

# City of Gatesville Parks & Recreation

## Youth Softball Playing Rules

Revised February 1, 2023

*All areas not specifically covered in the City of Gatesville Parks & Recreation Bylaws are subject to Texas Teenage Softball and USA Softball Association official rules.*

### Volunteers:

1. If you are actively engaged in coaching at any practices/games, you must complete a volunteer form and be approved through the GPARD prior to your involvement as a coach.
2. Once volunteer is approved, GPARD staff will contact volunteer and let them know that they are approved through the department as a coach.

### Teams & Roster:

*See TTAS age chart.*

| Age Division  | Grouping      | Ball Size        | Roster Size | Game Length     | # Of Coaches |
|---------------|---------------|------------------|-------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Pre- Tee Ball | Entire roster | Tee Ball         | 9-15        | 5 innings/45min | 4            |
| 6U            | 10 on field   | Size 11 softball | 9-15        | 5 innings/50min | 4            |
| 8U            | 9-10 on field | Size 11 softball | 9-15        | 6 innings/80min | 4            |
| 10U           | 9-10 on field | Size 11 softball | 9-15        | 6 innings/80min | 3            |
| 12U           | 9 on field    | Size 12 Softball | 9-15        | 6 innings/90min | 3            |
| 15U           | 9 on field    | Size 12 softball | 9-15        | 6 innings/90min | 3            |

*(6U & 8U – If using a 4<sup>th</sup> coach, can only have 3 protected players.)*

1. All rosters will be formed by player draft process. The only exception is a team coming from another town who has been approved by TTAS to participate in the Gatesville league.
2. No sitting/standing outside of dugouts when team is on defense. When on offense the only coaches allowed on the field will be in the first base and third base coaching boxes.
3. No buckets are allowed on the field at any time during the game.
4. Smoking and the consumption of alcohol is prohibited inside the gates of the Gatesville Sports Complex.

### Uniforms:

1. All team jerseys will be provided by GPARD.
2. All players must wear the jersey provided by the GPARD.
3. Metal cleats are only allowed in the 15U division.
4. No jewelry may be worn at any time during the game. Medical alerts may be worn but must be taped down.
5. GPARD & CCAOA may ban any equipment that they deem as unsafe or illegal.

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### Coaches:

1. Coaches will be elected by application and approval of the Gatesville Parks & Recreation Department.
2. Claims for teams are awarded according to the following hierarchy:
  - a) Returning head coach
  - b) Returning assistant coach
  - c) Parent of child returning to team
3. In cases where there are more people requesting to coach teams than there are teams available, GPARD reserves the right to vote on who shall be awarded a team based on, but not limited to, factors such as:
  - a) Prior years serving as a coach.
  - b) Other service to the league, but under no circumstances shall any monetary figures have any bearing in any decision on awarding teams.
  - c) Any experience with said person regarding behavior in the park during games.
4. All coaches are expected to set good examples for their players and spectators. See coach's agreement in "Downloads" section on [TeamSideline.com/GatesvilleTX](https://TeamSideline.com/GatesvilleTX)
5. When a head coach is approved at the first of the season by GPARD and he/she quits, GPARD will find and approve a new head coach.

### Equipment:

1. GPARD will provide each team with catching gear and 1 dozen softballs. 6U teams will receive half a dozen softballs and a hitting tee.

### Playing Rules (All Divisions)

1. Line-ups must be turned in to the scorekeeper (5) minutes prior to game time. First and last names of players, jersey number, and position must be listed.
2. Teams must have eight (8) players to start and finish a game. A team who wins due to a forfeiture must also have at least eight (8) players at the field during the time of the forfeit, unless one team called ahead to forfeit their game. In case of a double forfeiture, the game will not be rescheduled, and each team receives a loss. Any team appearing with less than 9 players may use the shorthanded rule. A team may play with only eight (8) players with the understanding that the 9<sup>th</sup> spot in the lineup will be an out each time that position comes up to bat.
3. Only players and approved coaches will be allowed in dugouts.

