

Denton County Interlock Rule Modifications – Spring 2015

Rules for All Divisions Softball

All rules are governed by ASA/USSSA Fast Pitch Softball with the following exceptions/highlights:

1. UNIFORMS / EQUIPMENT:
 - A. Uniforms – Spring uniforms (jersey tops) are expected to match. Shirts must be tucked in. Fall uniforms will be similar in color but not required to match. However, player numbers are required.
 - B. No jewelry. (Exception: Earrings covered before game begins.)
 - C. Bats – must be ASA/USSSA certified. (T-ball bats OK for 6u.)
 - D. Helmets – All batters and runners must wear helmets and facemasks that are NOCSAE approved. Chin straps are required.
 - E. Cleats – Rubber only. No metal cleats allowed.
 - F. Catchers – Must wear a catcher’s face mask, helmet, chest protector and shins guards.
 - G. Pitchers – Must wear face mask. (6u must wear helmet with face mask.)
2. BATTING: Teams will bat their roster. Coaches will submit a batting lineup card to the opposing coach prior to each game. Players arriving late will bat, but will be placed at the bottom of the lineup card once they arrive.
3. SUBSTITUTIONS: Free and unlimited defensive substitutions for all positions.
4. RUN LIMIT: 5 runs per inning per team.
5. RAIN-SHORTENED GAME: A game is considered complete if:
 - A. More than 3 complete innings have been played or 2.5 innings if the home team is ahead
 - B. If 45 minutes have elapsed off the game clock
 - i. Suspended games will be picked up at the point of suspension and played to completion. It is the home team’s responsibility to confirm with the plate umpire (official clock) and the visiting team remaining game time and place in the batting order where suspension occurred.
 - ii. It is the home team responsibility to report game status to their league official for rescheduling purposes.
6. SUBSTITUTE RUNNER RULE: A team may put in a pinch (substitute) runner for their pitcher or catcher at any point while they are on base. It must be the last batted out. If an out has not occurred, then it will be the last batter in the line-up.
7. SHORT-HANDED RULE: A team may start a game with as few as seven (7) players. There will not be any mandatory outs applied by the umpire for shorthanded play. However, coaches may not hold out players to gain a competitive advantage.
8. PICK-UP PLAYER RULE: If a team has less than 9 players, they may pick up a maximum of 2 players, with the requirement of them playing in the outfield and batting them at the bottom of the batting order. *****8U teams may pick up a maximum of 2 players to get their team to 10 players***** Pick-up players must be registered in the same or younger age group of the Team’s League for which they are substituting.

9. GAME CLOCK: All games are limited by time. All games will be 70 minutes for all ages except 6u. No inning may start with no time remaining on the clock.
- Exception: 6u – Hard clock at 50 minutes.
10. MANDATORY ROTATION RULE: No player shall be on the bench for two consecutive innings except for injury, illness or disciplinary reasons. No player shall be on the bench twice in one game before all other players sit on the bench at least once – except for the pitcher and catcher positions in levels 10u and up. There is no mandatory defensive rotation rule. However, coaches should provide the opportunity for each player to play multiple positions during the season based on their ability to play the position safely.
11. COACHES: There will be a maximum of four (4) coaches/adults in the dugout during the game. Coaches are expected to treat the umpires with respect and are expected to know the rules. Coaches are NEVER to argue umpire judgment calls and are expected to keep the team’s parents in line. There is no tolerance for unruly coaches. Coaches that are out of hand will be thrown out of the game and will be given at least a one game suspension.
12. TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES: The Home Team will provide an adult to keep the official score book. The visiting team will provide one adult to maintain the scoreboard. The league providing the host field will provide the game balls.
13. INTENTIONAL CONTACT: A player’s intentional and unnecessary contact with an umpire or opposing player, with the intention of causing harm, malice or in an attempt to jar the ball loose from a fielder’s possession, will result in an immediate ejection of the offending player by the game umpire.
14. CHANTING: Chanting in the dugout is allowed. However, coaches should not allow any chant with inappropriate content or chants that can be viewed as demeaning to the opposing players.
15. DISTRACTIONS: Noisemakers (such as, but limited to air horns and clappers) are not allowed to be used by parents or players whether in the dugout or bleacher area. At no time are spectators allowed to make noises that are specifically designed to distract the pitcher or batter.
16. RUNNING UP THE SCORE: The Interlock does not want any coach excessively “running up the score” on another team. This is recreational ball – respect each other and encourage other teams! Use this as an opportunity to play less talented players in positions they would not normally play
17. SPORTSMANSHIP: Coaches will be responsible for the conduct of their players, parents and themselves. Poor sportsmanship or disrespect toward any umpire, opposing player or coach will be tolerated. Coaches, parents and players are to speak to all players in a positive and supportive manner. Violations will result in the umpire banning the coach to the dugout or, in severe cases, from the field area.

