

Cathy Stage Homer Recreation Youth Softball Program
Local 10 and under Softball Rules and Guidelines
March 5, 2015

1. **Field Dimensions:** The distance between the bases is 60 feet. The base line is an imaginary line three feet to either side of the direct line of the bases. The distance from home plate to the pitcher's plate is 30 feet . The pitching rubber is located in the center of a circle with a 10 ft. radius. Out of play lines will be parallel to the foul ball line. Out of play lines will extend out from the ends of the backstop. A line marking the mid-way point for each baseline will be drawn to aid the umpire in determining if a runner is allowed to take the next base. At Calale, a line will be drawn ten feet behind the first to second and second to third baselines (see rule #33). At fields that do not have on deck batters cages, there will be two circles with 12 foot diameters drawn behind the wings on the backstop.
2. **Innings:** 10 and under teams play 6 innings. The first, second, fifth, and sixth innings of every game will be coach pitched, third and fourth innings must be player pitched. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** Ten players play defense. All players on the team are put in the batting order to bat, whether or not they play in the field during that inning. Once set, the batting order remains the same throughout the game. Each player must play in the field 3 of the 6 innings. Exceptions: A player is not required to play 3 innings if they arrive late or leave early. An inning ends when the defensive team makes 3 outs or the offensive team scores 5 runs.
3. **Starting Time:** All scheduled games must begin at the scheduled starting time. The home team takes the field 30 minutes before the starting time for a 15 warm-up. The visiting team takes the field for 15 minutes before the starting time for a 15 minute warm-up. At the scheduled starting time, the umpire should call "Play Ball-Batter up". All offensive and defensive players will need to be ready for play within 5 minutes of the end of the previous inning. Weekday games are scheduled to start at 6:00 p.m. Saturday game start times depends upon when the fields are available in each township.
4. **Ending Time:** the top of an inning may not start after 8:15 p.m.
5. **Minimum Number of Players:** Eight players per team must be present at the start of a game. If eight players are not present within 10 minutes of the scheduled start of a game, a forfeit is declared. Any player arriving after the start of the game must be placed at the end of the batting order. If a player leaves early from a game, they are deleted from the batting order with no penalty to the team. A team may finish with less than 8 players on the field. If one team knows in advance that it will not be able to field a minimum of eight players for a game, the opposing team must show up with a minimum of eight players within ten minutes of the scheduled starting time in order for a forfeit to be declared. If neither team can field a minimum of eight players within the time limits, a double forfeit will be declared. In the forfeit scenario, both teams are encouraged to show up at the field, share their players and play a scrimmage game. It is up to each team's coach as to where they play their players on defense. However, there can be no more than 4 infielders, a pitcher and a catcher if there are more than six players present.
6. The home team will provide two 11 inch yellow covered red stitched balls for each home game.
7. **Shortened Games:** A regulation game shall consist of 6 innings. If a game is called by an umpire for darkness or weather conditions after 4 complete innings have been completed, the game will be considered official. If less than 4 complete innings have been completed, the game will be resumed from the point where it was called at a later date. Players that were not at the first game but are at the resumed game are added to the bottom of the lineup. Players that were at the first game but are not at the resumed games are skipped in the lineup with no penalty to that team.

8. **Rain Outs:** It is the responsibility of the Recreation Director to make the determination if a game can be played, based upon the weather and field conditions. In his absence, the game umpires may make this decision. If it is obvious that conditions are unplayable, an agreement to cancel the game can be made over the telephone by the two coaches and the Recreation Director. If a game is rained out, the Recreation Director will assign a makeup date by notifying both coaches within 24 hours of the canceled game start time. The Recreation Director will assign the first available makeup date. If the makeup date is not agreeable to one of the coaches, the Recreation Director will accept an alternative date, if it is agreed upon by both coaches and the requested field is not already taken. The Recreation Director must hear from both coaches that their agreed upon date is acceptable to both coaches. If the Recreation Director does not hear from both coaches, the date assigned by the Recreation Director will be the make-up date.
9. **Infield Fly Rule:** The infield fly rule does not apply in this league.
10. **"Base on Balls", Stealing and Bunting:** There is no base on balls, leading off, stealing or bunting. A batter is awarded first base only if she swings the bat and hits the catcher's mitt since this is interference by the defense. If a batter is hit by a pitch from her own coach the ball is declared a "no pitch" and the batter does not advance to first base. A runner may not leave the base until the ball is hit.

If a player is pitching normal balls and strikes are called, and a batter will be awarded first base if she has received four called balls.

