



YMCA 3/4 Spirit Softball Rules Grades

1. Game Length - 1 hr. 20 min. time limit (no new inning to begin after 1 hr 20 min). Teams will exit area prior to next teams entering. Home team determined by coin flip.
2. Ten players on the field at a time. Everybody bats whether on the field or not. Free unlimited substitution. All players must play in the field of a minimum two innings. NO metal/steel cleats allowed for safety of all players.
3. Teams may play with a minimum of 6 players.
4. Pitching distance is 33'.
Base lines will be 60'. Ball:
11" yellow hard softball.
5. **6 Run Rule:** A team can only score 6 runs per inning or have 3 outs per inning. (If team has bases loaded and 5 runs in, play will continue but only 6 runs may be counted for that inning).
6. A pitcher may only pitch 3 innings in a game (they do not have to be consecutive). Coaches' discretion on pitching substitution.
7. **"Step Back" Rule is allowed:** Pitcher must start with front foot on pitching rubber and is allowed to "step back" with back foot to begin pitching motion, (back foot does not have to be in contact with rubber). It can happen before, simultaneous with or after the hands are brought together. Then would push off pitching rubber and drag lag foot upon release.
 - "Crow Hop" is considered an illegal move. The pivot foot must remain in contact with or push off and drag away from the pitched plate prior to the front foot touching the ground, as long as the pivot foot remains in contact with the ground.
8. Time-outs or trips to the mound: If a coach crosses the foul line for the second time, the pitcher must be replaced. Limit of two trips per inning.
9. Infield fly rule is not in effect.
10. Umpire will have final jurisdiction on all calls. **There will be NO PROTESTS.**
11. If batter throws bat, it is an automatic out. No warning will be given. It is a dead ball and no advancement of base runners.
12. Batter, on-deck batter and base runners must wear a helmet (Cap is required under helmet). Three helmets with faceguards will be provided to each team.
13. **Overthrow Rule** – base runners may advance at their own risk or until ball is controlled by infielder and umpire calls "Time." (If ball goes beyond extension of fence lines base runner will get base they are going to plus one at the time of throw.) Ball is dead on throw back from catcher to pitcher after pitch, no baserunner advancement allowed. If ball is overthrown on a steal, runner cannot advance.
14. Bunting and Stealing is allowed. Base Runners are allowed to begin a steal on the release of a pitch. Early steals will result in base runner being called "Out", (Dead-ball, pitch does not count).

- Home plate is closed on steals and throws to second and third.

15. Batter **cannot** run on a dropped third strike.

16. No look-backs allowed on walks (cannot advance to 2nd base on walk).

17. No intentional walks allowed. Everybody must have the opportunity to hit.

18. Score can result from any live ball.

19. A walk with loaded bases will result with a score.

20. Fielding mask for 3rd base and pitcher position required.

21. All 3 outfielders plus Rover position must begin in grass area of outfield prior to pitched ball.

22. **Fielder's Choice/Tag Play:** Base runner must slide if a **REALISTIC attempted tag play** is to be made at any base. No attempt to slide may result in base runner being called out. If there is no realistic attempt possible, the base runner may enter base standing up. Fielders cannot be in the base paths if there is not a possible play at the base.

The YMCA encourages & promotes good sportsmanship among all teams, coaches and fans (no team cheers allowed).