MODIFIED RULES FOR 6U REC SOFTBALL

Game Time Limit	50 minute time limit - No Official Score Kept Do Not Finish The Inning - Stop when time expires
Bat Metal Bats Only -	All Bats Must Be ASA/USSSA Certified (T-Ball bats OK for 6U) Result: None (Umpires Instruct on Correct Equipment)
Equipment	6U Pitchers Wear Batters Helmet with Mask. All Catchers Must Wear Head Gear/Mask/Chest Protector/Leg Guards (6U leg guards are not required or they can wear the soft shin guards)
Jewelry	No Jewelry (rings, necklaces, bracelets) - Exception: Ear Studs may be taped
Ball	ASA/USSSA Certified - 11" - Easton IncrediBall - Yellow (or Synthetic Leather 11" Softtouch)
Distances	Bases at 60' - Coach Pitcher - 28'-35', but Floating Rubber
# Players	All Players in the Field - Six Infielders including pitcher and catcher - Rest in Outfield - 10' beyond baseline
Catchers	Catcher is Optional, not required
Required # of Players	Suggested to have 6 to Play - Automatic Out Does Not Apply
Lineup / Substitutes	Bat the Lineup - No One On The Bench. Each team will bat the number of batters that the team with more players has. Example. One team has 6 playing against a team with 10. The team with 6 will bat 10 each inning. The team with 10 bats the lineup. We want to keep 6U teams to 5-7 players. Sometimes teams get formed with 9 and you just can't form two teams. This will enable both teams to have a similar amount of time up to bat. Last batter runs the entire base path. For the second time at bat, the team with the fewer players starts in the line-up where they left off.
Coaches	Coach Pitcher should kneel or remove themselves from the field when ball is live Do not coach or touch runners – Do not touch live ball
Offensive Coach Positioning	1 - Coach Pitcher / 2 - Behind Catcher (can help batter & catcher) / 3 & 4 - At First & Third Base
Defensive Coach Positioning	Maximum Three Coaches - All Behind The Outfield
Player Rotation	Rotate all players through all defensive positions during season
Pitching	Six Pitches Total: Suggested method: 3 Coach Pitch & 3 from the T - No Swinging Strikes (or any combination of 6 attempts to hit)
Pitching:	Last Pitch Sixth pitch is an out - unless a "hit" - foul balls will result as another pitch on last pitch.
Bunting	No Bunting
'Tight' or 'Loose' Bases Tight -	Leave when ball is hit
Stealing	No Stealing
Wild Pitch / Passed Ball	No Stealing
Batter/Runner	One Base Limit on any hit ball declared fair.
Overthrows (Out of Bounds)	One Base Limit
Runner Is Out	Outs DO Apply - Each Team Bats Lineup Each Inning. Once a player is put out at any base, she returns the dugout.
Play Over	When a defensive player has retrieved the ball and all runners have ceased advancing to the next base
Dropped Third Strike	Does Not Apply

