

GYGSA Official Rules of Play

The GYGSA Board of Directors has approved these rules for the Georgetown Youth Girls Softball Association (GYGSA) league, as appropriate for play, as determined by The President of Softball Operations, the GYGSA Softball Commissioners, and the Softball Director of Umpires. The President of GYGSA reserves the right to add or change rules during the year for the betterment of the program and/or safety of the players.

All GYGSA games will be played under the Official Rules of Softball published by USA Softball (6U and 8U and NFHS (10U/12U/14U) along with league specific modifications and exceptions detailed in these Official Rules of Play. In the event of any conflict in language between any past, present, or future printed version of these rules and the GYGSA online version as posted on league website, the GYGSA online version shall have priority. Should any situations arise, or rulings be required that are not addressed in these rules, the decision of the GYGSA Board of Directors shall serve as the official and appropriate ruling. All decisions by the Board of Directors, or the Board Member on Duty (BMOD), shall be final and may not be appealed.

The following rules will apply for all age divisions unless otherwise noted. In the event of a conflict between these rules and The Official Rules of Softball then these rules shall govern.

Some rules may be changed specifically for tournament play. Any rules changed for tournament games will be noted in the tournament rules by the tournament director at that time.

Any reference to a particular gender contained within this document such as she, hers, herself, etc., shall be meant to also include he, his, himself and are to be interpreted as gender neutral.

The Official Rules of Play are organized as follows:

RULE 1.00 - Playing Field, Uniforms, & Equipment

RULE 2.00 - Game Preliminaries

RULE 3.00 - Starting & Ending A Game

RULE 4.00 - Sportsmanship & Ejections

RULE 5.00 - Age Specific Rules

RULE 1.00 - Playing Field, Uniforms, & Equipment

1.01 Playing Field

1. The recommended distance for pitching mound-to-plate and base-to-base for each age division is listed in table 1.

a. The pitching mound-to-plate distance is measured from the rear of home plate to the front of the pitching mound.

b. The base distance is measured from the rear of home plate to the front of the base.

Recommended playing field dimensions are defined and listed below for each age group. Actual field measurements cannot be contested before the game, but inquiry can be made to ensure the bases and the pitching mound are in the correct location on each field.

Age Group	Pitching Distance	Base Paths	Fields Available for Play
4-6U	40'	55' w/10' Safety Line	West, Central, East
7-8U	40'	55' w/10' Safety Line	West, Central, East
9-10U	35'	60'	West, Central, East
11-12U	40'	60'	West, Central, East
13-17U	43'	60'	West, Central, East

1.02 Uniforms

Players must have proper uniforms on during games.

Metal cleats are **not** allowed in 6U – 12U play. They are permitted in the 14U division.

Note - Issues involving a player's attire and uniform legality will be resolved at the discretion of the umpire and/or the BMOD.

1.03 Protective Equipment

All offensive players must wear a double ear helmet with a protective facemask while on the playing field, outside of the dugouts. This includes bat girls and boys while performing their duties. Youth coaches under 18 years of age must adhere to this standard.

All defensive players playing in any of the infield positions including Pitcher, 1st base, 2nd base, short stop, or 3rd base are advised to wear a protective mask. Additionally, if outfield players are playing anywhere on the infield surface, they should also wear a protective mask. A protective mask is not required for defensive players playing in outfield positions, but it is highly recommended.

The catcher must wear a head protector, a body protector, shin guards, and a mask with a throat protector. The throat protector, which is part of or attached to the mask, must adequately protect them. The helmet must have full ear protection. The head, face, and throat protector can be one piece.

Note - In 6U the catcher's position must be filled, and a helmet and chest protector must be used. Shin guards are optional but highly recommended.

1.04 Softballs

The GYGSA league will provide (2) two game balls in good condition to the umpires for each game. Regulation leather covered softballs will be used for all divisions. Ball sizes - 6U/8U/10U will use 11 inch softballs and 12U/14U will use 12 inch softballs.

