



## 8U PCABA SOFTBALL RULES 2025



This league is an instructional league and should be coached and conducted as such. The basic fundamentals and sportsmanship along with participation and exercise should be some key ingredients to having a safe and fun time on the ball fields, not how many runs we score. Although that adds to the excitement, should not be the main reason for it.

1. Pitching Plate distance set at 35 feet.
2. Coaches pitch in this league and can pitch from any distance within the circle (standard softball circle, 16 foot diameter, centered on pitching rubber), underhand only. However, the player playing the pitching position must have one foot within the pitching circle until the ball is released.
3. All games will be six (6) innings, unless tied or halted by rain or other inclement weather. In case of rain, four (4) innings, three (3) and one half if the home team is leading, will constitute a complete game.
4. Ten (10) fielders may play at one time; **no more than six (6) may play in the infield (Catcher, pitcher, first baseman, second baseman, third baseman and shortstop)**. All other fielders must play in the outfield, minimum 5' behind the outfield line.
5. A team may field a minimum of 7 players with no out taken for vacant position in batting line up. *(1 of 7 must be a catcher)*
6. Each batter has seven (7) pitches or three (3) strikes to hit the ball. If the ball is not hit by the 7<sup>th</sup> pitch then the bat is recorded as an out. If on the last pitch the ball is fouled off an additional pitch is awarded.
7. No bunting shall be allowed. First time will result in a strike and a warning; second time shall be an out.
8. There shall be no bases on balls.
9. The coach who is pitching may not tell the player when to swing or run and cannot coach the player on the base path.
  - 1<sup>st</sup> offense: warning
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> offense: out for the game
10. Two (2) adult coaches will be allowed in the outfield on defense.
11. No lead offs. Runner cannot go until the ball is hit.
12. Infield fly rule does not apply
13. If a batted ball hits a coach/pitcher the ball is declared dead, all runners return to their positions and the pitcher may re-pitch the ball (the original pitch that was hit will not be counted against the batter's count).
14. Infield/Outfield "dividing" line is drawn at 10' behind the baseline at all fields. Outfielders must start a minimum of 5' behind the "dividing" line. An outfielder cannot make an out at a base or on a baserunner. The outfielder must transfer the ball to an infielder regardless of where it was fielded. If the grass outfield is at 10' behind the baseline (see above) it may be used as the dividing mark. If not, the infield/outfield "dividing" line must be drawn with chalk or paint prior to the game start.

INFIELD HIT BALL- base runners may advance a maximum of one base.

OUTFIELD HIT BALL- base runners may advance at will, however once the ball reaches the infield area and is CONTROLLED by an infielder within the

infield area, the player may continue to the next base with the liability of being thrown out.

If an infielder fields the ball beyond the dividing line, then it will be considered an outfield hit ball (as stated above). Once the infielder has control of the ball on the infield part of the field, the runners must stop at the base they are on, or be sent back to the base at the umpires discretion

**Infield/outfield and runner location at the time the ball is controlled is a judgment call by the umpire and will not be debated, the umpire's ruling is FINAL!**

Examples of this rule:

- a. No runners on, batter hits infield ball to shortstop, shortstop overthrows first:
    - i. Batter must stop at first base and cannot continue to second regardless of where the overthrow ends up
  - b. Runner on first, batter hits infield ball to shortstop, shortstop overthrows second:
    - i. Batter must stop at first base
    - ii. Runner from first must stop at second base
  - c. Batter hits ball to outfielder, outfielder throws ball to shortstop (and shortstop controls the ball) before batter reaches first:
    - i. Batter must stop at first base (batter may be put out if shortstop makes throw to first before batter reaches first)
  - d. Batter hits ball to right field, right field throws ball to first base before batter reaches first:
    - i. Batter is out
  - e. Batter hits outfield ball, outfield throws ball to shortstop and shortstop controls the ball (after batter rounds first):
    - i. Batter may continue to second base with the liability of being put out by the shortstop.
    - ii. If the shortstop overthrows the second baseman, batter may not advance beyond second base. Batter must stop at second base regardless of where the ball ends up.
  - f. Batter hits outfield ball, outfield throws ball to shortstop, and shortstop controls the ball (prior to reaching first base):
    - i. Batter must stop at first base
    - ii. If shortstop makes throw to first base, batter cannot advance
  - g. Runner on second, batter hits infield ball to shortstop:
    - i. If the runner remains on second base, the runner may not advance regardless of where the ball ends up.
    - ii. If the runner leaves the base before the shortstop makes the throw to first, they may continue to third with the liability of being put out.
    - iii. If the runner advances to third as possible in ii, the runner may not advance past third base and the batter may not advance past first base regardless of any play made by the infield.
    - iv. Infield Fly Ball runner(s) may not advance on the Infield fly ball if caught. If not caught they may advance one base.
15. Any player that is unable to bat for any reason may skip his/her position in the batting order without an out be declared. The MWBL will monitor use of this rule to