MODIFIED RULES FOR 8U REC SOFTBALL

Game Time	70 minute time limit; finish the game if the home team is behind and can win or tie (5 runs or less). Otherwise game ends when time expires; No tie breaker; 5 run limit per half inning
Ball	Use an 11" ball (375 compression / .47 core), optic yellow
Players	Maximum 10 players in defense with maximum 6 infielders including the pitcher and catcher. Outfielders are required to start each play at least 10' behind the base path.
Pitchers	Kid Pitcher/Coach Pitcher Modified - 30' pitching distance (NEW SPRING 2015) - Face Mask Required. Two teams can agree to play a straight kid-pitch game if both coaches agree at the plate before the game. In 8U Kid pitch game, 4 balls is a walk. If there is any dispute at the home plate as to whether it is to be a kid pitch game then the default is modified coach pitch.
Kid Pitcher	<p>Kid pitcher pitches a normal strike count up to a maximum of three called balls. Once three balls are called against the kid pitcher, then the coach pitcher enters the game (see next 2 steps)</p> <p>Illegal Pitch During league play only, pitchers will be given warnings for illegal pitches. Umpire needs to call it a "No Pitch" No bases are awarded. The goal is to instruct the correct pitching form.</p>
Coach Pitcher	<p>The coach pitcher enters the game when the kid pitcher has three called balls / inherits the strike count from the kid pitcher - no "warm-up" pitches / not allowed to coach batters or runners / must leave the field immediately upon any hit</p> <p>The 30' rubber must be used with a limit of one stride - slingshot or windmill method. Kid pitcher must stand at least slightly behind the coach pitcher and in the circle</p> <p>During coach pitching, the last strike must be hittable. This is determined by the umpire. Balls over the batter's head, in the dirt, behind (or at) the batter are all considered "no pitch" and the coach gets 1 more pitch, regardless if the player swung or not.</p>
Catchers	Required to be in full gear, directly behind the plate, in a proper 'catching' position
Offensive Coaches	One coach at 1B and one coach at 3B plus coach pitcher.
Defensive Coaches	Maximum two coaches behind outfielders and outside of foul lines.
Batter	<p>*No Walking / No Bunting / No Slap Hitting on Coach Pitch (Bunting is OK on Kid Pitcher) Batter will continue to hit on a last pitch foul ball (unlimited last pitch foul balls)</p> <p>Umpires may use a liberal strike zone to encourage batters to hit off of the kid pitcher</p> <p>Hit by pitch, the batter is awarded first base as long as an attempt to get out of the way is made. If no attempt is made then the pitch is considered a ball. A ball will be called instead of a hit by pitch if the pitch hits the ground first before hitting the batter.</p> <p>Play Dead On the attempt made back to the pitcher and once the ball crosses the pitching circle boundary. If the runner has already left the base and continues to run without pause they can continue on to the next base, this also leaves the pitcher the option to attempt to get the out at the next base. (an overthrow at this point is not an advancement of bases but a dead ball).</p>
Running Limits	<p>Infield Hit: The lead runner is limited to 3B on any hit and must be hit home from 3B. Outfield Hit: No limit on any runners; can advance until play is called dead.</p> <p>The baseline will be used to determine infield/outfield hit. A ball that is untouched by an infielder and crosses the baseline will be considered an outfield hit, the umpires will call the outfield hit.</p> <p>Stealing No stealing at any time</p>
Tight / Loose Bases	<p>Kid Pitcher – Loose Bases (leave base when ball leaves pitcher's hand)</p> <p>Coach Pitcher - Tight Bases (leave base when ball is hit)</p>
Dropped Third Strike	Not in effect
Infield Fly Ball	Not in effect

MODIFIED RULES FOR 10U REC SOFTBALL

Game Time	70 minute time limit; finish the inning if the home team is behind and can win or tie (5 runs or less). Otherwise game ends when time expires; If the game is tied 8-8 or less, one extra inning will be played with the last out starting at second base. If after one inning the game is tied, it remains a tie - 5 run limit per half inning
Ball	Use an 11" ball (375 compression / .47 core), optic yellow
Players	Maximum 9 players in defense per ASA/USSSA rules
Pitchers	Straight Kid Pitch – 35' pitching distance – Face Mask REQUIRED
Illegal Pitch	per ASA/USSSA rules
Offensive Coaches	One coach at 1B and one coach at 3B
Defensive Coaches	All defensive coaches must remain "in" the dugout. Some fields may allow defensive coaches to be immediately outside the dugout
Hit by pitch	The batter is awarded first base as long as an attempt to get out of the way is made. If no attempt is made then the pitch is considered a ball.
Stealing	Stealing is limited to one base per pitch when stealing, including home (NEW SPRING 2015) Runner cannot steal on a walk, they can only have 1 base
Wild Pitch or Passed Ball	One base limit
Dropped Third Strike	Not in effect unless agreed to by both coaches at home plate conference before game.
Infield Fly Ball	Not in effect unless agreed to by both coaches at home plate conference before game.

MODIFIED RULES FOR 12U & 15U REC SOFTBALL

Game	70 minute time limit; finish the inning; 5 run limit per half inning; If the game is tied 8-8 or less, one extra inning will be played with the last out starting at second base. If after one inning the game is tied, it remains a tie
Ball	Use a 12" ball (375 compression / .47 core), optic yellow
Pitching	12U = 40' pitching distance // 15U = 43' pitching distance. Pitchers required to wear a FACE MASK.