be positioned on the bench in a game un-

til all players in the batting order who started the game with fewer innings on the bench have already been positioned on the bench.

- iv. No player shall spend consecutive innings on the bench unless injured.
  - v. No player may start consecutive games on the bench unless the player has arrived late for the later game.
- b. Additional Rotation Rules for Younger Division:
    1. A player may not play more than 2 innings per game at the same infield position or more than 2 innings per game at first base and pitcher combined.
    2. A player may not play an infield position in more than 3 of the first 5 innings of any game.
  - c. Additional Rotation Rules for Middle Division:
    1. A player may not play more than 2 innings per game at the same infield position, including Pitcher or Catcher.
    2. A player may not play an infield position in more than 3 of the first 5 innings of any game.
 

**NOTE:** A coach may limit a pitcher's innings so as to give her more time to learn other infield positions. This is true even if the team does not have another qualified pitcher available to pitch those innings. (See subsection 4, below.)
    3. A player may not play more than 4 innings at Catcher or Pitcher per week, even if a team plays more than 2 games.
    4. When a team has multiple, qualified pitchers, coaches must fairly divide pitching time among them.
 

**NOTE:** The use of time rather than innings is specifically because more effective pitchers will generally face more batters in the same amount of time and thus pitch more innings. The goal is to be fair to all players by dividing the pitching time so as to keep the games moving. (See also subsection 4, above.)
  - d. Older Division Recreational Rotation:
    1. A player may not play more than 2 innings at the same infield position per game, except that of Catcher or Pitcher.
    2. A player may not play an infield position in more than 3 of the first 5 innings of any game, except that a player may play 4 of the first 5 innings entirely at Pitcher and Catcher.
 

**NOTE:** The intent of the exception is to allow a single battery to be used for 4 of the first 5 innings, with a possible swap of pitcher and catcher. If a player plays an infield position other than pitcher and catcher, even for part of an inning, that player is limited to 3 infield innings in the first 5.
    3. A player may play up to 5 innings (15 outs) at Catcher or Pitcher per game, but not more than 5 innings per week.

**NOTE: Middle and Older Divisions.** Players may move into and out of the pitching position without restriction unless there is a second Charged Conference.

**Sec.3. BLOOD IN SPORT RULE.**

- a. In the event of any player bleeding during the game, that player must be replaced until all bleeding ceases, the area cleaned and covered and, if necessary, her uniform replaced.
- b. The umpire, scorekeeper, and opposing coach must be advised when the withdrawn player is returning to the game.

**Sec.4. INJURY AND SUBSTITUTION RULE.**

League policy is that no team shall be penalized for players who are injured or otherwise unable to play.

- a. If a batter is unable to take her normal turn in the batting order, that turn is skipped and no out is charged.
- b. If a batter is injured while batting, is unable to complete her at bat, and has not been awarded first base, then she is replaced by the next batter. That next batter assumes her count and play continues as if it had been that next batter at the plate the entire time.
- c. If a player has been substituted for as a result of injury, it is at that player's discretion (with the assent of the head coach or a league official) that the player may return to the lineup.

**NOTE:** The league assumes responsibility for allowing the player to return under this rule. No umpire shall be held responsible for allowing a player who has been injured to return to the lineup.

## RULE 5 THE GAME

**Sec.1. ENDING AN INNING (“BATTERS-PER-INNING” RULE.)**

An inning will end when the defense makes three outs or after the last batter has completed her time at bat, when in:

- a. Micro Division: All players have batted once or 8 batters per inning, whichever is less.
- b. Younger Division: 10 batters have batted.
- c. Middle Division:
  1. In the first three innings: 4 or more runs have scored (NO BATTERS AFTER FOUR RUNS rule).
  2. In innings after the third: 10 batters have batted.
- d. Older Division:
  1. In the first three innings: 4 or more runs have scored, of which only 4 are counted in the score (FOUR RUNS PER INNING rule).
  2. In innings after the third: each half inning shall end only when the defense makes three outs.

**EXCEPTION:** Last inning can end early: see Sec.3d below.

**Sec.2. The FITNESS OF THE GROUND**

The fitness of the ground for a safe game shall be decided by the umpire in consultation with both opposing coaches.

**Sec.3. A COMPLETE GAME**

A complete game is six innings, or less if time expires. The umpire shall set the official starting time no later than 5 minutes after the scheduled starting time and notify the scorekeepers of same.

The time limits are:

- a. Micro Division: 60 minutes (1 hour).
- b. Younger Division: 90 minutes (1.5 hours).
- c. Middle and Older Divisions: 105 minutes (1.75 hours).

**NOTE:** No new inning may start with less than 15 minutes remaining in time. Once an inning is started, it must be completed except as in subsections d-f, below.

- d. Older Division. The bottom half of the sixth inning, or the last inning if time has expired, need not be played or completed if the home team is ahead and one of the opposing coaches requests that the game be ended.
- e. The umpire is empowered to call a game at any time because of darkness, rain, fire, panic or other cause which in the umpire's judgement puts the players or patrons at risk.
- f. A game is terminated immediately, regardless of its length or the number of outs, 7 minutes prior to the scheduled start time

of the next game on the same field. Players and coaches must immediately leave both the field and dugout areas at that time.

**EFFECT:** Sec.3f: For the purposes of scoring and reporting, the scorekeepers for both teams will concur and agree. Games that are within four runs at the start of the last inning or when terminated should be reported as ending in a tie.

#### Sec.4. SCORING OF RUNS.

- a. One run shall be scored each time a runner legally touches first, second, third, and home base before the third out of the inning, unless:
  1. The batter/runner being put out before legally touching first base.
  2. A runner being forced out due to the batter becoming a runner.
- b. A run shall not be scored if the third out of the inning is a result of:
  1. The batter/runner being put out before legally touching first base.
  2. A runner being forced out due to the batter becoming a runner.
- c. (Older and Middle Division only) The runner fails to keep contact with the base to which she is entitled until a pitch is released.
- d. A preceding runner is later declared out, and that out is the third out of the inning.

**NOTE:** A runner shall score if she touches home plate before another runner is tagged out (but not forced out) beyond first base for the third out of the inning.

## RULE 6 PITCHING

### Sec.1. PITCHER

- a. Micro Division:
  1. A coach of the batter pitches from the pitching plate or directly in front of the pitching plate. The defense must be set before the coach/pitcher pitches.
  2. When the ball is batted, the coach/pitcher shall move to the side away from the ball, making every effort to get out of the way of the play. If the coach/pitcher hits the batter with a pitch, a ball is called; the batter is not awarded a base. If the coach/pitcher is hit by a batted ball, a “no pitch” is called.
- b. Younger Division:
  1. The pitching machine is placed before the game and remains in place the entire game. An adult operator from the offensive team stands just behind the machine, and must make every effort to get out of the way of the play.
  2. The pitching machine is calibrated, if necessary, before the start of each inning, or when called for by the umpire. The speed of the pitching machine must be the same for both halves of every inning, but it can be changed between full innings if so agreed by coaches from both teams.
  3. All pitches are thrown by the pitching machine while operated by the coach/pitcher.
- c. Middle Division:
  1. The pitching machine is placed before the game and remains in place the entire game. An operator from the offensive team stands just behind the machine, and must make every effort to get out of the way of the play.
 

