



# WILLIAMSON COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION

## WCPR ATHLETICS YOUTH SOFTBALL SUPPLEMENTAL RULES

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Governing Body: the governing body will be Williamson County Parks and Recreation (WCPR).

USA Softball Official Rule book and this WCPR Supplement will be the guidelines for all league play.

Age Divisions: The playing age will be determined by August 31 of the current school year (2025) for the FALL 2025 and SPRING 2026 seasons. The following divisions will be offered each season; 6 & under (6U), 8 & under (8U), 10 & under fast-pitch (10U), and 13 & under fast-pitch (13U).

Practice Limitations: Pre-season there will be a limit of 3 hours per week of on field practice time. During the season there will be a limit of 1.5 hours a week of on field practice time.

**NOTE: No practices allowed once tournament play begins.**

Playing Time: Each player must play at least two (2) innings. If a team has 13 or more players and there is only a fifty-five (55) minute game, each player will only be required to play at least one (1) inning.

Base Lengths & Pitching Distances:

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Base Length</u>	<u>Pitching Distance</u>
6 & under (6U)	60'	Approximately 27'
8 & under (8U)	60'	35' Coach Pitch
10 & under (10U)	60'	35'
13 & under (13U)	60'	40'

Equipment: All equipment used by the players must meet the minimum criteria of the USA Softball rules. This is to include bats, balls, gloves, batting helmets, face masks, shoes, and catcher's equipment. Any equipment judged to be unsafe or damaged may be removed from play by an umpire.

**No metal cleats are allowed for any age division.**

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**RULE 3 EQUIPMENT:**

**SECTION 1: OFFICIAL BAT**

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**CERTIFIED/APPROVED:** The official bat for USA Softball Championship Play must meet all the USA Softball specifications and the requirements of Rule 3, Section 1, and

The official bat, made up of the knob, handle, grip, taper, barrel and end cap shall be free of burs, dents cracks, sharp edges, rattles and show no signs of excessive wear. The official bat may be marked OFFICIAL SOFTBALL by the manufacturer, and shall be no more than 34 inches long nor exceed 38 ounces in weight. The official bat shall not be more than 2.250 inches in diameter at its largest part, including any tolerance for expansion. The official bat must bear either the USA 2000 Certification Mark, USA 2004 Certification Mark, or USA 2013 Certification Mark (Slow Pitch, Men's Adult Fast Pitch, Junior Olympic Boy's Fast Pitch and Men's Modified only), as shown below and must not be listed on the USA Non-Approved Bat List with 2000 or 2004 Certification Mark.



AND

1. Must be included on a list of approved bat models published by the USA Softball  
OR
2. Must, in the sole opinion and discretion of the umpire, have been manufactured prior to 2000 and if tested, would comply with USA Softball Bat Performance Standard. This includes wooden bats.  
Exception: Senior Softball bats may be used in Senior Championship Play only.

*All bats in USA Softball Championship Play, except seniors, must pass the USA Softball Bat Performance Standard. All bats having the 2000, 2004 or 2013(Slow Pitch, Men's Adult Fast Pitch, Junior Olympic Boy's Fast Pitch and Men's Modified Pitch ONLY) Certification Mark and not listed on the list of Non-Approved bats with Certification marks will be allowed in USA Softball Championship Play. Bats with the 2013 Certification Mark will be allowed in Slow Pitch National Championship Play Only. For your convenience, USA Softball's website has a listing of all approved bats and bats that have USA Softball Certification Marks and are no longer approved.*

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## SECTION 2: OFFICIAL SOFTBALL