- ensure coaches do not abuse this rule. The idea of this rule is to not penalize a team for a player who is afraid to bat or must leave before the game completes.
16. If any player becomes injured, the next scheduled batter will take his/her place and assume the same count as the injured batter.
  17. Coaches will be allowed to call for time and to instruct players on the field when they see coaching points. This should be done in a way to better the player or teams, not to stall the game. Nor should we use this time to single out players. This is an instructional league and it will be conducted as one! Use this league to instruct and teach our young athletes to become students of the game. Instructing during games at this age level will benefit players and coaches tremendously, provided it is done correctly.
  18. 8U pitchers position must wear a batting helmet with a face guard to protect against injury from a line drive hit directly back to that position
  19. Softball Fielders Masks are required for players in the infield.
  20. HELMETS - FACE GUARDS and CHIN STRAPS BATTER- (SOFTBALL ONLY) PCABA requires that 8U softball players wear helmet with a face guard. Chin straps are recommended, especially at 8U, however wearing a chin strap is no longer mandatory

## PLAYING RULES:

1. The Board of PCABA approves all playing rule changes.
2. The following rules will apply to the applicable Leagues.
3. Except where noted, Baseball and Softball play is governed by **Official RULEBOOK of National Federation of High School Sports.**
4. TRAVEL PLAYERS
  - a. Travel Players are encouraged to play in the PCABA rec league.
  - b. Travel players must be distributed evenly between all teams within the age group they are playing in.
  - c. Travel players are considered travel players in the only if the player has been listed on a roster in any travel game.
5. In all levels, there is free substitution on defense.
6. **All players play a minimum of two (2) innings of defense unless the player is being disciplined for just cause.**
7. Pick-up players are permitted. Pick-up players must be members of PCABA and be listed on Rosters from T-Ball/Instructional League teams. For both Regular Season and Post-Season Tournament games, pick-up players must come from the next lower level. The "level" that a player is playing at is dictated by the PCABA league in which they are registered to and playing in, not by their actual league age. Thus if a player is "playing up" at a league level beyond their league age, they are unable to serve as a pick-up player at that level. Pick-up players must be picked-up from the same sport of registration. Pick-up players must play in the outfield and bat last in the lineup. A team may pick-up a maximum of three (3) players to field a legal team.
8. If rostered players arrive just before OR during the game, the pick-up player **MUST** come out of the game **ON DEFENSE**, and the rostered player entered on defense and be placed **AT THE END OF THE BATTING ORDER**. **THE PICK UP PLAYER WILL CONTINUE TO BAT IN THEIR SPOT IN THE BATTING ORDER** for the rest of the game.
9. The umpire may halt play in a game after completion of one (1) or two (2) less innings than a full game of play if considering the run rule, the team behind cannot score enough runs to win or tie the game.