**NOTE:** Operators typically stay on the field at all times (to keep the game moving), but if both coaches and the umpire agree they may enter the field only when needed.
  2. The pitching machine is calibrated, if necessary, before the start of each inning, or when called for by the umpire (typically after it throws 2 or 3 balls in a row). The speed of the pitching machine must be the same for both halves of every inning, but it can be changed between full innings if so agreed by coaches from both teams.
  3. The player/pitcher, if available, pitches from the pitching plate. Each at-bat starts with the player/pitcher pitching.
 

**NOTE:** Player/pitchers are available to pitch entire innings once they have qualified, until then they are only allowed to

pitch to 5 batters at a time once per game. The qualification process is administered by the commissioner and is detailed in an appendix.

**NOTE:** Whether qualified or not, any middle division player/pitcher must be replaced for the remainder of an inning if she walks three batters (consecutive or not) to whom she has pitched no strikes.

4. When the player/pitcher pitches four balls to the batter, as judged by the umpire, the machine operator uses the machine to pitch to the batter.
3. The strike count on the batter by the player/pitcher will remain, and the ball count will revert to no balls.
4. The coach will continue to pitch until either the batter gets a hit; or the batter strikes out; or four balls are called, at which time the batter is out.

**NOTE:** Base stealing and bunts are allowed when the machine pitches.

- d. Older Division: A player/pitcher always pitches.

**NOTE:** A player/pitcher in any division who hits 2 batters in an inning must be replaced for the remainder of the inning. A player/pitcher in any division who hits three batters in a game must be replaced for the remainder of the game.

### **Sec.2. PRELIMINARIES: Middle and Older Divisions player/pitchers.**

Before the delivery, the pitcher shall comply with the following:

- a. The pitcher shall first stand with both feet firmly on the ground and in contact with, but not off the side of, the pitcher's plate.
- b. The pitcher, while standing on the pitcher's plate, must take the signal from the catcher or look at the catcher. If a signal is taken, it must be taken while the pitcher has both feet in contact with the pitcher's plate. The ball must be held in ONE hand (bare or gloved) and the hands must be separated.
- c. The pitcher must then bring her WHOLE body to a full and complete stop facing the batter with her shoulders in line with first and third base and with the ball held in both hands in front of the body. This full and complete "set" position must be maintained for a minimum of one second and not more than 5 seconds before starting the pitch.
- d. The pitcher shall not be considered in the "set" pitching position unless the catcher is in position to receive the pitch.
- e. The pitcher may not take the "set" pitching position on or near the pitcher's plate without having the ball in her possession.

### **Sec.3. STARTING THE PITCH:**

- a. The pitch starts when one hand is taken off the ball or the pitcher makes any motion that is part of her windup.

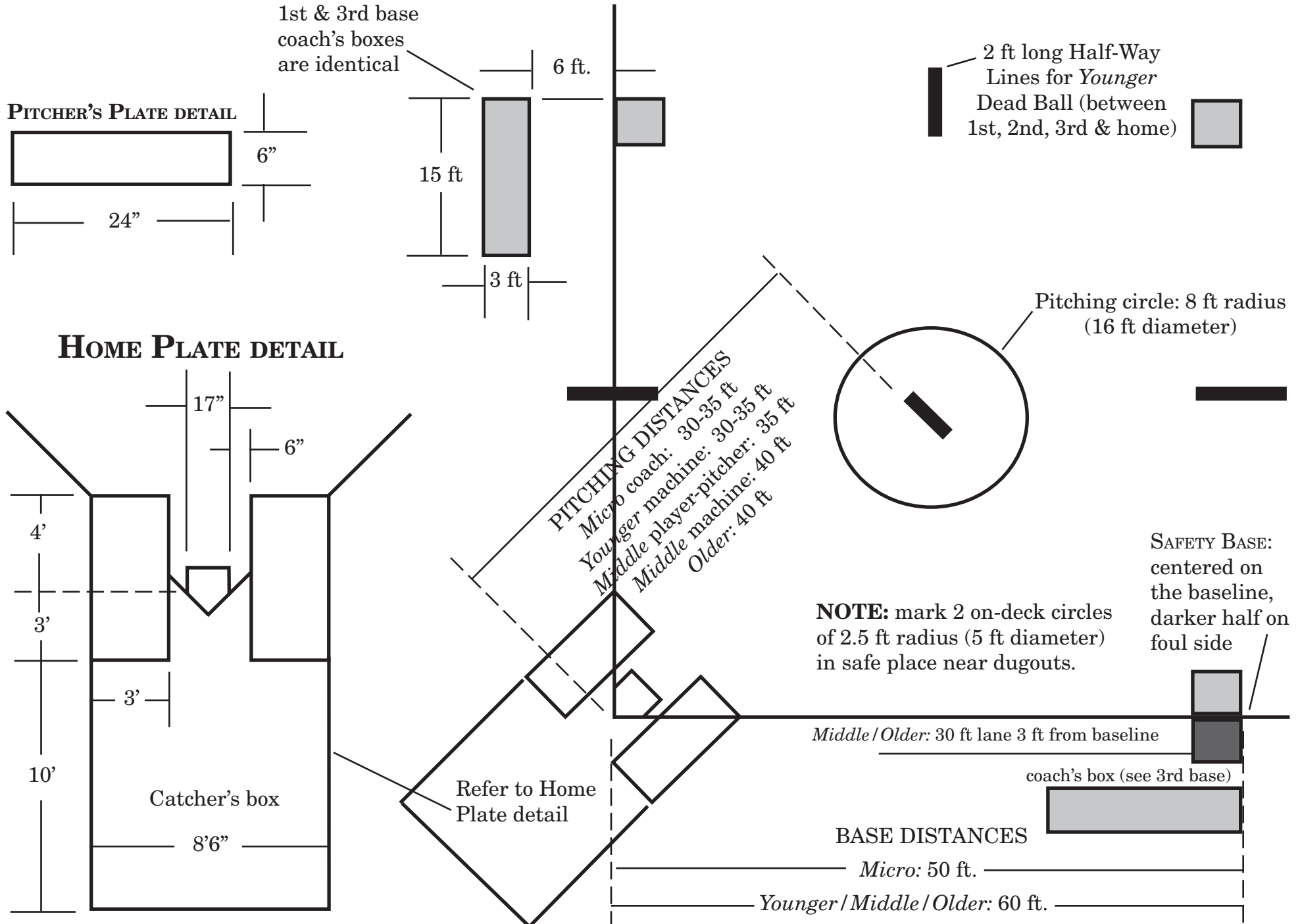
### **Sec.4. LEGAL DELIVERY:**

- a. The pitcher must not make any motion to pitch without immediately delivering the ball to the batter.
  - b. The pitcher must not use a pitching motion in which, after having ball in both hands in the pitching "set" position, the pitcher removes one hand from the ball, and returns the ball to both hands in front of the body.
  - c. The pitcher must not make a stop or reversal of the forward motion after separating the hands.
  - d. The pitcher may drop the arm to the side and to the rear before starting the windmill motion.
  - e. The delivery must be an underhanded motion with the hand below the hip and the wrist not farther from the body than the elbow.
  - f. The release of the ball and follow through of the hand and wrist must be forward and past the straight line of the body.
  - g. In the act of delivering the ball, the pitcher must take one step forward with the non-pivot foot just prior to the release of the ball. The step must be made toward the batter within the 24-inch length of the pitcher's plate. **NOTE:** The pitcher may slide the pivot foot across and in front the pitcher's plate, provided contact is maintained with the plate and/or the ground. Raising the foot off the pitching plate and returning it to the plate creates a rocking motion and is an illegal act.
  - h. Pushing off with the pivot foot from a place other than the pitcher's plate is illegal. This includes a "crowhop" delivery as defined in Rule 1.
  - i. The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitching plate, or push off and drag away from it, as long as the pivot foot remains in contact with the ground, prior to the front foot touching the ground.
  - j. The pitcher must not make another arm revolution after releasing the ball.
  - k. The pitcher shall not deliberately drop, roll, or bounce the ball in order to prevent the batter from hitting it.
  - l. The pitcher has 20 seconds to release the next pitch after receiving the ball or after the umpire indicates "PLAY BALL."
- NOTE:** A "pitch out," if legally delivered, for the purpose of intentionally walking a batter, is not considered an illegal pitch.