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- A. Certified/ Approved: Only softballs which bear an USA Softball approved certification mark signifying compliance with the ball COR and ball compression limitations then in effect, and which satisfy all other applicable provisions in Rule 3, Section 3, will be allowed for use in USA Championship Play.
- B. Cover: the official softball shall have a cover of leather or synthetic leather material. The ball shall be regular, smooth-seamed, and smooth-surfaced. Beginning January 1, 2010 the optic yellow ball shall be used.
- C. The 12 inch ball: the official 12 inch softball shall be at least 12.0 inches in circumference when measured across two seams, and shall weigh at least 6.750 ounces. The 12-inch ball shall have no fewer than 88 stitches in each cover, sewn by the two-needle method, or with an authentic facsimile of stitching as approved by USA Softball.
1. The 12 inch fast pitch ball: the yellow optic cover, red stitch 12 inch ball with a ball COR of .470 or under and a ball compression of 375.0 lbs. or under.  
**NOTE:** This ball is used for 13U Fast-pitch divisions.
- D. The 11 inch ball: the official 11 inch softball shall be at least 11.0 inches in circumference. It shall weigh at least 6.0 ounces. The smooth-seamed style shall not have fewer than 80 stitches in each cover sewn by the two-needle method, or with an authentic facsimile of stitching as approved by USA Softball.
1. The 11-inch fast pitch ball: the yellow optic cover, red stitch 11-inch ball with a ball COR of .470 and under, and a ball compression of 375.0 lbs. or under.  
**NOTE:** This ball is used for divisions 10U and below.

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## SECTION 3: CATCHERS EQUIPMENT, FACE MASK/GUARDS & HELMETS

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- A. Face mask/guards: Any defensive player or offensive player may wear a face mask/guard or batters helmet with attached face mask.

**NOTE:** All batters are required to wear an approved batting helmet with attached facemask. All catchers are required to wear an approved helmet with attached facemask, shin guards, and body protectors.

**NOTE:** 6U pitchers are required to wear a helmet and face mask/guard while playing in the field.

**NOTE:** 8U, 10U and 13U pitchers are required to wear a face mask/guard while playing in the field. **WCPR strongly encourages all pitchers to wear chest protectors during play.**

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## RULE 4 PLAYERS, COACHES, AND SUBSTITUTES:

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### SECTION 1: PLAYERS

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- A. A team shall consist of ten (10) players in the following positions: Pitcher, catcher, first base, second base, short stop, third base, left fielder, left-center fielder, right-center fielder, right fielder.

**EXCEPTION:** 6U teams will play the number of players present on the field.

- B. **6U: All the infield positions get filled and everyone else is placed in the outfield (i.e. the extra players are placed in the outfield and only one player per position in the infield).**

**NOTE:** All outfield positions **MUST** be on the grass of the outfield.

**NOTE:** This will remain throughout the entire season to include the end of season tournament: If a team chooses to play with a nine-player defensive field that is allowed. The minimum playing time for all players must be adhering to.

**NOTE:** All age groups will bat the entire roster.

**NOTE:** Eight players must be present to start and complete a game. If 8 players are not present for a team, a 10-minute grace period will begin. If the short-handed team doesn't have enough players show up during the grace period, then a forfeit will be declared and the game will count as a loss. Once a forfeit is declared, then a scrimmage game is playable, but the end result will still be a loss for the record keeping. Umpires will work all games assigned.

**NOTE:** Coaches must remain inside the dugout or along the fence of the dugout. Any coach stepping onto the field without time being called will receive a warning. After the first warning the coach will be ejected from the game. Any coach ejected from the game or receiving warnings in multiple games will be suspended for one game. Any coach ejected from two games will be suspended for the season.

Teams will only be allowed to use "Pick up" players who are in the younger age division and are from the same community recreation program to field a complete team for the regular season only. "Pick-up" players must be currently registered in the program. You may NOT pick up players from the same or older age division.

Teams who choose to play with only 8 players will be charged an out for the 9<sup>th</sup> batter during the regular season and tournament games except 6U teams. If teams have 9 players they will not need to take an out.

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## SECTION 2: SUBSTITUTES/ILLEGAL PLAYERS

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G. Players may only be officially rostered to one (1) team per entire league.

**Official team rosters must be submitted to WCPR before the first week of games.** Failure to do so will result in the forfeiture of the opportunity to participate in the tournament. If a player is found to be playing on a team illegally, the offending team(s) will forfeit any remaining games in the tournament.