10. **If there is a rules dispute at any game, the home field association will decide.** If the dispute cannot be decided there, then a PCABA Board member will be contacted. A decision will be made based on the information given and that will be final. If a Board Member is unavailable, then the appointed representative of the home field organization will make the decision, which will be final.
11. **There will be a mandatory home plate meeting with the head umpire and the 2 head coaches prior to every game.** The ground rules and age specific rules will be discussed, and fully understood by both coaches prior to the game beginning.
12. Players may arrive late to a game and must be added to the bottom of the order upon arrival. If you are expecting a late arrival, the opposing coach and umpire **MUST BE** notified prior to the start of the game and also when the player arrives. *If a pickup player is already in the lineup see rule #8 above.*
13. An injured or sick player that starts a game may be skipped in the lineup without taking an out when that position comes up in the batting order if they are unable to bat. This would be in effect for the remainder of the game. If able, the player may re-enter the game after 1 complete inning. This exception can only happen once per player per game. If the player re-enters the game and then it is determined the player cannot continue and comes back out of the lineup, then an out will be taken at that position for the remainder of the game. If a player leaves the lineup for any other reason (ie: 4-H meeting, other sport, etc) then every time that position comes to bat, an out will be taken for the remainder of the game. This rule will be in effect for all age groups for baseball and softball
14. No shiny helmets are allowed, This is mainly metallic or chrome helmets that act as a mirror. It will be at the discretion of the head umpire to decide if a helmet is not allowed to be worn in the game.
15. Reflective sun glasses are permitted. The pitcher may wear reflective lenses at the umpires discretion.
16. Chattering is allowed, but cannot be directed at any member of the opposing team. The only type of chatter that is allowed is positive and directed toward your own team. If chatter becomes offensive toward the opposing team and/or is directed at an individual player on the opposing team, then the umpire will issue a warning to the team chattering and all chatter must stop immediately.
17. **RUN LIMIT Per Inning** A team's half of an inning will end after three (3) outs or six (6) runs have been scored, whichever shall occur first. Any runs above six (6) will not be recorded in the official score. For example, if the team already has five (5) runs scored, bases are loaded and the batter hits a home run, only one (1) additional run will be added to the score. If a team is down more than six (6) runs in the last inning of the game, they cannot score enough runs to win the game (the team can only score six (6) runs in any inning).
18. **Run Rule - The game is complete: 6 inning game**  
**After completed innings 4<sup>th</sup> inning = 13 runs**  
**5<sup>th</sup> inning = 7 runs**
19. **TIME LIMIT: For 8U, games, one hour and forty-five minutes (1:45) of play is the time limit for all games in the league.**  
However, all games must end on complete inning.  
**No new inning may start at or after 1 hour and 45 minutes (8U) (EXCEPTION: Tie games will utilize the following tie-breaking procedure.) CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT GAMES (ONLY) HAVE NO TIME LIMIT FOR ALL AGE GROUPS.**

20. TIE BREAKING PROCEDURE: If a tie occurs after all regulation innings are played during a regular season game or a tournament game, or if a tie exists at the end of a complete inning and the time limit has been met (regardless of how many innings have been played), the following tie-breaking procedure will be followed:

- a. For the first extra inning exceeding the time limit, the inning will be started with runners on second-base and third-base with no outs. All other league-specific rules remain in place (run limit, etc.).
- b. Should the game remain tied after one extra inning is played, a second extra inning shall be played. For the second extra inning, the inning will be started with the bases loaded and no outs. All other league-specific rules remain in place (run limit, etc.).
- c. For regular season games, should the game remain tied after the second extra inning is played, the game shall be recorded as a tie.
- d. For post-season tournament games, should the game remain tied after the second extra inning, additional innings shall be played using the 2<sup>nd</sup> extra-inning format described in Paragraph b. above (bases loaded) until a winner is decided.
- e. The base-runners required by the above procedure shall be placed in the following manner:  
The player in the batting order immediately before the first batter of the extra inning shall be placed at the base furthest from scoring, the player two spots in front of the first batter of the extra inning shall be placed on the next furthest base, etc. (EXAMPLE: The 7<sup>th</sup> batter is the lead-off batter in the second extra inning. The runner at first base would be the 6<sup>th</sup> batter, the runner on second base would be the 5<sup>th</sup> batter, and the runner on third base would be the 4<sup>th</sup> batter.)

21. LIGHTNING & THUNDER RULE: Safety of the players is of the utmost concern. Upon sighting lightning OR hearing thunder, the head umpire shall delay the game by thirty (30) minutes. If the head umpire does not see the lightning OR hear thunder, coaches may make the umpire of aware of the situation. In any case, the game should be immediately delayed for thirty (30) minutes. If during the delay additional thunder or lightning is seen or heard, the 30 minutes will start over each time.

22. CANCELLATION: Home team head coach will call opposing team and notify umpires. If in doubt, call the home team coach. Before the playing season starts be sure to know the contact information for all fields within the schedule to avoid the uncertainty of any game in question. If in doubt, double check with home team head coach.