### **Sec.5. DEFENSIVE POSITIONING:**

- a. The pitcher shall not deliver a pitch unless all defensive players are positioned in fair territory, except the catcher who must be in the catcher's box.
- b. No player shall take a position in the batter's line of vision or, with deliberate unsportsmanlike intent, act in a manner to dis-

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tract the batter.

**EFFECT:** Sec.5b. The offender shall be benched and an illegal pitch shall be declared, even though a pitch may not be released.

- c. (Younger and Middle Division Only) When the coach/pitcher is operating the machine, the player/pitcher must be positioned with both feet inside the pitching circle until the pitch is released.

**Sec.6. CATCHER:**

- a. The catcher must be within the outside lines of the catcher's box when the pitch is released .
- b. The catcher shall return the ball directly to the pitcher after each pitch, except after a strikeout, or a play attempted by the catcher.

**EFFECT:** Sec 6b: An additional ball is awarded the batter.

**Sec.7. FOREIGN SUBSTANCE:**

- a. The pitcher shall not wear tape, sweatbands or other distracting items on her pitching hand, fingers, wrist, or forearm, nor use a ball that has a foreign substance on it.
- b. Under the supervision and control of the umpire, powdered resin may be used to dry the hands.

**Sec.8. THROWING TO A BASE:**

The pitcher shall not throw to a base while a foot is in contact with the pitcher's plate after having taken the pitching "set" position.

**NOTE:** The pitcher may remove herself from the pitching "set" position only by stepping backwards off the pitcher's plate provided the hands are still together. Stepping forward or sideways constitutes an illegal pitch.

**Sec.9. ILLEGAL PITCH (INFRACTIONS OF Secs.1-8.)**

- a. Any infraction of Sections 1 through 8 is an illegal pitch. The ball is dead. A ball is called on the batter. Runners are entitled to advance one base without liability to be put out.
- b. If the pitcher completes the delivery of the ball to the batter and the batter hits the ball and reaches first base safely and all runners advance at least one base, then the action stands and the illegal pitch is nullified. A delayed dead ball will be signaled by the umpire by extending the left arm horizontally. (See Rule 10 for more details of delayed dead balls.)
- c. If an illegal pitch hits the batter, the batter is awarded first base.

**Sec.10. WARM-UP PITCHES:**

- a. At the beginning of each half inning, or when a new pitcher relieves another, not more than one minute may be used to deliver not more than five pitches, unless the umpire has delayed the

start of play.

- b. A pitcher returning to pitch in the same half inning will not receive warm-up pitches.

**NOTE:** There is no limitation as to the number of times a player can return to the pitching position if the player has not left the batting order.

**Sec.11. DROPPED BALL:**

If the ball slips from the player/pitcher's hand during the delivery, a ball is declared on the batter, the ball will remain in play and the runner(s) may advance at their own risk.

**Sec.12. A "NO PITCH" SHALL BE DECLARED WHEN:**

- a. The pitcher pitches during the suspension of play.
- b. The runner is called out for leaving the base before the pitched ball is:
  1. (Middle Division) batted or crosses the line of home plate.
  2. (Older Division) released by the pitcher.
- c. The pitcher pitches before the runner has retouched her base after a foul ball has been declared. The ball is dead.
- d. Younger and Middle Division. A batted ball hits the coach/pitcher (as opposed to the pitching machine).
- e. No player or coach shall call "TIME" or employ any other word or phrase or commit any act while the ball is alive and in play for the obvious purpose of trying to make the pitcher commit an illegal pitch.

**EFFECT:** Sec.a-d: The ball is dead and all subsequent action on that pitch is canceled.

**EFFECT:** Sec.e: A "No pitch" shall be declared and a warning issued to the offending team. A repeat of this act by anyone on the team warned shall result in the offender being benched from the game.

**Sec.13. (Older Division only) THERE SHALL BE ONLY ONE CHARGED CONFERENCE BETWEEN A COACH AND EACH PITCHER IN AN INNING.**

After the second charged conference during an inning, the pitcher must be replaced for the remainder of that inning.

## RULE 7 BATTING

**NOTE:** Any reference to “strike” only applies to Older and Middle Divisions. There are no strikes called on batters in Younger and Micro Divisions.

### **Sec.1. THE BATTER SHALL TAKE HER POSITION WITHIN THE LINES OF THE BATTER’S BOX.**

- a. The batter must have both feet completely within the batter’s box prior to the start of the pitch. She may touch the lines, but no part of either foot may be outside the lines prior to the pitch.
- b. The batter shall not step directly across in front of the catcher to the other batter’s box while the pitcher is in the “set” position ready to pitch.

**EFFECT:** The ball is dead, the batter is out, runners may NOT advance.

- c. The batter must take her position within 10 seconds after “PLAY BALL” has been declared by the umpire.

**EFFECT:** If the batter does not enter the batter’s box within 10 seconds after the umpire calls, “PLAY BALL,” the umpire will call a strike. No pitch has to be thrown. The ball becomes dead.

### **Sec.2. BATTING ORDER.**

- a. As per Rule 4, the coach must deliver a copy of the batting order and rotation chart of her team to the scorekeeper as well as submit it to the inspection of the opposing coach.

- b. Each player of the side at bat shall become a batter in the order in which her name appears on the rotation chart.

- c. The batting order must be followed throughout the game unless a player is unable to bat, whereupon the umpire and scorekeeper must be notified.

**EFFECT:** There is no penalty when a batter is unable to start or complete an at-bat. See Rule 4.

- d. The first batter in each inning shall be the batter whose name follows that of the last player who completed a turn at bat in the preceding inning.

- e. Batting out of order:

1. If the error is discovered while the incorrect batter is at bat, the correct batter may take her place, assume any balls and strikes, and any runs scored or bases run while the incorrect batter was at bat shall be legal.
2. If the error is discovered after the incorrect batter has completed her turn at bat and before there has been a pitch to

another batter, the player who should have batted is out. Any advance or score made because of a ball batted by the improper batter or because of the improper batter’s advance to first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, or a hit batter shall be nullified. The next batter is the player whose name follows that of the player called out for failing to bat. If the batter declared out under these circumstances is the third out, the correct batter in the next inning shall be the player who would have come to bat had the player been put out by ordinary play.

