



MTBSA Rookies Softball Rules

Age Group – 6 years old

League Objective

MTBSA Softball offers the girls in our local communities an athletic forum to help develop both their physical and social skills through the game of softball. Our supervised program is designed to provide softball instruction in recreational and competitive environments, while promoting the ideals of good sportsmanship, fair play, honesty, loyalty, and a respect for authority. We want to offer an enjoyable and positive experience for the girls enrolled in the program. All directors, officers, coaches, and members shall bear in mind that, although important, the attainment of exceptional athletic skill and the winning of games are secondary to the goal of helping to mold the future women of our community.

Although MTBSA Softball does provide a competitive environment for girls with better than average skills, though our Select and Travel programs, many of the girls enrolled will play in the recreational divisions, which are intended to provide the players with an environment where they can learn the game of softball and have fun at the same time. These are instructional divisions with an emphasis on providing the player with the proper development and guidance needed to learn and acquire the necessary skills to grow in the sport and progress through each division.

DIVISIONAL OBJECTIVES

Pony division is an instructional and developmental division and a very important transition for 7- & 8-year-olds. An 11-inch softball is introduced at this level and a coach will pitch. As this division precedes the level (Minors) where girls will begin to pitch, player pitching will be introduced as the season progresses. Score and standings are not kept. Catcher is a new position introduced at this level. Players should be exposed to all positions that they can play erring on the side of player safety.

We want to create an environment where the player will learn, have a good time and continue to enroll in the program in subsequent years. The player will continue to be taught the skills of softball, working with teammates and coaches to learn and master their softball skills. This is an instructional, non-competitive division; thus, the parents, coaches and players should place their emphasis on the sport and having a good time.

The Game

1. All games will be four (4) innings or 90 minutes (allowing each team to bat for the same number of innings) whichever comes first.
2. Score should not be kept; this is an instructional league.
3. Prior to the start of a game, during warm-ups, the home team and visiting teams will split use of the infield beginning 15 minutes prior to game start.



Responsibilities

The Home team is responsible for the following:

1. Lining of the field.
2. Setting up bases and pitching rubber.
3. Providing two game balls.
4. Returning bases and any other field equipment to the field storage box and locking the box.
5. Calling off the game due to rain or field conditions by contacting the opposing coach and Commissioner and rescheduling through the Commissioner.

Each team is responsible for providing their own game balls.

Players

1. All players must be in proper uniform (i.e., shirts, pants, socks, and visor).
2. Shirts should be tucked in, and visors worn forward.
3. Players must wear a baseball/softball glove when playing in the field during the game.
4. No jewelry should be worn during game or practice time (i.e., necklaces, watches, bracelets, rings, or earrings).
5. Mouthpieces are recommended, but not required.
6. Plastic cleats are recommended, but not required. Metal spikes are forbidden.

Offense

1. The minimum number of batters in any half inning is ten (10). If a team has fewer than ten players, continue through the batting rotation until 10 players have batted. The 10th batter should be announced prior to batting. If there are more than 10 players on a team, managers may agree, before the game, to bat more than 10 players per inning.
2. A batter who is called out should not be allowed to stay on the base.
3. The half inning will end when the agreed-upon number of players has batted. (Since this is an instructional league, it is more important for the players to spend time fielding and batting than it is to learn the rule that 3 outs end the half inning).
4. All players should bat in order even though they may not be playing in the field that inning.
5. The coach will pitch to his own players (in an underhand motion).
6. Coach Pitcher should crouch or kneel to keep the batter's swing level and allow all fielders to see the batter.
7. The batter and all base runners are required to always wear a helmet.
8. Stealing and bunting are not permitted.
9. Throwing the bat or equipment will not be permitted. A warning will be given the first time, and if the action continues the batter will be called out. The coach should explain the danger of the player's actions.
10. Players, waiting their turn to bat in the rotation, should be seated on the proper sideline; a safe distance from the playing field.
11. Base runners must remain on the base until the batter makes contact with the ball.
12. Players cannot advance on over-throws that are out of play.
13. Play ends when there is an attempt to make an out.
14. A batter can advance beyond one base on a solid hit that reaches the outfield (coaches should



exercise judgment to allow for good hits to be rewarded, but not to penalize the fielders for inaccurate throwing).

15. Force plays at home will not be permitted by the pitcher or any other fielder. In the absence of a catcher, all fielders should be instructed to throw the ball to first, second or third base, as the situation dictates, to get the out.

Defense

1. The defense should typically consist of 10 players, five (5) players in the infield (Pitcher, First Base, Second Base, Shortstop and Third Base), and five (5) players in the outfield.
2. Outfielders must stay behind the base paths in the outfield.
3. Coaches should agree before the start of the game if they will allow more than 10 fielders on the defense. If so, the extra players should be positioned in the outfield.
4. When there is an opposing coach pitching, the player pitcher should position herself defensively on either side of the coach (typically on the right arm side of the coach for right-handed batters and on the left arm side of the coach for left-handed batters).
5. A coach from the batting team will serve as the catcher.
6. Coaches are allowed on the field for instruction.
7. Each player must play at least one inning in the outfield and one in the infield (if they were present at game start).
8. A ball is declared dead when a fielder throws or attempts to throw the ball to a base to make an out. The runner must stop at the closest base.
9. Coaches should strive to move players to different positions during the game, and plan to put each player at every position throughout the season unless there is a safety concern (this is an instructional league, and we want the player to become acquainted with the different positions on the field).

Umpires

1. There are no umpires required at the Rookies level.

Field Layout

1. Distance between bases will be 45 ft.
2. Distance from home plate to the pitcher's mound will be 35 ft.
3. A double first base will be used to minimize the risk of injury. The white portion of the base will reside in fair territory while the orange portion of the base will be in foul territory. If the runner decides to run through first base (instead of taking the turn towards second base), every attempt should be made to step on the orange portion of the double base and into foul territory, although the runner will not be penalized for contacting any white portion of the base.



SAFETY

1. At the first sign of lightning, a game or practice should be immediately called.
2. During the game, players who are neither in the field, in the batter's box nor on deck, should be seated (in the dugout area) a safe distance from the field and watching the play of the game.
3. When a team is batting, only the player in the batter's box and the player on deck should have a bat. All other bats should be kept away from the bench area.
4. A coach (or other adult) should be assigned to the on-deck area to ensure that the on-deck batter waits for the proper time to approach the batter's box, and that practice swings are conducted in a safe manner.
5. Any player who is injured during a game should be attended to immediately and removed from play until proper medical attention has been administered, and the player's supervising adult has given the approval for the player to resume play. If the injury results in bleeding, the player should be immediately removed and not permitted to return to the game.
6. In the event of an emergency, coaches should follow emergency procedures as outlined by the League.

Parents and Other Non-Coaching Adults

Parents, or supervising adults, who are not coaching, and who are not requested by the coach to help, are neither permitted on the field during play, nor are they permitted to assist a player who is either batting or in the field, except to provide verbal encouragement.

Rule Changes

The MTBSA Softball Pony Division Rules and Guidelines contained herein may be changed during the season by the Commissioner or VP Softball to allow for changes in League Policy, introduction of piloted training programs, or any other factor that seeks to improve the quality of instruction and recreation for the player.