23. HEART GUARD/8U PITCHER HELMET: The league strongly recommends that all players purchase and wear a heart guard while playing their respective sports. It is mandatory that the player playing the "pitcher" position at the 8U level wear a batting helmet with face mask while playing in the field due to the limited reaction time and slower reflexes for players of this age. PCABA and its member associations will not be held responsible for accidents that occur that could have been prevented if the players had been wearing a heart guard or other safety equipment.

24. **Throwing bats is a serious concern and offenses will not be taken lightly. PENALTIES WILL BE APPLIED TO THE ENTIRE OFFENDING TEAM, NOT INDIVIDUAL PLAYERS:**

- 1<sup>ST</sup> OFFENSE BY THE TEAM –TEAM WILL BE ISSUED A WARNING
- 2<sup>ND</sup> OFFENSE BY THE TEAM (EVEN IF A DIFFERENT PLAYER IS

INVOLVED) - BATTER IS OUT

- 3<sup>RD</sup> OFFENSE BY THE TEAM (EVEN IF NEITHER THE FIRST NOR SECOND OFFENDING PLAYER IS INVOLVED) – BATTER IS OUT AND THAT THIRD PLAYER MUST SIT OUT REMAINDER OF GAME. AN OUT SHALL BE CALLED WHEN HIS/HER SPOT IN THE ORDER COMES UP FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE GAME.

25. Tournament Seeding- A special board meeting will be held to determine seedings for the end of season tournament. Tournament brackets will be released after this meeting. Higher seeded teams will be the home team in each tournament game, including the championship game.

26. Time Outs / Stalling Tactics:

**DEFENSE CONFERENCES:** A charged conference is a meeting which involves the coach or his non-playing representative and a player or players of the team. A defensive charged conference is concluded when the coach or non playing representative crosses the foul line if the conference was in FAIR territory. If the conference was in FOUL territory, the conference concludes when the coach or non-playing representative initially starts to return to the dugout/bench area.

Each Team, when on defense, may be granted NOT more than 3 charged conferences during a game and NO more than 2 charged conferences in 1 given inning. Extra inning game each team is granted 1 per inning without penalty.

**OFFENSE CONFERENCE:** Each team, when on offense, may be granted not more than 1(one) charged conference per inning to permit the coach or any team's personnel to confer with base runner, the batter, the on-deck batter or other offensive team personnel. The UMPIRE SHALL DENY subsequent offensive team requests for charged conference. The offensive charged conference is concluded when the coach or team representative initially starts to return to the coach's box or dugout/bench area. RESTRICTED to BENCH/DUGOUT area that conference shall end when the players involved initially start to return to their positions on the field.

\*\*\* When either team has a charged conference, the other team may also have a conference, which is not charged, provided the conference concludes when opposing team's charged conference concludes, so the game is not further delayed.

**BATTER:** Delaying the game by failing to take her position promptly in the batter's box within 10 (Ten) seconds. The batter MUST keep at least one foot in the batter's box throughout the time at bat.

Exception:

- The batter swings at a pitch
- The batter is forced out of the box by the pitch
- A member of either TEAM requests and is granted "TIME"

The Reason for the above rule is to encourage TEAM HUSTLE and coaches are encouraged to avoid STALL TACTICS.

## SECTION E: GAME START TIMES

1. Games start time will be established by predetermined schedules.
2. All weeknight games will be a 6:00pm start time. The 2<sup>nd</sup> game on the same field(s)

- will begin at 8:00pm or 15 minutes following the first game.
3. Warm-up periods begin 15 minutes prior to the start of the first scheduled game and immediately following the vacating of the dugout by the prior games teams.
  4. The visiting team will be allowed 7 minutes of warm-up followed by 7 minutes of warm-up by the home team. Immediately following the home team warm-up, the home players shall assume their defensive positions.
  5. Teams that do not begin warm-ups within their allotted time frames will have their time reduced proportionately to their delay.
  6. Teams arriving early should NOT take the infield for warm-ups until 15 minutes prior to the schedule start of the game.
  7. Batting practice should never be conducted on the infield prior to a game.

**SECTION F: MAKE-UP GAMES:** Make-up games shall be played on the date and time as scheduled by the teams' coaches involved. The home team association will be responsible for ensuring field and official availability and scheduling.