11. **Batting:** Six well pitched balls are thrown to the batter by their own coach. A well pitched ball is considered to be any ball that is in the strike zone. The umpire will determine and count the well pitched balls. The umpire will notify the coach/pitcher when five well pitched balls have been reached. If the sixth pitch is a foul ball, the coach continues to pitch until the batter gets a hit, swings and misses, or receives a "well pitched ball". Three swinging strikes is an out. Foul balls count as a swinging strike for the first two strikes. Player pitching will be 6 thrown balls and will be called balls and strikes, three strikes or four balls, whichever comes first. Batter will strike out or walk, unless 6th ball is a foul ball, then there will be a seventh pitch. The coach/pitcher will pitch from the 30 foot pitching rubber. All pitches must not go over the height of the shoulder of the batter. If a batted ball strikes the coach who pitched the ball before a defensive player touches the ball, the batted ball is declared a no pitch. Only the pitcher/coach may wear a glove in the field and they are wearing a glove only for self defense. If they should instinctively catch or touch a ball, the batted ball is declared a "no pitch". When a player hits a fair ball, the coach pitching immediately exits to foul territory and remains there until the next player comes up to bat.
12. **Ball in Play;** When a batter hits a fair ball, the ball is considered "in play" and runners may continue to advance until one of the following events occurs:
 - A. The defense makes a play and gets the third out, or
 - B. The ball is thrown out of bounds, in which case the umpire declares the ball dead and each runner will be awarded two bases from the point where they were at time of the throw was released, or
 - C. The umpire rules a ball "dead" because of interference or another rule, or
 - D. The ball is thrown to the player/ pitcher who is in the circle around the pitcher's mound as the defense attempts to return the ball to the pitcher. The player in the circle must be the player/pitcher. The player/pitcher must make contact with the ball in the circle. If the ball is thrown to a pitcher/coach, the ball remains a live ball, and the pitcher/coach must drop the ball immediately.
 - E. When a ball is hit to the outfield, play will stop when the ball has been thrown to a base player and the base player has control of the ball. If the base player tries to make a play on a runner the play will resume.

13. **Legal Touch:** A legal touch occurs when a runner who is not touching a base is touched by the ball while it is securely held in a fielder's hand(s). The ball is not considered as having been securely held if it is juggled or dropped by the fielder after having touched the runner, unless the runner deliberately knocks the ball from the hand(s) of the fielder. It is sufficient for the runner to be touched with the glove or hand(s) holding the ball. It is not a legal touch if the runner is touched with an empty hand or glove, even though the defensive player is holding the ball in the opposite hand or glove.
14. **Coaching Defense:** During play, one coach from the defensive team may be positioned behind the infielders on the playing field to offer guidance to the defensive players. They may wear a glove in order to show the players how to use a glove.
15. **Base Running and Interference:**
 - A. Defensive players are instructed by their coaches and the umpires, if necessary, as to the proper position to stand in relation to a base. They may not obstruct a runner advancing to another base.
 - B. A base runner is called "out" for running outside the base path when running to any base in regular or reverse order and runs outside the base path to avoid being touched by the ball in the hand(s) of a defensive player. A player will not be called "out" if they run outside the base path while trying to avoid a collision with a defensive player who is fielding a ball, in which case the runner should run behind the defensive player.
 - C. If a runner advancing to a base is hit by a batted ball, the runner is called "out".
 - D. If a base runner advancing to a base is hit by a thrown ball, the runner is not out, and the ball is alive and playable.
 - E. A runner who intentionally interferes with a defensive play will be declared out.
 - F. If the umpire is hit by a batted ball, it is considered a live ball. An umpire is considered part of the field of play.
 - G. A runner is out when they physically pass a preceding runner before that runner has been put out.
16. **Throwing the bat:** Throwing the bat constitutes an "out" declared by the umpire at the umpire's discretion. The play is dead and the base runners return to their original base. No warnings have to be given.
17. **Safety:** Batter, on deck batters, base runners and base coaches under the age of 18 must wear a helmet with a facemask and a chin strap at all times. For safety reasons, the only jewelry that is allowed to be worn is safety alert necklaces and bracelets which must be tucked inside the player's shirt and taped down. Starting in 2002, by ASA rules, no other jewelry may be worn. Umpires have the right to request that any jewelry must be removed before the player can resume playing. If a player is injured, the umpire can immediately stop the game and allow treatment of the injured player. First aid kits must be present in all equipment bags.
18. **"Uniforms"** constitute the same color shirt for the entire team. If it is cold, a jacket or sweatshirt should be worn under the team shirt, so the umpires can distinguish defensive from offensive players. Two extra shirts are issued for coaches. Players must wear the team shirt in order to play. The umpires wear light blue shirts and therefore it is requested that no team wear light blue shirts.
19. **Pitching:**
 - A. Pitching at the 10 and under level may be a sling shot technique or windmill
 - B. The pitcher's motion must be all forward.
 - C. The pitchers at the 10 and under level must pitch the third and fourth innings of every game
 - D. A pitcher can pitch to as many or as few batters as the coach deems necessary. Coaches can choose to have as many different pitchers per inning as they would like.