3. If the error is discovered after the first pitch to the next batter, the turn at bat of the incorrect batter is legal, all runs scored and bases run are legal, and the next batter in order shall be the one whose name follows that of the incorrect batter. No one is called out for failure to bat. Players who have not batted and who have not been called out will lose their turn at bat until reached again in the regular order.

4. No runner shall be removed from the base she is occupying to bat in her proper place. She merely misses her turn at bat with no penalty. The batter following her in the batting order becomes the legal batter.

- f. When the third out in an inning is made before the batter has completed her turn at bat, that batter shall be the first batter in the next inning, and the ball and strike count shall be canceled.

- g. The designated pinch runner will be the most recent batter who is not on base.

### **Sec.3. THE BATTER SHALL NOT HINDER THE CATCHER.**

The batter shall not hinder the catcher from fielding or throwing the ball by stepping out of the batter’s box, or intentionally hinder the catcher while standing within the batter’s box.

**EFFECT:** The ball is dead and runners must return to the last base that, in the judgment of the umpire, was touched at the time of the interference. The batter is out.

### **Sec.4. MEMBERS OF THE TEAM AT BAT SHALL NOT INTERFERE WITH A PLAYER ATTEMPTING TO FIELD A FOUL FLYBALL.**

**EFFECT:** The ball is dead and the batter is out, and runners must return to the base legally held at the time of the pitch.

### **Sec.5. THE BATTER SHALL NOT HIT A FAIR BALL WITH THE BAT A SECOND TIME IN FAIR TERRITORY.**

**EXCEPTION:** If the batter is standing in the batter’s box, a foul ball is ruled even if the ball is hit a second time over fair territory with the bat in the batter’s hand.

**NOTE:** If the batter drops the bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory and, in the umpire's judgment, there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball, the batter is not out, and the ball is alive and in play.

**EFFECT:** The ball is dead, the batter is out, and runners may not advance.

**Sec.6. THERE ARE NO BALL/STRIKE COUNTS IN MICRO AND YOUNGER DIVISIONS.**

- a. Micro Division: If a batter has not hit the ball after 6 pitches from the coach/pitcher, a tee shall be used to produce a batted ball. The batter has unlimited swings at the teed ball. A ball that enters fair territory is a fair ball regardless of how it is struck.
- b. Younger Division: If a batter does not hit the ball after 6 pitches from the machine, a tee shall be used to produce a batted ball. The batter has unlimited swings at the teed ball. The batted ball shall be called "foul" if the tee is struck before the ball. All other bat contact with the ball resulting in a fair hit ball will be allowed.

**Sec.7. A STRIKE IS CALLED BY THE UMPIRE (Middle and Older Divisions only):**

- a. When any part of a legally pitched ball enters the strike zone before touching the ground and at which the batter does not swing.
- b. For each legally pitched ball swung at and missed by the batter.
- c. For each foul tip. See definition of "foul tip."  
**EFFECT:** Sec.6a-c: The ball is in play and the runners may advance (steal) in jeopardy.
- d. For each foul ball not legally caught on the fly when the batter has less than two strikes.
- e. For each pitched ball swung at and missed which touches any part of the batter.
- f. When any part of the batter's person or clothing is hit with her own batted ball when she is in the batter's box and she has less than two strikes.
- g. When a delivered ball by the pitcher hits the batter while the ball is in the strike zone.  
**EFFECT:** Sec.6d-g: The ball is dead and runners must return to their bases without liability to be put out.

**Sec.8. A BALL IS CALLED BY THE UMPIRE: (Middle and Older Divisions only)**

- a. For each pitched ball which does not enter the strike zone or touches the ground before crossing home plate or touches home plate and which is not swung at by the batter.  
**EFFECT:** The ball is in play and runners are entitled to ad-

vance in jeopardy.

- b. When the catcher fails to return the ball directly to the pitcher as required in Rule 6.
- c. When the pitcher fails to pitch the ball within 20 seconds.
- d. If the ball slips from the player/pitcher's hand during delivery.
- e. For any pitch which exceeds 10 feet in height.

**Sec.9. A FAIR BALL IS A LEGALLY BATTED BALL WHICH:**

- a. Settles on fair territory between home and first base or between home and third base.  
**EXCEPTION:** (Micro Division) See No Play Arc, Rule 2.
- b. Bounds past first or third base on or over fair territory.
- c. Touches first, second, third, or home base.
- d. (Younger and Middle Division) Touches the pitching machine.
- e. While on or over fair territory, touches the person or clothing of an umpire or player.
- f. First lands on fair territory (or touches an object in fair territory, including the fences and foul poles) beyond first or third base.  
**EFFECT:** Sec.9a-f: The ball is in play and runners are entitled to advance any number of bases in jeopardy. The batter becomes a runner unless the infield fly rule applies.
- g. While over fair territory passes out of the playing field beyond the outfield fence.
- h. Hits a foul line pole on the fly above the fence level  
**EFFECT:** Sec.9g-h: The batted ball shall be a home run.

**NOTE:** All bases including home plate are part of fair territory.

**NOTE:** A fair fly shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line (including the foul pole) when first touched, and not as to whether the fielder is on fair or foul territory at the time of touching the ball.

**Sec.10. A FOUL BALL IS A LEGALLY BATTED BALL WHICH:**

- a. Settles or is touched on or over foul territory between home and first base or between home and third base.
- b. Bounds or rolls past first or third base on or over foul territory.
- c. First touches foul territory beyond first or third base.
- d. While on or over foul territory touches the person or clothing of an umpire or player or any object foreign to the natural ground.
- e. Touches the batter or the bat a second time while the batter is within the batter's box.
- f. Immediately rebounds up from the ground or home plate and hits the bat a second time while the batter is in the batter's box.
- g. Goes directly from the bat, not higher than the batter's head, to any part of the catcher's body or equipment and is caught by another fielder.

**EFFECT:** Sec.10:

1. The ball is dead unless it is a legally caught foul fly. If a foul fly is caught, the batter is out.
2. A strike is called on the batter unless she already has two strikes.
3. Runners must return to their bases without liability to be put out unless a foul fly is caught. In this case, a runner is in jeopardy to be put out exactly as with a fair fly ball, and may advance in jeopardy after the ball has been touched.

**NOTE:** The foul lines on the field are considered to be in fair territory.

**Sec.11. THE BATTER IS OUT:**

- a. If her foot is completely outside the lines of the batter's box and touching the ground or if any part of her foot is touching home plate when she hits the ball fair or foul.
- b. When the third strike is swung at and missed and the ball touches any part of the batter's person.
- c. When she bunts foul after the second strike. If this ball is caught in the air, it remains live and in play.
- d. (Middle Division only) When she has three strikes.
- e. (Older Division only) When she has three strikes and either:
  1. There are less than two outs and first base was occupied at the time of the pitch; or
  2. The third strike is caught by the catcher before it strikes the ground.

**NOTE:** See Rule 8: "Dropped 3rd strike rule."

**Sec.12. ON-DECK BATTER.**

- a. The on-deck batter shall take a position within the lines of the on-deck circle nearest her bench.
- b. The on-deck batter may leave the on-deck circle:
  1. When she becomes the batter.
  2. To direct runners advancing from third to home plate.
- c. When the on-deck batter interferes with the defensive player's opportunity to make a play on a runner, the runner closest to home plate at the time of the interference shall be declared out.
- d. The provisions of Rule 7, Sec.4 shall apply to the on-deck batter.

