

Clayton Youth Softball League

Grade 7/8 Girls Rules

OFFICIAL RULES: The official softball rules published by the Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA) shall be used for all Leagues, EXCEPT that Clayton Parks and Recreation league rules shall take precedence in cases of conflicts.

Ball:

1. Play with a 12" softball
2. Each team provides one (1) game ball for each game

Distances - Pitching and Base:

1. Pitching rubber at 40 ft. Bases at 60 ft.

Balls and Strikes:

1. A player is allowed 3 strikes (called or swinging) and the final strike must be a non-foul strike.
2. Batters **may run on a dropped 3rd strike**, only when first base is **unoccupied**. The exception to this is when there are two outs. With two outs, batter runs on dropped third strike even if first base is occupied.
3. A walk is issued after 4 balls.
4. **Intentional walks** are not allowed.

Base Running/Stealing:

1. A manager or coach may not physically interfere with the base-running progress of a player.
Penalty: runner is out.
2. Coach on 1st or 3rd base must make an obvious attempt to get out of the way of a playable foul ball.
Penalty: Umpire may declare batter out.
3. Base stealing and lead offs **are allowed once the ball is released from the pitchers hand**.
4. The runner gets one (1) base on a pitch which gets stuck in the backstop fence or goes behind or through the fence.

Bunting:

1. Bunting is allowed.

Batting/Batting Orders:

1. Coaches should keep a written batting order and exchange batting orders with the umpire-in-chief and the opposing coach at least ten (10) minutes before the official starting time. All players present will bat in a specific batting order, whether she is playing defensive or not. Late players must be added to the bottom of the batting order. Pinch-hitting is not allowed.
2. If a player begins batting at the wrong lineup spot, the coach should call time out, send the correct player up and the count will start over. If a wrong batter is noticed after she bats, simply make the correction the next time up.
3. The throwing of bats is very dangerous. The following rules will apply:
 - *The first time a player throws a bat, player and coach will be warned.
 - *The second time it occurs in a game, the player will be called out.
 - *If, at any time, a bat is thrown in an unsportsman like manner, the player will be called out and ejected from the game without further warning.
 - *This rule also applies to defensive players as well: for example, a catcher or other fielder throwing a bat out of the way in anticipation of a play at the plate.

Batting Helmets:

1. All batters, runners and on deck batters must wear a batting helmet.
2. Runners must keep the helmet on at all times, except during a time out. A runner intentionally removing a helmet during play, after a team warning, will be called out.

Catcher:

1. Catchers must wear full protective catcher's gear, including shin guards, chest protector, and catcher's mask with helmet.
2. Players warming up a pitcher must wear a mask.

Game:

1. A complete game is seven (7) innings. An official game is three (3) innings, therefore if game is called because of inclement weather after 3 innings; it is an official game and will not be rescheduled.
2. A 1 hour and 40 minute time limit is in effect for each game or 6 innings whichever comes first. Umpires should announce the "last" inning as the 1 hour and 40 minute time limit approaches. Should an inning go past the time limit, at 1 hour and 50 minutes into the game, it will be stopped and called an official game (it does not matter what point the teams are at, the game comes to a dead stop).
3. Games will be called for darkness at the umpire's discretion.

Game Cancellations:

1. In the event of inclement weather or poor field conditions, games will be canceled. Always check on the status of games by calling the Clayton Sports Hotline at 314-290-8515 or by visiting www.teamsideline.com/claytonmo.
4. Clayton Parks and Recreation will attempt to reschedule every canceled game. The league will do everything possible to see that each team plays eight (8) games during the duration of the season. Rescheduled games might occur on days other than your normal game days.

Infield Fly Rule:

1. The infield fly rule **applies** in this grade level.
2. Defined as a playable **fair fly** ball, at least first and second base occupied and less than two outs; umpire must call it. If the ball is caught the batter is out, the ball remains live and runners may attempt to advance after re-tagging. If the ball is not caught the batter is still out, the ball remains live and the runners may advance but do not have to tag-up.

Any fair fly ball that could be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort is covered by the rule, whether or not it's in the infield, and whether or not an infielder catches it, or even attempts to catch it.

The umpire must rule also that a ball is an infield fly, even if handled by an outfielder, if, in the umpire's judgment, the ball could have been as easily handled by an infielder.

Injuries:

1. If a player is injured, removed from the game and cannot bat when called upon, the next batter in the lineup will be up. The player will be allowed back in the lineup (in the same spot) and the field when she feels physically capable and the coach is absolutely sure she is capable of resuming play.
2. If a batter is injured and removed from the game, the next batter is up and the count starts over. The injured player will be allowed back in the game when she feels physically capable and the coach is absolutely sure she is capable of resuming play.

Malicious Contact:

1. Under no conditions should a runner maliciously run over a fielder, regardless of the position of the fielder. Runners should be taught that sliding is the best way to avoid both a charge of malicious contact and being put out.
2. If, **in the opinion of the umpire**, malicious contact occurred, the runner is out and ejected from the game and no runner may advance because of the player's action. Runners scoring after the occurrence will be returned to the base occupied at the time malicious contact occurred.
3. Malicious contact supersedes obstruction.
4. Generally, when severe contact occurs, the call will be malicious contact.