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### Coach/Participant/Parent Conduct

1. Any player, coach, or spectator ejected from any league game must leave the facility.
2. Any player, coach, or spectator ejected from any league game is subject to a possible league game suspension and/or removal from league.
3. Players, coaches, or spectators who have been suspended may not return until the completion of their suspension. Suspensions can carry over from season to season or league/sport.
4. No coach/parent shall interfere with the officials. Any concerns regarding the officials must be brought to the attention of the Parks & Recreation Department.
5. No fighting is allowed. Each offense will be ruled upon accordingly and is subject to removal from all programs for the period of up to five years.
6. An official has the authority to remove a player, coach, or spectator from a game and/or forfeit the game due to unsportsmanlike conduct. Unsportsmanlike conduct shall include, but not limited to profanity, threats of any kind toward the referees or scorekeeper, fighting (before, during, or after the game), or any flagrant foul as determined by the referees.
7. In the event of a coach or a fan ejection, the individual ejected will be subject to further disciplinary action from the Parks & Recreation Department.
8. No coach/parent should be present at any city sporting event under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. Patrons in violation of this rule will be asked to leave the facility.

### Selection of Players

1. Brothers/sisters, stepbrothers/stepsisters will be assigned to the same team. Siblings of a returning or protected player will go two picks behind last returning/protected player. If the 1<sup>st</sup> sibling was drafted, the 2<sup>nd</sup> sibling takes the next immediate slot on the draft card.
2. In initial selection of players not assigned to a team, players will be selected from the entire group eligible to play in such league, rather than by age group.
3. All residents must sign up by the last registration date to be guaranteed to play.
4. All players must be able to produce a valid birth certificate to advance to the District and State tournaments.
5. Players that sign up after Skills Day become a hat pick at draft unless returning to the same team or is a legal protected player. These players will not be able to be returned to the same team next year.
6. Each team will select a player in the first round of the draft with each team's protected players being drafted beginning in round two. Exception: Required hat picks will take precedence over first round pick.
7. Head coaches whose son/daughter plays on the team must be listed as a

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- protected player except if player is returning to team from previous year where parent was not coaching.
- i. The only stipulation to this rule will be if there is a domestic problem and a parent has turned in a written request that states the child cannot be coached by the parent.
8. All protected players must be announced before Skills Day begins for that age group.
  9. A team may only have three protected players on a team in any given year. This means if three players were protected last year, and those players are still eligible in the same age division; the team may not protect any more players. This rule must remain in compliance with all intents of the player pool rules. All three coaches must be on the field during the games.
  10. Player Pool: Allows any player the opportunity to go to another team without penalizing the player or his current team. To be eligible for the player pool, a player must meet the following requirements:
    - a) All released players must be at Skills Day. Any player not at Skills Day will become a hat pick.
    - b) Requests for releases may be initiated by the parents of the player and not by a coach.
    - c) All releases must be done by the last day of player registration, as set by Gatesville Parks & Recreation.
    - d) No player released to the draft may be drafted by the team that released him/her.
    - e) If a player is released for the purpose of his/her own parent to become the head coach or assistant of another team, that player is designated with protected status and must be selected in the designated draft round for protected players.
  11. In the event a team has more than 8 maximum age players when all protected and returning players are combined, then maximum age players will be released from the team and returned to the player pool in the reverse order that they were drafted onto the team the previous year until the number of maximum age players is reduced to eight (8).
  12. Hat picks will be equally distributed to all teams.
    - a.) Hat picks will not count as returning players. Hat picks from previous year will return to the draft unless they missed Skills Day again, in which case they will become an automatic Hat Pick again.
    - b.) No team shall receive a second hat pick until each team has received a first hat pick. Exception: If a hat pick comes with a sibling, that team shall take both players if the team has an additional open draft slot but will be exempted from the next hat pick round. If the team does not have an open draft slot to accommodate the sibling, the hat pick will be redrawn. A hat pick may not take the place of a team's last round pick but can and will fill the team's first round pick if that is all that is available.
    - c.) Once every team has received one hat pick, the process will repeat until every hat pick player has been assigned.

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13. Team Roster size will be set by the Gatesville Parks & Recreation Department based on the total number of players who sign up to play and the total number of available coaches. The goal of the Board is to set team rosters at a minimum of 10 players per team and a maximum of 12, but to accommodate all players who register to play GPARD may set the roster size at more or less than this number as necessary.