**Games shall be rescheduled for the following reasons ONLY:**

- o Weather conditions,
- o Playing field conditions,
- o Field scheduling conflicts.
- o School Activities

The coaches shall notify the commissioners of both associations (baseball/softball) involved in the rescheduling. The home team association must notify the Director of Scheduling of the rescheduled date/time. **COACHES ARE ENCOURAGED TO MAKE UP GAMES AS SOON AS POSSIBLE...DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST WEEKEND OF THE SEASON TO TRY TO**

**RESCHEDULE MAKE-UP GAMES.** If a coach is unable to contact an opposing coach about rescheduling a game that coach should work through their association president or representative to ensure the game gets rescheduled.

Games that are not played due to coach's inaction will be counted as a loss for both teams (exception: clear documentation of the non-responsiveness of one coach).

**All Divisions - End of Season Tiebreaker rule process:**

1. Season Record
2. Head to head records. **(skip to #3 if more than 2 teams)**
3. Runs allowed in the regular season
4. Runs scored in the regular season
5. Games that are not played or are not reported by the tournament seeding meeting will be counted as a loss for both teams, and 15 runs assigned to Runs allowed to each team.

**SECTION C: COACHING GUIDELINES:**

1. A coach must be at least 18 years old.
2. A coach must show good sportsmanship on the field and as a spectator.
3. A coach must have a thorough understanding of league rules.
4. A coach may not trade or recruit players but shall work through the board of directors to acquire players.
5. Only the head coach may approach the umpire. In the event of the head coach's absence, the assistant coach or other pre-determined person may fill in. **The umpire must be notified who is the head coach of each team prior to the game starting.**
6. Coaches shall keep an accurate score book of the games or assign a responsible

person to this duty. The home team shall keep the official score, checking with the opposing team each ½ inning to ensure accuracy.

7. Home coach is responsible to confirm proper field set-up.
8. Coaches must consider the welfare of each player.
9. WINNING OF GAMES MUST BE SECONDARY!
10. Both coaches will report the game result on the website.

## CODE OF ETHICS

**SECTION A:** Vandalism: defacing, destroying property or any other type of vandalism will result in the prosecution of the guilty parties! No second chances will be given!!!!!!

**SECTION B:** All players, parents, coaches, umpires, and fans of PCABA must abide by the code of conduct agreement in the front of the program.

### SECTION C: UNDESIRABLE BEHAVIOR

1. **No player or coach shall show any form of open hostility.** The umpire will issue a team warning note on the umpire card. If it occurs again during the game, the player/coach will be ejected from that game and the player/coach will be required to attend a disciplinary hearing to determine appropriate corrective measures.
2. **Balls and strikes are not open to question.** These are an umpire's judgment call. Players/coaches cannot argue these calls.
3. **Umpires shall not award a game forfeit due to unsportsmanlike conduct.** The player, coach or spectator will be ejected from the game per guidelines established in article VIII, Section B of this constitution. The umpire will note any ejection on the score card that will be turned in at the end of the game
4. **If a coach is ejected from a game** that coach may appeal before the board for a disciplinary hearing. Failure to attend this meeting can result in dismissal for the coach. If the coach is found at fault for the offense, then the Board will suspend the coach for remainder of current season, including tournament.
5. **Fans can be told to leave the playing facility by the umpire.** If the umpire determines it to be necessary to maintain a sportsmanlike atmosphere, the disruptive fan will receive 1 warning, the second addressing of the issue will result in the fan's ejection from the playing facility. **Failure to comply with an ejection order will result in enforcement by the local authorities!**
6. **Fans should remember that the development of players' sense of sportsmanship is of the utmost importance.** At the core of all sportsmanship is the respect for individuals. Personal attacks will not be tolerated. Cheering for your team is encouraged and highly welcomed.
7. Absolutely no alcoholic beverages are permitted on school property or at any PCABA game or practice sites! Any coach violating this code of ethics will be subject to disciplinary action by the board.
8. The use of tobacco products in any form is strictly prohibited while in contact with our youth on the playing field. Any coach violating this code of ethics will be subject to disciplinary action by the board.
9. Any league or team using "gentlemen agreements" of variance to the rules agreed upon by PCABA will be subject to a minimum 1 (one) game suspension and possibly more depending on the severity of the infraction.