1.05 Softball Bats

THE OFFICIAL BAT. The bat shall be a smooth cylinder with a knob. Only bats that pass through a 2-1/4-inch (5.7150 cm) diameter bat ring are legal. Each bat shall be no more than 2-1/4 inches (5.7150 cm) in diameter at its thickest part, no more than 34 inches (86.360 cm) in length, and not exceed 38 ounces (1077.30 g) in weight. There shall be no devices, attachments, or wrappings that cause the handle to become flush with the knob. All bats shall meet the USA/ASA bat performance standard. Laser etching, other than on the barrel is permissible.

RULE 2.00 - Game Preliminaries

2.01 Rosters

Team rosters are limited to the numbers of players assigned by the Commissioners of each division as determined by the President of the League. All players must be registered in the appropriate age division or comply with GYGSA rules for playing-up as determined by the President of the League. Any manager found to be using illegal players will be warned, and any additional offenses or failure to comply may result in the manager being suspended from the field of play for their next scheduled game with the possibility of being ejected from the League.

2.02 Managers and Asst. Coaches

Each team will be limited to one manager and 3 coaches (including team parents). Only league approved managers, coaches, and players are permitted in the dugout or on the field. If a team is missing a coach(s), then an approved coach from another GYGSA team may help with team duties on a temporary basis. All managers and coaches must pass background checks prior to the first practice. Only approved managers and coaches are allowed to conduct practices and participate in game duties.

2.03 Minimum Number of Players

A team must have eight (8) players to start/continue/finish a game. If a team has only eight (8) players, play will continue and an out will be taken when the 9th position comes up to bat. A team may NOT pick up a player to fill the 9th position. *

Teams may pick up GYGSA players ONLY if the minimum number of players (8) will not be able to attend the game. If the minimum number of players (8) are unable to attend the game, the game will be

considered a technical forfeit, however the game still MUST be played. In the event of a technical forfeit, players may be picked up to form a full team of no more than 9 players (all divisions). Pickup players must be from the same age Division or lower for regular season games only. (Ex.: An 8U Division team may pick up another 8U Division player or lower age division but may not pick up a player from the 10U Division). The manager of the team should make the opposing manager aware of the substitution at the plate meeting prior to the game. No matter who the opponent, whether they are another GYGSA team or other local area league, any player(s) picked up must bat in the last batting position.

A team may not use pickup players during tournament play without express consent from the League Commissioner and President of Operations.

The purpose of this rule is to ensure all defensive positions are filled, or can be filled, to provide the most competitive game in accordance with the League format.

2.04 Line-up and Substitutions

Each team will bat the entire roster. A late arriving player will be inserted at the bottom of the lineup.

1. If a team's ninth (9th) player (or any other player) is expected to arrive late to the game, the manager of the team must make an announcement at the pre-game conference and advise both the plate-umpire and the opposing team that a player will be arriving late.
2. When the player arrives, the player is announced to both the plate umpire and the opposing team. The late arriving player is placed in the bottom or last position in the line-up. The game resumes as if he or she was there at the start of the game. Until the player arrives, an out is recorded if there are less than nine (9) players.
 - a. If a player is removed from the game for any reason, the player's position in the lineup will be skipped without an out unless the team falls below nine (9) players. If the team falls below 9 players and it is during Spring season or tournament play an out will be taken.

2.05 Forfeits

An official game cannot continue with less than eight (8) players. A team has ten (10) minutes past the posted scheduled game time to gather the required number of players to start an official game.

In the event a team does not gather the required minimum number of players (8), the umpire will contact one of the Board Members on Duty (BMOD) and the BMOD will call the game a forfeit. The team which is short players may then follow the pickup rule as described in 2.03 and the game will be played under the ruling of a forfeit. All rules of the game are the same as a regular game no matter if it was ruled a forfeit. No game will be rescheduled as a result of a forfeit unless otherwise approved by the league president.