## RULE 8 BATTER/RUNNER & RUNNER

**Sec.1. THE RUNNERS MUST TOUCH BASES IN LEGAL ORDER (i.e., FIRST, SECOND, THIRD AND HOME PLATE).**

- a. When a runner must return while the ball is in play, she must touch the bases in reverse order.  
**EFFECT:** Sec a: The ball is in play and runners must return in jeopardy.
- b. When a runner acquires the right to a base by touching it before being put out, she is entitled to hold the base until she has legally touched the next base in order or is forced to vacate it for a succeeding runner
- c. When a runner dislodges a base from its proper position neither she nor succeeding runners in the same series of plays are compelled to follow a base unreasonably out of position.  
**EFFECT:** Sec.1b-c: The ball is in play, and runners may advance in jeopardy.
- d. Two runners may not occupy the same base simultaneously.  
**EFFECT:** Sec.1d: The runner who first legally occupied the base shall be entitled to it, unless forced to advance. The second runner may be put out by being tagged.
- e. Failure of a preceding runner to touch a base, or to leave a base legally on a caught flyball and who is declared out, does not affect the status of a succeeding runner who touches bases in proper order. However, if the failure to touch a base in regular order or to leave a base legally on a caught flyball becomes the third out of the inning, no succeeding runner may score a run.
- f. No runner may return to touch a missed base, or to one left illegally, after a following runner has scored.
- g. After the ball becomes dead, no runner may return to touch a missed base, a base left after advancing to and touching a base beyond the missed base, or a base left illegally, even after the ball becomes live.
- h. No runner may return to touch a missed base, or one left illegally, once she enters her team dugout or bench area.
- i. When a walk or home run is issued, all runners must touch all bases in legal order.
- j. Bases left too soon on a caught flyball must be retouched while en route to awarded bases.
- k. Awarded bases must also be touched and in proper order.

**Sec.2. THE BATTER BECOMES A BATTER/RUNNER:**

- a. As soon as she hits a fair ball.

- b. (Older Division only) **DROPPED THIRD STRIKE RULE:** When the catcher fails to catch the third strike before the ball touches the ground:
1. When there are less than two outs and first base is unoccupied at the time of the pitch, or
  2. Anytime when there are two outs.
- NOTE:** If the pitch touches the ground and bounces and the batter swings at and misses the ball, even if the catcher fields the ball cleanly, it shall be considered a dropped third strike.
- NOTE:** If the batter takes a step into the dugout, the batter then forfeits her right to advance to first base.
- c. When a fair ball strikes the person or clothing of an umpire on foul ground.  
**EFFECT:** Sec.2a-c: The ball is in play and the batter becomes a batter/runner in jeopardy.
- d. (Older Division only) When four balls have been called by the umpire (walk).  
**EFFECT:** Sec.2d: The ball is in play unless it has become blocked. The batter becomes a batter/runner and is entitled to first base without liability to be put out. All baserunners forced to advance by the batter/runner are entitled to the next base without liability to be put out. Any runner may continue beyond the base they are entitled to in jeopardy unless she stops her forward progress and the pitcher has the ball in the circle. In this case, the runner must remain at the base where she has stopped or return to the previously achieved base if she is between bases.
- e. **CATCHER OBSTRUCTION.** When the catcher or any other fielder obstructs or prevents the batter from swinging at a pitched ball.  
**EFFECT:** Sec.2e:
1. The umpire shall give a delayed dead ball signal.
  2. The coach of the offensive team has the option of taking the award for catcher obstruction, or she may take the result of the play.
  3. If the coach does not accept the result of the play, “catcher obstruction” is enforced by awarding the batter first base and advancing other runners if forced.
  4. If the batter hits the ball and reaches first base safely and if all other runners have advanced at least one base on the batted ball, “catcher obstruction” is canceled. All action as a result of the batted ball stands. No option is given.
- f. When a fair ball strikes the person or clothing of the umpire or a runner on fair ground.  
**EFFECT:** Sec.2f: If the ball hits an umpire or runner:
1. After touching a fielder (including the pitcher), the ball is in

- play.
2. Before touching a fielder, the ball is dead. If the runner is hit by the untouched ball, she is out. The batter is entitled to first base without liability to be put out. Any baserunner not forced by the batter/runner must return to the base she had reached prior to the interference. When a ball touches a runner who is in contact with a base, the ball remains live unless intentionally interfered with.
- g. When a pitch thrown by a player-pitcher that is not swung at, and not called a strike, touches any part of the batter’s person or clothing while she is in the batter’s box. It does not matter if the ball strikes the ground before hitting her. The batter’s hands are not to be considered as part of the bat.  
**EFFECT:** Sec.2g: The ball is dead and the batter is entitled to one base without liability to be put out unless she made no effort to avoid being hit. In this case, the plate umpire calls either a ball or a strike.  
**EXCEPTION:** If the ball bounces before hitting the batter, then the batter is allowed to refuse the awarded base and keep batting. In this case the batter is awarded a ball.  
**NOTE:** Sec. 2g does not apply if a batter is hit by a coach pitch.
- h. If a batted ball hits the coach/pitcher before being touched by a fielder, the ball is considered blocked, a “NO PITCH” is called, the ball is dead, all play is forfeited, and the count remains.  
**NOTE:** If such a ball has been touched first by a fielder, the ball is live and in play.  
**NOTE:** Sec.2g 9 does not apply to the pitching machine, which is part of fair territory. Balls which hit the pitching machine are in play.  
**EXCEPTION:** If the umpire feels an intentional interference has taken place then the rules for interference apply.

**Sec.3. RUNNERS ARE ENTITLED TO ADVANCE IN JEOPARDY UNDER THE FOLLOWING CIRCUMSTANCES:**

- a. Stealing:
1. Middle Division. Runners may not leave the base until the pitched ball crosses the line of home plate. A runner starting at second base (only) may advance in jeopardy (steal) one base only per pitch, regardless of whether the defense attempts a play on the stealer; defensive errors will not enable the stealer to advance an additional base. The ball becomes dead at the end of the attempted play. Runners starting at first and third base may not steal or advance even if a play is attempted but are in jeopardy if they come off any base.  
**NOTE:** If a runner steals a base she was not entitled to, she must return to the previous base without liability to be put

out: the ball becomes dead.

**NOTE:** Runners *may* steal when coach/pitcher is pitching.

3. Older Division: Runners may not leave their base until the ball leaves the pitcher's hand on a pitch or on a throw out of the pitching circle; or when the pitcher leaves the pitching circle. Runners may advance in jeopardy (steal) to the next base, but not beyond that base unless played on.
4. Middle and Older Division: During any play when a runner stops her forward progress toward the next base and the pitcher has received the ball inside the pitching circle, that runner shall return immediately non-stop to the previous base before the pitcher releases the ball in the next pitch.

**EFFECT:** Sec.3g4: The runner is out.

- b. (Older Division) When the ball is thrown into fair or foul territory and is not blocked.
- c. When the ball is batted into fair territory and is not blocked.
- d. When a legally caught flyball (whether foul or fair) is first touched by a fielder.
- e. If a fair ball strikes a runner or an umpire or a coach/pitcher on fair or foul ground after touching a fielder, the ball shall be in play.