***See next two pages for special Gatesville league rules. All other rules not listed are governed by Texas Teenage Softball and USA Softball Association official rules.***

**Mandatory Play (6U-10U):** Every rostered player present at the start of the game will participate in each game for a minimum of six (6) defensive outs and bat at least one (1) time.

**Mandatory Play (12U-15U):** Every rostered player present at the start of the game will participate in each game for a minimum of three (3) defensive outs and bat at least one (1) time.

**Short Handed Rule (6U-15U):** If a team begins play with the required number of players, that team may continue a game with one or two less players than it started with. Under no circumstance will a team be permitted to bat less than eight. (10-14 & 10-8 apply)

**Extra Hitter (10U-15U):** The EH player is optional, but if used must be made known, prior to the start of the game and be listed anywhere on the line-up card in the regular batting order. The EH may enter the game on defense at any time, but the batting order must remain the same throughout the game. The EH position can be substituted for and re-entered like any other position.

**Courtesy Runner (10U-15U):** a courtesy runner is only allowed for the pitcher or catcher and must be an eligible player who is not in the current batting lineup. The same runner may not be a courtesy runner more than once per inning, except in the case where the same person, for whom he ran for, returns to the plate more than once per inning.

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**Pinch Runner (10U-15U):** a pinch runner is a legal substitute who enters the game to run for a batter who has reached the base. Once the pinch runner has substituted in the game, they will assume the batting position in the line-up for the player they substituted for. Re-Entry rule will apply.

**Re-Entry Rule (10U-15U):** Any player may be substituted for or replaced and re-entered once provided the players occupy their same batting positions in the batting order. The starting player and substitute may not be in the line-up at the same time. In the event of an injury and all subs are used up, out will be taken. If a player is pulled for any injury, they are not allowed to reenter the game. Exception: "Blood Rule" (Rule 10-8 & 10-14). Under no circumstance will a team be allowed to bat less than 8.

**Charged Conference (8U-15U):** Offensive team will be given one charged conference per inning. Defensive team will be given 3 charged conferences for the entire game. Only one charged conference is allowed per inning without removal of the pitcher.

**T-Ball-** 5 innings or 50-minute time limit. 7 runs per inning. If time has expired and either team is mathematically incapable of winning due to 7 run limit per inning, game is over. Game can end in a tie. T-Ball will be allowed to have an extra outfielder. 6U will bat all players on their roster. Offense will be allowed 4 coaches and no defensive coaches will be allowed. This is for regular season only.

**8U-** 6 innings or 1 hour 20 minutes time limit. 7 runs per inning. If time has expired and either team is mathematically incapable of winning due to 7 run limit per inning, game is over. A 15-run lead shall be considered a complete game after 4 innings of play or 8 run lead after 5 innings of play. Game can end in a tie. 8U Coach pitch will be allowed to have an extra outfielder. 8U will bat all players on their roster. This is for regular season only.

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**10U-** 6 innings or 1 hour 30-minute time limit. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> inning 4 run limit. Run limit opens up in 4<sup>th</sup> inning. If time has expired and either team is mathematically incapable of winning due to 4 run limit per inning, game is over. A 10-run lead shall be considered a complete game after 4 innings of play. (If the home team is up by ten or more runs in the bottom of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning, the game is over.) Game can end in tie. 10U will be allowed to have an extra outfielder. This will put ten players in the field and use the team's EH position in the lineup. This is for regular season only.

**12U-** 6 innings or 1 hour 30-minute time limit. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> inning 7 run limit. Run limit opens up in 4<sup>th</sup> inning. If time has expired and either team is mathematically incapable of winning due to 7 run limit per inning, game is over. A 10-run lead shall be considered a complete game after 4 innings of play. (If the home team is up by ten or more runs in the bottom of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning, the game is over.) Game can end in tie.

**15U-** 6 innings or 1 hour 30-minute time limit. A ten-run lead shall be considered a complete game after 4 innings of play. (If the home team is up by ten or more runs in the bottom of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning, the game is over.) Game can end in a tie.

**Standings-** Determined by winning percentage. First tie breaker is determined by the team that won head-to-head during the regular season. Second tie breaker is determined by point differential in head-to-head matches during the regular season. Third tie breaker will be determined by the teams playing another match.