2.05a Exception Forfeits

There will be no technical forfeits during the fall regular season play no matter if a team is short-handed or has to pick-up players to play the game.

RULE 3.00 – Game Regulations

3.01 Game Time

For Spring Season Regulation Game Times see table 3.1

Table 3.1

Division	Game time	Tie-Breaker
4-6U	60 minutes, Finish the inning	None
7-8U	60 minutes, Finish the inning	None
9-10U	70 minutes, Finish the inning	None
11-12U	70 minutes, Finish the inning	None
13-17U	70 minutes, Finish the inning	None

For Fall Season Regulation Game Times See Table 3.2

Table 3.2

Division	Game time	Tie-Breaker
4-6U	60 minutes, No new inning after 55	None
7-8U	60 minutes, No new inning after 55	None
9-10U	70 minutes, No new inning after 65	None
11-12U	70 minutes, No new inning after 65	None
13-17U	70 minutes, No new inning after 65	None

3.02 Run Limitations & Mercy Rule

The following limitations will apply to all GYGSA games. The imposed Mercy (run) Rule shall be used to complete a regulation game when one team's margin of lead is greater than or equal to the listed run differential.

Division	Runs per ½ inning	Mercy Rule
4-6U	5	12 after 3, 10 after 4, 8 after 5
7-8U	5	12 after 3, 10 after 4, 8 after 5
9-10U	5	12 after 3, 10 after 4, 8 after 5
11-12U	5	12 after 3, 10 after 4, 8 after 5
13-14U	5	12 after 3, 10 after 4, 8 after 5

Note - For regular season games, if the field schedule permits, the run-ruled game may continue until the allotted time is complete, by agreement of both managers. For tournament play, run-ruled games may not continue for any reason.

3.03 Suspended Games

If a game is called due to weather or other conditions, it will be ruled an official game provided:

1. Two and one-half (2 ½) innings have been completed and the home team is ahead or three (3) innings if the home team is behind.
2. All games stopped by a league official for weather or other necessary safety reasons before a game officially begins are declared suspended games. Suspended games, if rescheduled, will resume at the exact point where the game left off. The umpire will verify all game details with the scorebook so the game can be resumed at its exact point.

Note - Suspended games may not be rescheduled due to various reasons. All decisions to reschedule are at the discretion of the President of Operations and Schedule Director.

RULE 4.00 - Sportsmanship and Ejections

4.01 No Tolerance Policy

Players

1. Openly disputes or argues any decision by an official.
2. Uses obscene or vulgar language and/or gestures at any time, including any swearing, even if it is not directed at a particular person.
3. Visually demonstrates any sign of dissatisfaction with an official's decision. Any time that a player persists in any of these actions, they shall be assessed a misconduct penalty. A game misconduct shall result if the player continues such action.
4. Displays unsportsmanlike behavior toward any players this includes both verbal and physical violence.

Coaches

1. Openly disputes or disputes any decision by an official.
2. Uses obscene or vulgar language in a boisterous manner to anyone at any time.
3. Visually displays any sign of dissatisfaction with an official's decision with the intent of inciting the officials, players or spectators. Any time that a coach persists in any of these actions, they shall be assessed a game misconduct penalty.
4. Displays unsportsmanlike behavior toward any players, this includes both verbal and physical violence.

Parents/Spectators

The game will be stopped by game officials or League administrators when parents/spectators displaying inappropriate and disruptive behavior interfere with other spectators or the game. The game officials or League administrators will identify violators to the coaches for the purpose of removing parents/spectators from the spectator's viewing and game area. Once removed, play will resume. Lost time will not be replaced, and violators may be subject to further disciplinary action by the Board of Directors. Inappropriate behavior includes:

1. Use of obscene or vulgar language and or gestures in a boisterous manner to anyone at any time.
2. Taunting of players, coaches, officials or other spectators by means of baiting, ridiculing, threat of physical violence or physical violence.
3. Throwing of any object in the spectator's viewing area, player's bench directed in any manner as to create a safety hazard.