**Sec.4. A BATTER/RUNNER OR RUNNER FORFEITS EXEMPTION FROM LIABILITY TO BE PUT OUT:**

- a. If, while the ball is in play, she fails to touch the base to which she was entitled before attempting to make the next base. If the runner put out is the batter/runner at first base, or any other runner forced to advance because the batter became a runner, this out is a force out.
- b. When, after overrunning first base, the batter/runner attempts to continue to second base.
- c. When, after dislodging a base, the batter/runner attempts to advance to the next base.

**Sec.5. RUNNERS ARE ENTITLED TO ADVANCE WITHOUT LIABILITY TO BE PUT OUT:**

- a. When forced to vacate a base because the batter was awarded a base on balls.  
**EFFECT:** Sec.5a: Older Division: The ball remains in play unless it is blocked. Runners affected are entitled to one base and may advance further in jeopardy if the ball is in play. However, once the pitcher has the ball in the circle and a runner stops her forward progress, the runner, if between bases, must return to the last achieved base, or remain on the base on which she stopped.  
**EFFECT:** Sec.5a Younger/Middle Division: The ball is dead.
- b. When a fielder obstructs the runner from making a base unless

the fielder is in the act of fielding a thrown or batted ball, or applying a tag.

**EFFECT:** Sec.5b: When any obstruction occurs (including in a run-down), the umpire will signal a delayed dead ball. The ball will remain alive.

1. If the obstructed runner is put out prior to reaching the base she would have reached had there not been obstruction, a dead ball is called, and the obstructed runner (and each other runner affected by the obstruction) will always be awarded the base or bases she would have reached, in the umpire's judgment, had there been no obstruction.
2. An obstructed runner may never be called out between the two bases where she was obstructed. The runner would either be advanced or returned to the last base touched. **EXCEPTION:** Should an act of interference occur following an obstruction, enforcement of the interference penalty shall have precedence.
3. If the obstructed runner is put out after passing the base she would have reached had there not been obstruction, the obstructed runner will be called out. The ball remains alive.
- c. When a runner, while advancing or returning to a base, is obstructed by a fielder who neither has the ball nor is attempting to field a batted or thrown ball, or a fielder who fakes a tag without the ball, the obstructed runner (and each other runner affected by the obstruction) will always be awarded the base or bases she would have reached, in the umpire's judgment, had there been no obstruction. If the umpire feels there is justification, a defensive player making a fake tag could be benched from the game.  
**EFFECT:** Sec.5c: The play shall proceed until no further action is possible. The umpire shall then call "TIME" and impose such penalties, if any, that in her judgment will nullify the act of obstruction.  
**NOTE:** Sec.5b-c: Obstructed runners must still touch all bases in proper order, or they could be called out.
- d. When a wild pitch or passed ball goes under, over, through, or lodges in, the backstop.  
**EFFECT:** Sec.5d: The ball is dead. All runners are awarded one base only. The batter is awarded first base only on the fourth ball.
- e. When forced to vacate a base because the batter was awarded a base:
  1. For being hit by a pitched ball.
  2. For being obstructed by the catcher when striking at a pitched ball.

**EFFECT:** Sec.5e: The ball is dead and runners may not advance farther than the base to which they are entitled.

**NOTE:** If, with a runner on third base and trying to score by means of a squeeze play or a steal, the catcher or any other fielder steps on, or in front of, home plate without possession of the ball, or touches the batter or her bat, the pitcher shall be charged with an illegal pitch, the batter shall be awarded first base on the obstruction and the ball is dead.

**NOTE:** Catcher obstruction of the batter in other cases is covered under Rule 8.

- f. When a pitcher makes an illegal pitch.  
**EFFECT:** Sec.5f: The ball is dead and runners may advance to the base to which they are entitled without liability to be put out.
- g. When a fielder uses her cap, mask, glove, or any part of the uniform, while detached from its proper place, to contact or catch a fair batted or thrown ball.  
**EFFECT:** Sec.5g: The runners shall be entitled to three bases from the time of the pitch if a batted ball, or two bases from the time of the throw if a thrown ball, or in either case the runners may advance further at their own risk. If the illegal catch or touch is made on a fair hit ball, which in the opinion of the umpire would have cleared the outfield fence in flight, the runner shall be awarded a home run.
- h. Middle and Older Division: When the ball is in play and is overthrown (beyond the boundary lines) or is blocked.  
**EFFECT:** Sec.5h: All runners will be awarded two bases, and the award will be governed by the position of the runners when the ball left the fielder's hand. If two runners are between the same bases, the award is based on the position of the lead runner.
- i. When a fielder loses possession of the ball such as on an attempted tag, and the ball then enters the dead ball area or becomes blocked.  
**EFFECT:** Sec.5i: All runners are awarded one base from the base touched at the time the ball entered the dead ball area or became blocked. If a runner touches the next base and returns to her original base, the original base she left is considered the last base touched for purposes of an overthrow award.
- j. When a fair-batted ball goes over the fence.  
**EFFECT:** Sec.5j: The batter/runner shall be awarded a home run unless the ball passes out of the grounds at a distance less than those prescribed in Rule 2, Sec.1, in which case the batter/runner shall be entitled to two bases only.
- k. When a fair ball bounces over, under, or through a fence or bound-

ary of the playing field. Also, when it deflects off of a fielder, runner, or umpire and goes out of play.

**EFFECT:** Sec.5k: The ball is dead and all runners are awarded two bases from the time of the pitch.

- l. When a live ball is unintentionally carried by a fielder from playable territory into out-of-play territory.  
**EFFECT:** Sec.5l: The ball is dead and each runner is awarded one base from the last base touched at the time fielder entered out-of-play territory.
- m. If, in the judgment of the umpire, a fielder intentionally carries, kicks, or throws a live ball into out-of-play territory.  
**EFFECT:** Sec.5m: The ball is dead. Runners are awarded two bases from the last base touched at the time the ball went out of play.
- n. When there is spectator interference with a thrown or fair batted ball.  
**EFFECT:** Sec.5n: The umpire shall place the batter and the runner in the place they would have been had there been no interference. If, in the umpires opinion, a spectator hinders a fielder from catching a ball, then the batter is out.

#### **Sec.6. A RUNNER MUST RETURN TO HER LAST ACHIEVED BASE:**

- a. When a batted ball is foul.
- b. When a ball is batted illegally.
- c. When a batter or runner is called out for interference.
- d. When a pitched ball or pitched ball that is swung at and missed touches a batter's person or clothing, unless forced.
- e. Younger Division: When "TIME" is called and the runner has not crossed the half-way line.
- f. Middle and Older Division: When "TIME" is called.