H. Middle School players are permitted to participate, but must play in at least half of the regular season games to be eligible to participate in the tournament.

I. High School players will not be permitted to play on a recreational league team.

J. **Teams may not have more than 4 travel tournament players. (From the school current year)**

**NOTE:** Any team found to be playing with more than 4 travel tournament players during the season will forfeit their right to participate in the tournament. Further actions towards coach will follow.

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## SECTION 3: DISQUALIFIED OR EJECTED PARTICIPANT

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A. A disqualified player is prohibited from playing but can remain in the team area or serve as a team coach/manager

B. An ejected participant must leave the grounds and have no contact with the umpires or participants in the game.

**NOTE:** Any player, coach, or parent ejected from a game will have a minimum of a one (1) game suspension and must also leave the property immediately upon being ejected. Suspension could be lengthened depending on the severity of the incident. Abuse of umpires, supervisors and WCPR staff may result in suspension for two or more games, this includes after the game is complete. Any person involved in fighting will be immediately removed from the facility and will be suspended from all leagues and facilities indefinitely.

- C. Any arguing of the judgment of balls and strikes will result in a team warning. Any repeat offense will result in the ejection of the team member.
- D. If a player is disqualified a team can play shorthanded. However, if a player is ejected and the team does not have enough players, play cannot continue and the game is forfeited.

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## **RULE 5 THE GAME:**

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### **SECTION 1: HOME TEAM**

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Prior to the start of the game, the home team shall be determined by a coin toss.

**NOTE:** During the regular season when teams travel to other parks, the host association will be considered the home team. When there are two (2) host teams the home status will be determined by a coin toss.

**NOTE:** For tournament games, the higher seeded team will be the designated home team.

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### **SECTION 2: FITNESS OF THE GROUNDS**

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- A. The plate umpire shall determine the Fitness of the grounds for a game **when WCPR staff is not present.**

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### **SECTION 3: REGULATION GAME/TIME LIMIT**

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- B. A regulation game shall consist of seven (7) innings or a time limit, or whichever comes first.
- C. **During the regular season, games will end in a tie.**

**SPRING & FALL SEASON: 6U time limit will be fifty-five (55) minutes. 8U time limit will be sixty-five (65) minutes. 10U and 13U will be one (1) hour and twenty (20) minutes time limit. If teams are scheduled for doubleheader games and choose to play one (1) long game, then there will be a 7 inning limit or one (1) hour and forty-five (45) minute time limit.**

**NOTE:** The third out at the bottom of an inning indicates a new inning has begun. The new inning will then be played. If time expires when the visiting team is batting, the inning will continue and the home team will have the opportunity to bat only if they are losing and are down by 5 or less runs.

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### **SECTION 4: SCORING OF RUNS**

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- D. Each team may score a maximum of five (5) runs per inning.

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## RULE 6 PITCHING REGULATIONS:

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### SECTION 1: INTENTIONAL WALKS AND ILLEGAL PITCHES

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If the pitcher desires to walk a batter intentionally, all pitches must be legally delivered to the batter.

**NOTE:** Intentional walks will not be permitted in any Slow Pitch Divisions.

**NOTE:** Illegal pitches will not be called, but the umpires will help to communicate with the pitcher when they notice if the pitch is illegal.

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### SECTION 2: 8U PITCHING

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#### A. 8U Pitching Rule:

- a. The coach may pitch from anywhere within the circle. Both feet must remain within the circle during the entire pitch. Player in pitching position must be equal to or behind the coach pitcher, with at least one foot within the circle.
- b. A direct hit at the coach pitcher will result in a dead ball. No ball or strike will be called; it will be a do-over.

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### SECTION 3: 10U PITCHING

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#### B. 10U Pitching Rule: After three (3) consecutive or four (4) batters per inning, have been awarded base by either four balls or being hit by pitch, the offensive team's manager or coach comes in to pitch the rest of the inning.