Coaches/Parents/Spectators

In addition to above, the following Codes of Conduct for coaches, parents and spectators should be adhered to:

1. Children are involved in organized sports for their enjoyment. Make it fun.
2. Encourage your child to play by the rules. Remember, children learn best by example, so applaud the good plays of both teams.
3. Do not embarrass any your child by yelling at players, coaches or officials. By showing a positive attitude toward the game and all of its participants, your child will benefit.
4. Emphasize skill development and practices and how they benefit your young athlete. Deemphasize games and competition in the younger age levels.
5. Know and study the rules of softball and support the officials on and off the field. This approach will help in the development and support of the game. Any criticism of the officials only hurts the game.
6. Applaud a good effort in both victory and defeat and enforce the positive points of the game.
7. Never yell or physically abuse your child after a game or practice. It is destructive. Work toward removing physical and verbal abuse in youth sports.
8. Recognize the importance of volunteer coaches. They are important to the development of your child and the sport. Communicate with them and support them.
9. If you enjoy the game, learn all you can and dedicate time as a volunteer!

Spectators:

1. Display good sportsmanship. Always respect players, coaches and officials.
2. Act appropriately; do not taunt or disturb other fans. Enjoy the game together.
3. Cheer good plays of all participants, avoid booing opponents.
4. Cheer in a positive manner and encourage fair play; profanity and objectionable cheers or gestures are offensive.
5. Help provide a safe and fun environment; throwing objects on the field can cause injury to players and officials
6. Support the umpires and coaches by trusting their judgment and integrity.
7. Be responsible for your own safety and remain alert to help prevent accidents.
8. Respect dugouts as private areas for players, coaches and officials.
9. Be supportive after the game, win or lose. Recognize good efforts, teamwork and sportsmanship.

4.02 Ejections and Suspensions

If a player is ejected from a game for any unsportsmanlike act, the following penalties will apply:

1. The ejected player is out and must leave the dugout or park dependent on the issue assessed and if the parent/Guardian is available. If no parent/Guardian is available, the player will be supervised by the BMOD until such time the parent/guardian arrives. An out will be declared in the player's position in the lineup, if the roster drops below nine. If not, this position will be skipped without an out.
2. The ejected player will be required to sit out the next scheduled game. The required suspension can be overturned only by the President of the league after review of the report of the actions leading up to the suspension.

If a parent, coach, umpire or other spectator is ejected from a game for any unsportsmanlike act, the following penalties will apply:

1. The ejected party will be required to immediately leave the facility and depending on the action may also be required to sit out the next scheduled game. The required suspension can be overturned only by the President of the league after review of the report of the actions leading up to the suspension.

RULE 5.00 - Age Specific Rules

7.01 6U T-Ball

6U Rules

1. During the Fall season, coaches are permitted to be on the field assisting players with positioning and communicating with players for where to make plays during games. The fall season is intended to be very instructional. We do not however allow coaches to be in the outfield during the Spring season. The reasoning behind that is because following the spring season some kids may be selected for all-stars. When we play in the all-star tournaments, rules state that no coaches can be in the outfield assisting and no coaches are allowed on the field.

Document History:

Revised 3/1/24 – Revised and removed references to T-ball / Tee Ball bats

Revised 9/28/23 – Revised and removed references to PONY

Revised 1/17/23 – Revised the section 2.03 about pick up players. Also added 1.04 Softball bats.

Revised 1/22/20 – Removed section "B" which stated a player could not return to the game if they are removed or miss their turn at bat for any reason other than injury.

Revised 1/11/20 – changed run rules for 6u / 8u to 5 runs per ½ to reflect the 2020 pony rule changes.

1/10/20 – Document Created