Obstruction and Interference:

1. Although the terms are used interchangeably, obstruction is defensive and interference is offensive.
2. Obstruction occurs when a fielder impedes or prevents the legal advance or return of a runner to a base.
3. **Penalties for obstruction:** Umpire shall award the obstructed runner and any other runner affected by the obstruction, the bases they would have, in their opinion, reached had there been no obstruction. The obstructed runner is awarded a minimum of one base beyond the position on base when the obstruction occurred.
4. Interference occurs when a batter, batter-runner or base-runner impedes or prevents a defensive player from making a play.
5. **Penalties for interference:** If by a player, he is out. If by a coach or other personnel, runner is out. Other runners are to return to base occupied when interference occurred and no runner may advance because of interference.

Outfielders:

1. Outfielders may not cover a base and receive a throw to a base, or tag a base, except for a run-down situation.

Pitchers:

1. Pitchers may pitch no more than 4 innings or 12 total outs. A pitcher may return to the pitching position once, provided that she has not pitched for more than 12 outs. Coaches are to keep track of pitchers' total outs.
2. A pitcher must leave the pitching position if a coach steps onto the playing field to talk with that pitcher a total of two times in the same inning.
3. "Windmill" and "Slingshot" deliveries are allowed. Side-arm deliveries are not allowed.
5. Pitchers must begin their delivery with two feet on the rubber. Their first step must be toward home plate. (They may not take a step to the rubber and then release the ball.)

Players:

1. Seven to ten (7 - 9) players from each team may begin play. A maximum of 9 players can play in the field at the same time and no more than 6 players are to be in the infield.
2. If a team has less than 7 players at game time, teams may and should borrow a player from the opposing team in order to make the game even. Coaches should ask, not order players to switch and should applaud their help and sportsmanship.
3. Coaches **must give all team members equal playing time on defense.**

Scoring:

1. In any inning of a game, the batting team may score no more than seven (7) runs. Once seven runs have scored, the batting team will return to defense, regardless of the number of outs.
2. When seven runs have been scored before three outs were made, the pitcher will still be assessed 3 outs toward his maximum of 12 outs.
3. Each half inning consists of 3 outs or the seven run rule. **Note:** the next inning's batting order begins where it left off the previous inning.

Time Out:

1. Time is not out until an umpire calls it. Time is back in when the plate umpire assumes his or her position and gives the proper motion and call to resume play.

Umpires:

1. The Clayton Parks and Recreation Department assign umpires to games. They **have complete authority once the ground-rules conference begins.**

Uniforms:

1. In all leagues, all metal spikes are prohibited. Tennis shoes, rubber or plastic cleats/spikes are allowed.
2. Each team shall be dressed alike and have uniform shirts of the same color. All girls are also encouraged to wear softball shorts.

Conduct:

1. On any conduct problem concerning coaches, players and/or spectators, umpires are instructed to deal only with coaches, who are responsible for correcting the problem. If a problem persists, a forfeit will result.
2. No manager, player, coach or spectator may charge, threaten or abuse an umpire before, during or after a game. Such behavior will result in ejection from the league.
3. Coaches remain in coach's box on offense and in designated "dugout" in foul territory on defense.
4. All spectators who are not directly connected with the teams or the league must stay at least ten feet behind the foul line.
5. If a discipline problem with a player arises during a game, and a coach wishes to remove a problem player, he shall notify the opposing coach and the umpire in order to adjust the batting order. The coach must call the Clayton Parks and Recreation Department the next business day to explain the situation.
6. Players must remain in the designated bench area during the game.
7. There shall be no heckling of an opposing team by anyone, nor shall any spectator or player verbally or physically attempt to distract an opposing player. Violations of this rule will result in ejection of offending player(s) and/or forfeiture of the game.
8. The coach is responsible for the conduct of his or her spectators, parents and players on the field and bench. **COACHES, SPECTATORS AND PLAYERS SHALL NOT DISPUTE CALLS MADE BY THE UMPIRE.** Coaches, players or spectators who are verbally abusive to the umpires, players or each other may be ejected by the official or coordinator and must leave the field immediately.
9. If, in the umpire's or coordinator's opinion, a player or coach is not conducting himself or herself in a proper manner- such as misconduct, yelling at the umpire, profane or abusive language directed at another, violent or dangerous play – the player or coach will be given a warning. Upon further occurrence the coach or player will be ejected from the game. If the conduct is of an extremely violent, dangerous and intentional nature, the umpire may eject a player or a coach without a prior warning. An ejected coach or player shall immediately leave the field.
10. The umpire shall report all ejections to the league as soon as possible after the game is completed, together with a brief statement of the occurrence. A player or coach expelled from a game will be

automatically suspended by the league for their next game and can be suspended for longer than one game depending on the seriousness of the infraction.