- a. The pitches from the offensive fast pitch coach must be at minimum a modified fast pitch. No slow pitches/lobbing off ball will be allowed. The coach pitcher must pitch from the 35' pitching rubber. The defensive pitcher must remain even with or behind the 35' rubber, with at least one foot in the pitching circle. **No stealing will be allowed once the offensive coach comes in to pitch.**
- b. On a walk, runner may steal second, as long as time has not been called/pitcher is not in control of the ball within the circle.
- c. Once a coach comes in to pitch the same coach will have to remain pitching for the completion of the inning.
- d. Coach will perform modified fast pitch and not exceed height of shoulders. First violation is a warning and second and further infractions will result in loss of pitch.
- e. **Rules do not revert to 8U rules, only the ability to steal changes**

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### SECTION 4: DEFENSIVE POSITIONING

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- A. The pitcher shall not deliver a pitch unless all defensive players are positioned in fair territory except the catcher who must be in the catcher's box or arc.

**NOTE:** No player will be permitted to play a defensive position other than the catcher within thirty (30) feet of the batter.

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## RULE 7 BATTING:

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### SECTION 1: BATTING ORDER

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- A. The batting order shall show the names, first and last, in the order in which the players are scheduled to bat.

**NOTE:** Each team will bat the entire roster during the game using the normal batting routine.

**NOTE: 6U only - There will be no on deck batter on the field. The on-deck batter shall remain in the dugout.**

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## **RULE 7 BATTING:**

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### **SECTION 2: A STRIKE IS CALLED BY THE UMPIRE**

The 6U Division will have three (3) pitches from the coach to put the ball into play; after three (3) pitches the batter will use a Tee that is placed on the home plate until the ball is hit into the field. A ten (10) foot arc measured from the back of the plate will be used to determine a fair ball into the field. The coach has the option for use the Tee without using the three (3) pitches first.

**NOTE:** There is no out for the batter at the plate in this division.

The 8U Division will have five (5) pitches or three (3) strikes, whichever comes first, to put the ball into play. **It only counts as a strike if they swing.** The batter will be declared out if the ball is not put into play after the fifth pitch, unless the fifth pitch is a foul ball. In this case the batter will have another opportunity to put the ball into play. **NOTE:** No batter will be called out for a foul ball. A batter may be called out if a hit ball is legally caught in foul or fair territory. Also, a batter may be called out if the batted ball goes sharply and directly from the bat to the catcher's hand or glove and is legally caught (foul tip).

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## **RULE 8 BATTER-RUNNER AND RUNNER:**

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### **SECTION 1: THE BATTER BECOMES A BATTER-RUNNER**

- A. **For the 13U division,** the batter becomes a batter-runner when the catcher fails to catch the third strike before the ball touches the ground and there are:
1. Fewer than two (2) outs and first base is not occupied at the time of the pitch or
  2. Any time there are two (2) outs

**NOTE:** When the batter-runner fails to advance to first base and enters the team area (dug-out) the batter-runner will be declared out.

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### **SECTION 2: BATTER-RUNNER IS OUT**

- B. Infield fly rule is not in effect for any level of play.

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### **SECTION 3: RUNNERS ARE ENTITLED TO ADVANCE WITH LIABILITY**

Slow Pitch Divisions are not permitted to steal any base.

**10U Division (Fast Pitch) – Once a coach has been called to pitch because of the consecutive walks by the player-pitcher, no runners on base are allowed to steal.**

10U and 13U Divisions are permitted to steal every base and can leave the base when the ball has been released from the pitcher's hand.

**NOTE: 10U only – On a steal attempt, an overthrow from the catcher to second or third base will be deemed a dead ball. The runner is awarded the base they were making the attempt on, and no additional bases may be taken.**

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## SECTION 4: RUNNERS ARE ENTITLED TO ADVANCE WITHOUT LIABILITY

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### C. Overthrow rule:

For 6U: A ball thrown to a live base will result in a stoppage of play if the THROWN ball gets through, around, or over the player who is receiving the throw. As a result, the base runners will not be able to advance beyond the base they occupy at the time of the overthrow. The ball must be thrown to a live base. Play will not stop until, in the opinion of the umpire, the defense has made an actual attempt to put out a runner, lead or otherwise, meaning the defense will not be awarded "time" if the ball is thrown to third and there is no runner on second or third. Throws to a pitcher inside the pitching circle will no longer constitute stoppage of play.

