

Rules 3rd/4th Grade Level
2023 Dodge County Girls Softball League

Field Preparations:

1. Bases are 60 feet apart. The pitcher's mound is 35 feet.
2. A double base will be used at 1st base.

Game Rules:

1. Balls used are Dudley, "Fast Pitch" SB 11", .44 core
2. A half inning consists of 3 outs or 4 runs scored. The 4 run rule is NOT in effect in the last inning.
3. The count is 3 strikes and 4 balls. However, **no walks!** When the pitcher has walked a batter, ***the count carries forward and the batter's coach will pitch for remainder of count brought forward.***
 - Continue swinging until she misses or hits a fair ball.
 - Coach must pitch from the mound.
4. **NO** infield fly rule.
5. Dropped 3rd strike will be discussed and agreed upon to use by the coaches & umpire before the game.
 - a. IF AGREED UPON: If the catcher drops the 3rd strike WHEN first base is UNOCCUPIED or there are 2 outs, the batter may attempt to reach 1st base safely. The batter can begin this running (after first forgetting) anytime before she reaches the dugout or fenceline. ONCE the batter has reached the dugout or fence line, or has been touched by a coach, the batter is OUT.
6. If a batter is hit by a pitch, the batter must hit the remaining count *thrown by the coach*. Attempts should be made to avoid being hit.
 - Includes if ball hits ground and then hits batter;
 - count carries forward with swings.
7. If the pitch hits the ground before crossing the plate and/or hitting the batter, *it is a live ball*. If the batter swings and hits the ball, *it is a live play*. If the batter swings and misses, a strike. If hits batter, see rule #6.
8. Fielder, if fielding the ball has priority (see long example in general rules for all levels).

Pitching:

1. *The pitcher must start her windup with one foot on the pitching rubber. Correct pitching formation is encouraged but if not used, umpire would let the coach know and let the game continue.
2. Maximum of *four innings/pitcher/game*. *Innings can be split.*

Base Running:

1. Base stealing is allowed after the pitched ball crosses the plate.
2. Runners may take a lead off once the ball has crossed the plate. If the ball has not been hit, the runner must return to the base.
3. A batter reaching 1st base safely and overrunning the base may turn right or toward the dugout to return safely to the base. If an attempt has been made toward 2nd base, but turning left, she may be tagged out.
4. If the ball is over thrown, the runners shall be awarded the base to which they were headed only.
 - a. Ex #1 - An overthrow while a runner is going from 1st to 2nd base - the runner is awarded 3rd base.
 - b. Ex #2 - An overthrow while a runner is heading back to 1st base after going part way to 2nd - the runner is awarded 2nd base.
5. ***If a play is being made at home***, runners must attempt a slide at home to avoid a collision otherwise the umpire will give the runner a warning. The catcher can NOT block home plate or make a play for the runner if she does not have the ball. Again, umpire may give a warning here. If repetitive, an out can be called.
6. No stealing home.