#### **Sec.7. THE RUNNER IS OUT:**

- a. When the batter/runner bats a flyball that is legally caught by a member of the defensive team.
- b. When the runner runs more than three feet from the base line to avoid a tag.
- c. When the runner not on base is tagged while the ball is in play.
- d. On a force play when the fielder with the ball touches the base or touches the ball to the base before the runner.
- e. When the runner passes a preceding runner who is not out.
- f. When anyone physically assists the runner.
- g. Older Division: When the batter/runner bats a flyball, an Infield Fly is declared, and the ball does not go foul.
- h. When the batter/runner legally overruns first base, attempts to

- run to second base, and is legally tagged while off base.
- i. When a fielder with the ball touches the base a runner has left before a caught flyball has touched a fielder, unless the runner had returned to the base to tag up before advancing.  
**EFFECT:** Sec.7a-i: The runner is out and the ball remains in play.
  - j. When the runner fails to touch the intervening base or bases in regular or reverse order and the ball is returned to an infielder who touches that base.
  - k. When running home, a runner fails to touch home plate before returning to the dugout or before the next pitch or “TIME” being called.  
**EFFECT:** Sec.7j-k: The runner is out and ball is dead.
  - l. When the runner interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball or throw the ball, or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball.
  - m. When the runner contacts a fair, untouched, batted ball while not in contact with a base.
  - n. When the runner intentionally kicks a fair ball.
  - o. When one or more offensive players, not in the act of base running, collect around a base to which a runner is advancing and add to the difficulty of making the play, the runner closest to home is out.
  - p. When an offensive coach interferes with any play, the runner closest to home is out, unless the interference is unavoidable, in which case the ball remains live and in play.
  - q. When the runner collides with a fielder in the act of receiving a thrown or batted ball or legitimately making a play, unless the flight of the ball draws the fielder into the path of base runner in such a way that the runner cannot avoid the collision.  
**NOTE:** The runner has the responsibility to avoid a collision by sliding, dodging, jumping over the fielder, or returning to the previous base.
  - r. If, after any member of a team is warned, the bat is thrown in a dangerous way a second time by the same team member or anyone else on that same team.
  - s. If a batter strikes any person with a thrown bat. No warning shall be given.  
**EFFECT:** Sec.7l-s: The runner is out, the ball is dead, and other runners must return to the last base touched at the time of interference.
  - t. Younger Division: If a runner leaves a base before bat-ball contact.
  - u. Middle Division: If a runner leaves a base before the ball crosses the front line of the plate.

- v. Older Division: If a runner leaves a base before the pitcher releases the ball.
- w. Middle and Older Division. Any runner, who stops her forward progress between bases while the pitcher has the ball within the pitcher’s circle, must immediately return (in jeopardy) non-stop to the last achieved base; once the runner stops on a base, while the pitcher has the ball within the pitcher’s circle, she must stay on that base.  
**EXCEPTION:** The runner will not be declared out for resuming progress or changing direction another time if the pitcher makes a play or a fake throw on her or another runner.
- x. When a runner intentionally slides without wearing sliding pants and pads.  
**EFFECT:** Sec.7s-x: Runner is out and the ball is dead.

**Sec.8. THE RUNNER IS NOT OUT:**

- a. When a runner runs behind or in front of the fielder outside the basepath in order to avoid interfering with a fielder attempting to field the ball.
- b. When a runner does not run in a direct line to a base, provided the fielder in the direct line does not have possession of the ball.
- c. When more than one fielder attempts to field a batted ball and the runner comes into contact with the one who, in the umpire’s judgment, was not able to field the ball.
- d. When the runner inadvertently contacts a fair batted ball after it contacts any fielder, including the pitcher.
- e. When a runner is touched with a ball not securely held by a fielder.
- f. When a batter/runner passes first base after touching it and returns directly to the base.
- g. Older Division: When the runner has legally started to advance before the pitcher receives the ball in the pitching circle or enters the pitching circle while holding the ball.  
**EFFECT:** Sec.8g: The runner may continue to advance and the ball is live. Once the runner stops advancing, she must immediately return to or remain on the last base touched unless a play is made.
- h. When the runner is not given sufficient time to return to a base, she shall not be called out for being off base before the pitcher releases the ball.  
**EFFECT:** Sec.8h: A “no pitch” will be called and the runner shall return to the base.
- i. When a runner holds her base until a flyball touches a fielder and then attempts to advance.
- j. When a runner is hit by a batted ball when touching the base,

unless she intentionally interferes with the ball or a fielder making a play.

**EFFECT:** Sec.8j: The ball is live.

- k. When a runner slides into a base and dislodges it from its proper position, the base is considered to have followed the runner.

**EFFECT:** Sec.8k: Runners having made such a base safely shall not be called out for being off that base. They may return to that base without liability to be put out when the base has been replaced. Runners forfeit this exemption if they attempt to advance beyond the dislodged base.

**Sec. 9. PINCH RUNNER:**

The designated pinch runner will be the player on the offensive team who last made out. This is either:

- a. the player last retired in the current inning; or
- b. the player last retired in the prior inning; or
- c. the last player in the batting order (if no outs have yet been recorded for that team).

## RULE 9 DEAD BALL / BALL IN PLAY

**Sec.1. THE BALL IS DEAD AND NOT IN PLAY IN THE FOLLOWING CIRCUMSTANCES:**

- a. When "TIME" or "DEAD BALL" is called by the umpire.
- b. When the ball is batted illegally.
- c. When the batter steps from one box to another when the pitcher is ready to pitch.
- d. When "NO PITCH" is declared.
- e. When a pitched ball touches any part of the batter's person or clothing, whether or not the ball is swung at.
- f. When a foul ball is not caught.
- g. When a runner is called out for leaving the base before a pitched ball is released.
- h. In case of offensive interference with a fielder.
- i. The offensive team causes an interference:
  1. When a batter intentionally hits the ball either a second time or with a thrown bat, or deflects the ball's course while running to first base.
  2. When a thrown ball is intentionally touched by a coach.
  3. When a fair ball strikes a runner, coach/pitcher (but not a pitching machine), or umpire before touching an infielder, including the player/pitcher.
  4. When the batter interferes with the catcher.
  5. When a member of the offensive team intentionally interferes with a live ball.
  6. When a runner intentionally kicks a ball which a fielder has missed.
- j. When the ball touches the ground, person, or object in the established out-of-play territory.
- k. If an accident to a batter/runner or runner prevents her from proceeding to an awarded base.
- l. When a wild pitch or passed ball goes under, over, or through the backstop.
- m. When a batter is hit by her own batted ball while in the batter's box.
- n. When, in the judgment of the umpires, the coach touches or physically assists the runner to return or to leave a base.
- o. When one or more offensive players collect around a base to which a runner is advancing, thereby confusing the fielders and adding to the difficulty of making a play.
- p. When a blocked ball is declared.

- q. When a batted ball touches a coach/pitcher before a fielder.
- r. When a fielder carries a live ball into out-of-play territory.
- s. Spectator interference.

**EFFECT:** Sec.1a-s: Base-runners cannot advance on a dead ball, unless forced to do so by reason of the batter having reached first base as entitled, or they are awarded a base or bases.

**NOTE:** When the umpire calls “TIME,” runners must stop at the base they have just reached. Middle: Runners will return to last achieved base. Younger: See Sec.3.

**NOTE:** See also the particular dead ball rules for Micro, Younger, and Middle Divisions below.

### Sec.2. MICRO DIVISION DEAD BALL:

Coaches will call “TIME” making the ball dead and not in play, when a defensive player has possession of the ball at or near a base, when an outfielder attempts to return the ball to any infielder, or when an infielder attempts to return the ball to the adult pitcher. The purpose of this rule is to motivate outfielders to return a batted ball immediately to an infielder and to motivate infielders to make plays on or stop the forward progress of runners with the least number of throws.

### Sec.3. YOUNGER DIVISION DEAD BALL:

The ball is dead and not in play when the umpire calls, “TIME,” at the logical conclusion of play, after:

- a. Any infielder on the defensive team attempts a play on, or throws a legally batted ball towards another infielder who is in a position to attempt a play on, the batter-baserunner or any other runner.