**For 8U: THIS RULE APPLIES TO BALLS THROWN TO ANY LIVE BASE. If a ball is overthrown attempting to put out a batter/runner running to any live base, that runner may only advance to one base. The defensive team can put out the existing runners attempting to take extra bases if the ball remains live.**

**NOTE:** All baserunners advancing on overthrows do so at their own risk.

### D. Stopping the runner:

For 6U, time will be called when a defensive player has possession of the ball in the base path. If a runner is more than halfway to the next base when time is called, the runner will be awarded the next base.

- Hash marks will be placed in the middle of the bases between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> base, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base, and 3<sup>rd</sup> base and home plate to help determine if the players were more than halfway to the next base.

For 8U: The ball will be declared dead when the defensive team stops the lead runner or the runner abandons the effort to advance. Once play had been stopped, no other runners may advance beyond the last base tagged.

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## SECTION 5: COURTESY RUNNERS (FAST PITCH/MODIFIED)

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### WCPR Rule: Courtesy Runners

Each team may use **one courtesy runner per inning for the catcher**. The **last recorded out** prior to the catcher's at-bat will serve as the courtesy runner. If the courtesy runner is used for the catcher, the catcher **must be fully equipped and ready to take the field** when the half-inning ends.

**NOTE:** An additional courtesy runner may be used **in the event of an injury**. The **last recorded out** prior to the injured player's at-bat will be used as the courtesy runner.

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## RULE 9 PROTESTS:

### SECTION 1: PROTESTS

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All protests will be handled by the Umpire-In-Chief; otherwise the WCPR League Supervisor will receive the protest. Judgment calls cannot be protested and post-game protests will not be considered.

#### A. Misinterpretation of a playing rule must be made to the head umpire:

1. Before the next pitch legal or illegal
2. Before the next play
3. Before all infielders have left fair territory
4. On the last play of the game, before the umpire leaves live ball territory

- B. Illegal player protests must be made to the head umpire while the player in question is in the game and before the umpires leave the playing field.
- C. Ineligible player protests can be made any time. Eligibility is the decision of WCPR staff. If a player is deemed ineligible, any games that the player played in will be considered a forfeit. If it is determined, during the tournament, that the player in question is ineligible, then the team(s) the player played for will be forfeited out of any remaining games.

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**ADDITIONAL RULES/NOTES:**

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- A. Coaches on the Field: Except for 6U, no coaches are allowed to coach from the field of play. All coaches must remain within or outside the dugout, apart from coach pitchers and offensive first and third base coaches.
- B. Number of Coaches: No more than 4 coaches can participate to coach during a game.
- C. 10U: Removal of drop third strike will take into effect moving forward.
- D. Mercy Rule: Up by 15 runs or mathematically eliminated. If the game ends in a mercy rule and time are still left on the clock, teams may continue playing as a scrimmage, but they cannot play past their allotted time.
- E. In case of weather, all parties must follow the Williamson County Weather Protocols. The umpire on duty and home team coaches is encouraged to use My Lightning Tracker & Alerts app for notifications.

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**ALL-STARS SCHEDULE/EQUIRMENTS:**

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**WCPR and Area Rec. Associations are proud to offer an All-Stars tournament at the conclusion of the spring season. The tournament style/format will be decided on by the commissioners.**

- A. One team will be formed from each association per division (8U, 10U and 13U).
- B. Players must have been registered during the regular season in order to participant.
- C. Players may only play in the same division they were registered in during the regular season.

**USA Softball Non-Approved Bat List with Certification Marks**

***Updated: 1/2/2024***

[USA Softball Non-Approved Bat List w/2004 ASA Cert Mark](#)

[USA Softball Non-Approved Bat List with ASA Certification Mark](#)

[USA Softball Non-Approved Bat List with Certification Marks](#)