

VIP Series General Playing Rules-All Divisions

1. **Time Limit:** Pool and Bracket games will consist of 1 hour and 10 minutes. Game start time will be 1 minute after the pre-game meeting between the managers and umpires is over.

Official Game: If a game **cannot be completed due to weather or other tournament circumstances and has less than 15 minutes left**, it will be considered an official game with the previous inning score being official.

Note: If time has expired and either team is ahead by at least 6 runs for 8U-10U-12U or 8 runs for 14U-16/18U, the game is official.

2. **Run Limit/Spreads**

- a. 8U – 10U – 12U: 5 runs scored in an inning will end that half inning.
- b. 14U – 16/18U: 7 runs scored in an inning will end that half inning.
- c. Run spreads for all ages are 12 after 3, 10 after 4 and 8 after 5.

3. **Players: 08C and 10C ONLY** divisions will field ten players, or that number less than ten available. When fielding 10 players, defense must use 4 outfielders and, in the umpire's opinion, must be positioned in the outfield.

4. **Players: ALL AGES** a team must have no less than seven players to start and/or finish a game. The missing players will be skipped in the batting order without penalty of an out.

5. **Participation of Players:** All players **must** bat. Players not in the dugout when play begins will be added to the bottom of the batting order when the player checks in with the Official Scorekeeper. A player that leaves the game for any reason, other than ejection, may not return and no out is charged to the team when her turn at bat comes due.

6. **Injured Player(s):** If an injured player is unable to continue batting and/or base running, the player will be substituted for with the last available player in the inning. The player will be skipped in the batting order without penalty of an out and may not return to game.

7. **Free Defensive Substitution:** Defensive players may be freely substituted.

8. **Scorekeepers:** The home team will furnish the official scorekeeper.

9. **Protests:** The Home Plate Umpire and the Official Scorekeeper must be notified of a protest at the time of the infraction and prior to the next pitch, legal or illegal. The tournament UIC will give final rule interpretation.

10. **Managers:** Managers are responsible for good sportsmanship by their players, coaches and fans. Failure to show good sportsmanship by those individuals may result in the ejection of the manager. Profanity by a Manager, Coach, Parent, or follower of the team will result in the immediate ejection of that individual from the game. The **manager** is responsible for **all** persons associated with their team. The Manager of each team will see that their dugout area is cleaned properly after each game.

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11. **Alcohol and tobacco:** The use of alcoholic beverages by Managers, Coaches, Parents, Players, or followers while coaching, watching, playing, or practicing will result in that person being barred from further participation in the tournament. Managers and Coaches will refrain from using tobacco products or smoking while on the field or in the vicinity of the dugout and in the fans viewing areas.
12. **Tie Breaker:** At the end of the time limit and/or seven innings in **bracket play only**, the USA Softball International Tie Breaker Rule goes into effect.
13. An accidentally thrown bat shall constitute a team warning. Further thrown bats shall constitute a dead ball out for that player. A flagrantly thrown bat shall constitute a dead ball and the batter is out. An intentionally thrown bat shall constitute an out and **ejection**.
14. **No Jewelry allowed! Includes no tape or Band-Aid cover-up!**
15. **Courtesy Runner:** The courtesy runner shall be any player who is on the batting roster in that game. If a courtesy runner's turn at bat comes up while they are on base, an out will be declared on the bases and the player will take their turn at bat.

Additional 10U Rules:

1. No infield fly rule.
2. No dropped 3rd strike.
3. Players are allowed to steal second and/or third, with liability to be put out, but may not steal home. 1 stolen base per pitch allowed. A runner attempting to steal home is at liability to be put out. If a runner reaches home, they will be placed back on third. For the purpose of this rule, a runner may also not advance home from third base on a wild pitch, passed ball, overthrow back to the pitcher, or a catcher attempting to put any other runner out. A runner starting at third may only advance home on a hit ball, or if forced by walk or a batter hit by pitch.
4. **Strike Zone:** The strike zone shall be enlarged, when the player is in a natural stance, to include the top of the shoulders to mid-shin. The strike zone shall also be enlarged to include the width of a softball on each side of home plate.
5. On a base on balls, the batter is awarded 1st base and cannot advance further than 1st base on the walk.
6. **Look Back Rule Same as 12U-14U-16/18U:** On a Live Ball in play, runners can continue to run until the pitcher has the ball in control and inside the 8' radius pitching circle, at which point runners must make a commitment to the next base or return to the previous base.

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Coach Pitch Division Rules (08U)

1. **Defensive Coaches:** Two defensive coaches are allowed to stay on the field at all times, for the purpose of instruction and placement between plays. The coach will have fifteen seconds between plays to position players and offer instructions.
 - a. Other than the Coach that is pitching, Coaches must be behind the infielders and make every attempt to prevent play interference.
 - b. Any ball that makes contact with a Coach in the field of play will be considered a dead ball, and a no pitch with the batter returning to the batters box to assume the same pitch count and ball-strike count as they had prior to the pitch, and all runners returned to the base they occupied at the time of the pitch.

2. **Pitching Distance:** The pitching distance shall be 35 feet.

3. **Player/Pitcher Rules (PP):**
 - a. The player must be in the pitcher's circle when the ball is delivered.
 - b. The player must be STATIONARY, not forward of the pitching plate when the ball is released. (violation: first - warning, second - the PP is to be removed from the PP position for the remainder of the game.)

4. **Batters:**
 - a. There will be no walks.
 - b. A batter will be called out after five (5) pitches or three (3) strikes. The umpire will give notification prior to the fifth pitch.
 - c. If it's the 5th pitch or if the batter has two (2) strikes, the at bat cannot end on a foul ball. Pitching will continue until the batter strikes out or until the ball is put into play.
 - d. No bunting will be allowed.

5. **Base Running:**
 - a. No stealing.
 - b. **Base runners may not leave a base until after the pitcher releases the ball. (Violation: runner is out)**
 - c. No Infield Fly Rule.
 - d. When the ball is initially batted into fair territory; batter/runner and/or runners may advance as many bases as possible per hit until the ball has been secured and a throw is made. A throw must be made to stop the runner, not the ball just being held or the fielder running in with the ball.
 - i. Runners must stop at the base they are on or the base they are running to.
 - ii. If the base runner has rounded the base and her back foot has left that base, she is deemed to be running to the next base and may advance with liability to be put out.
 - e. Runners cannot advance after the initial throw UNLESS the initial throw is overthrown, then runners can advance a maximum of one additional base with liability to be put out.
 - f. Runners cannot advance on any additional overthrows beyond the initial play.

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Base Running Continued:

- g. When the ball is live, the runner has liability to be put out. The goal is to permit the defense to attempt to make the play without further penalty.
6. **Fielders:** Every attempt must be made to throw a fielded ball and try to make an out instead of just throwing the ball back to the pitcher to deaden the ball.
- i. The throw must be made to the infield.

Examples for 8U Base Running Rules:

EXAMPLE A: An infielder fields a ball and attempts to throw out a player running to second. If the attempted throw is caught - the runner, if safe, must stop at second base. If the attempted throw is overthrown – the runner can advance one additional base with liability to be put out.

EXAMPLE B: An outfielder fields a ball in center field. She attempts a throw in the direction of the infield. The runner is between second and third at the time the attempt is made. If the attempted throw is caught – the runner, if safe, must stop at third base. If the attempted throw is overthrown – the runner can advance 1 additional base with liability to be put out