**NOTE:** It does not matter if the throw is offline or overthrown or the receiving infielder mishandles the ball.

**EFFECT:** “TIME” will be called and play stops once the runner played upon has advanced (or returned to her original base) and the batter-baserunner has reached first base.

- b. Any member of the defensive team, having retrieved or received a ball from the outfield, throws a legally batted ball towards an infielder who is in a position to attempt a play on, or to stop the forward progress of, any runner.

**NOTE:** It does not matter if the throw is offline or the receiving infielder mishandles the ball.

**EFFECT:** “TIME” will be called and play stops once any infielder touches the ball or makes an attempt to retrieve the ball.

- c. Anytime the lead runner stops her forward progress at a base, even if the ball is still in play in the infield or outfield.

**EFFECT:** “TIME” will be called and play stops once the lead runner has stopped on the base and the batter/baserunner has reached first base. If the lead runner resumes her forward prog-

ress before “TIME” is called then the play will continue as if the lead runner had not stopped.

**NOTE 1:** If, at the conclusion of a play, a defensive player immediately attempts another play before the umpire can call “TIME,” the subsequent attempt does *not* extend play and “TIME” is called by the umpire as usual. All offensive players not put out before “TIME” was called are positioned as described in NOTE 3 below.

**NOTE 2:** The defensive player, after “TIME” is called, will return the ball promptly to the player-pitcher inside the pitching circle.

**NOTE 3:** Runners who are at or beyond the half-way line between bases when “TIME” is called are entitled to the base they are approaching. Runners who have not crossed the half-way line who are not forced to advance by the batter/baserunner must return to the last base achieved.

### Sec.4. MIDDLE DIVISION DEAD BALL:

The ball is dead and not in play when the umpire calls, “TIME,” at the logical conclusion of play, after:

- a. Any member of the defensive team returns any legally batted ball to an infielder who is a position to attempt a play on, or to stop the forward progress of, any runner. The infielder must have possession of the ball before “TIME” will be called.
- b. Anytime the defensive team stops the forward progress of the lead runner.

**EFFECT:** If any defensive player, at the conclusion of a play, before “TIME” is called, immediately attempts another play on another runner between bases, the ball will remain alive until the logical conclusion of that play and no further plays are attempted, at which point “TIME” will be called. See also NOTE 1 below.

**NOTE 1:** When any fielder attempts a play on a runner approaching a base and the ball is overthrown or mishandled by the defense, the runner may advance, in jeopardy, only one additional base, even if a play is attempted on this runner at the next base.

**NOTE 2:** The defensive player, when “TIME” is called, will return the ball promptly to the player-pitcher

**NOTE 3:** Runners between bases when “TIME” is called will return to the last legally achieved base. Runners in contact with a base when “TIME” is called will remain on that base.

### Sec.5. THE BALL IS IN PLAY IN THE FOLLOWING CIRCUMSTANCES:

Whenever the ball is not dead as provided in Sections 1-4 of this rule, and also:

- a. When the pitcher has the ball while standing in her pitching position, and the plate umpire has called, “PLAY BALL.”

**NOTE:** This is how play resumes after a dead ball and at the start of each inning.

- b. When the batter legally hits a fair ball.
- c. When a fair ball strikes an umpire or runner on fair ground after touching a fielder.
- d. (Older Division only) When the infield fly rule is enforced.
- e. (Older Division only) When a thrown ball goes past a fielder and remains in playable territory.

**NOTE:** In Older Division, in the course of normal play, the ball is almost always live. This is because none of the qualifying actions of Section 1 will have rendered the ball dead. Unlike Younger and Middle Divisions, the ball does not automatically become dead at the end of each play.

## APPENDIX 1

### PITCHER QUALIFICATION

#### Sec.1. RATIONALE

The use of a qualification procedure offers the following benefits:

- a. It assures both girls and parents, pitchers and batters, that games are going to be reasonably paced.
- b. It gives beginners a concrete and viable target for when they will be able to pitch in games, and assures them they won't be too embarrassed once they can.
- c. It keeps the number of pitchers a coach needs to get innings for restricted to the number who will really benefit from it, rather than everyone who simply wants to try.

#### Sec.2. FREQUENCY

It is in the best interests of middle division to produce as many qualified pitchers as possible, while keeping girls' expectations at a reasonable level. Experience has taught us that these interests are best served by the following guidelines:

- a. Girls are not allowed to qualify more than once per practice, or more than twice every three practices.
- b. Within the limitations of (a), players may request a qualification session at any time, and the league will make a target (and qualifier) available within four days of the request.
- c. The league will hold a qualification session for all interested girls after the pitching clinic held closest to the start of games each season.

#### Sec.3. QUALIFIER

The qualifier shall be a commissioner or other designated league official, including the head coach of any team.

- a. An assistant coach may be designated by the commissioner to act as a qualifier.
- b. Under no circumstances may a coach qualify his own daughter.

#### Sec.4. QUALIFICATION TARGET

The qualification target (see Figure 1) shall be made of PVC pipe, measuring 1 foot wider than the plate, having a "strike zone area" 3 feet high starting 6 inches off the ground, and shall have feet to stand on and a handle to hold.

#### Sec.5. QUALIFICATION PROCEDURE

- a. The qualification target is held by the qualifier so that it straddles an actual home plate even with the corners where the plate starts to narrow (that is, at the back edge of the square part of the plate).
- b. Legally delivered pitches which go through the strike zone area

or which hit the target at the edges of the strike zone area are considered strikes; everything else is a ball (*without exception*).

- c. The pitcher throws from the rubber (or at least the normal pitching position) and is throwing to an actual catcher (either girl or adult) in normal catching position behind the plate.
- d. The pitcher throws 6 warm-up pitches, and then simulates throwing a 4-batter “inning.”
  1. A normal count is kept for each “batter.”
  2. Every “at bat” ends either with a strikeout or a walk.
  3. The number of strikes thrown to all “batters” is added up.
- e. A pitcher qualifies if she throws six or more strikes in the inning.

**NOTE:** “Typically” this means the pitcher will have thrown a strike to each batter and two strikes to two of them. A pitcher can walk one batter on four pitches, but then must have thrown two strikes to each of the other three batters. A pitcher can even walk two batters on eight pitches, but then must have struck out the other two.

### Sec.6. RE-QUALIFICATION

- a. A pitcher must re-qualify each year.
- b. Pitchers who do not continue to practice and stay sharp after qualifying (as judged by their team’s coaches) may be asked by the coaches to re-qualify.

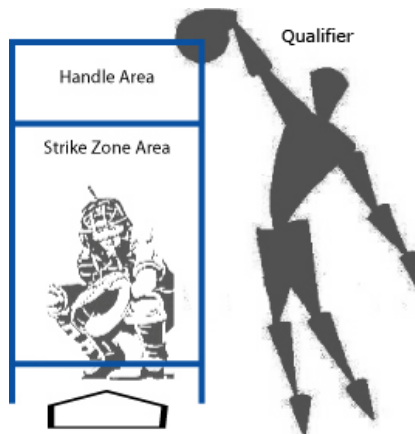


Figure 1. *Qualification Procedure.* A view of the qualification target, qualifier, and catcher from the point of view of the pitcher being qualified. The qualifier holds the target upright while the ball is pitched and observes whether it passes through or strikes the target area.