20. Sportsmanship: In keeping with our philosophy "Cathy Stage player are to play and have fun" players, coaches and spectators are encouraged to demonstrate good sportsmanship, especially in cheering and applauding for "good plays", no matter which team makes the play or gets the hit! It is up to the discretion of the umpires to speak to the coaches about their parents, team players', or their own display of unsportsmanlike conduct. After the second warning, the game is stopped until the person responsible for the unsportsmanship behavior leaves the field. Refer to the Coaches', Players' and Spectator's code of conduct.
21. Request to reschedule games for non-weather reason: After the initial schedule has been published, there may be games scheduled on a day when something such as a school or girl scout function is taking place that the scheduler was unaware of. These games may be rescheduled if the Recreation Director is notified by both coaches by May 15th. The Recreation Director will accept an alternate date if it is agreed upon by both coaches and the requested field is available. The Recreation Director must hear from both coaches that the agreed upon date is acceptable to both coaches. The coaches do not have to suggest an alternate date in which case the Recreation Director will assign another date.
22. Length of Games: In an effort to have the games finish in less than two hours, the following guidelines are suggested.
- A. Courtesy runner for the catcher at the coaches option, after there are two outs or on tenth batter, if the next inning's catcher is on base, they may be replaced with a courtesy runner which will be the last player to make an out.
 - B. Have your players know which positions they will be playing in the next inning, especially the catcher.
 - C. Please give special consideration to whom you select for your catchers. If they do not catch the ball very often, it takes time to retrieve the ball from the backstop.
- If a pitcher has hit three batters in a game and the batter has been awarded first base, the pitch has to be removed from the pitching position for the remainder of the game. Exception: If the game is suspended, and resumed at a later date, the pitcher may resume pitching.
23. Talking to Umpires:
- A. By ASA Rules, only the Head Coach may talk to the umpire. We do allow the scorekeepers to ask ball/strike count, number of outs, etc.
 - B. There should be no threatening comments made to umpires before, during or at the end of games
 - C. A head coach can appeal a call based upon a rule not an umpire's judgment. If an umpire rules a certain way on a rule, that is the end of the appeal. You may appeal to the Umpire Director at the conclusion of the game. The game will not be replayed or resumed, however the intent is to get the rule correctly applied in the future.
24. Coaches cannot touch runners until play is stopped. If touched, the runner is out.
25. A coach can ask an umpire if a batter is out of the batter's box. Once an interpretation has been made, the coaches should use discretion on asking an umpire for another interpretation.
26. If an umpire has not called time before a pitch has been delivered, whatever subsequently happens, is part of the game.
27. A protest of a game can be made for the following reasons
- A. Misinterpretation of a playing rule – must be made before the next pitch or if the last play of the game before the umpires leave the field.
 - B. Ineligible player – can be made any time

THE ONLY PROTEST THAT WILL BE ALLOWED IN THE CATHY STAGE HOMER RECREATION PROGRAM WILL BE FOR AN INELIGIBLE PLAYER, IE, A PLAYER NOT REGISTERED IN THE PROGRAM

28. There is no ASA rule that requires a runner to slide; however we do encourage the players to slide on close plays or give themselves up in the interest of safety. The only time a runner can be called out for not sliding is when a defensive player has the ball or is about to catch the ball, and the runner remains on their feet and deliberately, with great force, crashes into the defensive player. The runner is out, the ball is dead and each runner must return to the last base touched. The umpire determines what "great force" is.
29. When a ball has entered the pitcher's circle with a pitcher/player in the circle, the umpire will signal dead ball, and the play will end. Any runners that are not halfway to the next base, in the umpire's judgment, must go back to the last base touched. If the pitcher/player makes a play on a runner or to a base, the dead ball is waved off and the play continues.
30. When a ball is hit to the outfield play will stop when the ball has been thrown to a base player and the base player has control of the ball. If the base player tries to make a play on a runner then play will resume.
31. If a game is tied after six inning, the teams can continue to play until the tie is resolved if time and weather conditions allow, and if it is not too dark. If a game is called after six innings, it is considered official, and the score will stand as is, win, lose or tie. The final score is determined by the last complete inning played.
32. For safety reasons, a catcher must be in a squat position. They will no longer be allowed to be on their knees.
33. A. On all grass fields, a line will be drawn ten feet behind the first to second and second to third baselines. All three outfielders and the rover player must stand behind the line until the ball is hit.
B. At fields where there is a dirt infield, the three outfielders and the rover player must stand on the outfield grass until the ball is hit.
34. Per the Recreation Commission, in the umpire's judgment, if thunder is heard or lightning is seen, all participants must leave the field, and not return until 20 minutes after the last bolt of lightning is seen or clap of thunder is heard. If play resumes and is topped a second time, the game will be ended.
35. All Coaches on the field that are under the age of 18 must wear a batter's helmet with face mask and chin strap.
36. ASA Rules will apply in all situations unless they are superseded by local rules. This document is considered the local rules.