



TOWNSHIP OF SCOTCH PLAINS, NEW JERSEY

Department of Parks and Recreation
430 Park Avenue Rm. 113
Scotch Plains, NJ 07076
908-322-6700 x223
<https://www.scotchplainsnj.gov/departments/recreation/>

Youth Softball Procedural Guidelines

The guidelines below are a set of rules, notes, and clarifications specific to the sport as the details of game play, set-up, and focuses change throughout the different levels of program offerings. All instructions set forth below are in accordance with the Youth Sports Policy of the Scotch Plains Parks and Recreation Department. Participants, coaches, and spectators must adhere to all Youth Sport Policies, as well as sport-specific guidelines. These guidelines will be reviewed in advance and at the conclusion of each season.

Youth Softball Rules: 4th/5th Grade Division

**USA Softball / ASA Softball rules govern this league with the following modifications. All rules listed in this document are in accordance with the Scotch Plains Parks and Recreation Youth Sport Policy.*

1. EXPECTATIONS

In accordance with the Scotch Plains Parks and Recreation Youth Sport Policy, good sportsmanship is expected from players, coaches, and spectators at all times. The intended goals of this league are to improve the overall skill level of each player, incorporate softball strategies based on game situations, and gain a better understanding of each position.

2. EQUIPMENT & SAFETY

In accordance with the Scotch Plains Parks and Recreation Youth Sport Policy "Game Procedures" section:

- All players must bring their own glove
- All bats must be ASA sanctioned softball bats
- Batters and base runners must wear helmets with face masks
- This division uses 11" softballs
- Rubber cleats or sneakers ONLY (no metal spikes)
- Jewelry is not permitted during practices or games (except for medical alert tags)
- Catchers are required to wear protective equipment while catching during all games and practices
- All players not in the game shall remain in the dugout
- Spectators are not permitted on the team bench
- All equipment provided by the Recreation Department must be returned at the end of the season

In addition to these items, coaches, players and spectators should adhere to the 2021 Safe Return to Play Covid-Plan found in the Scotch Plains Parks and Recreation Youth Sport Policy Appendix A.





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3. INCLEMENT WEATHER/CANCELLATIONS

- Always assume “game on” unless you hear from a league representative, your coach, or an official cancellation is posted on our [Facebook page](#)
 - Please note that game status is subject to change and cancellation updates may not be posted on the website or our Facebook page in time for your game
 - Coaches will be responsible for sharing cancellation information with their roster
 - If Scotch Plains Parks and Recreation or SPF Board of Education close fields for any reason, **you must stay off!**

4. LEAGUE DETAILS

- This division may part of the USA Softball NJ District II League depending on enrollment
 - Website: <https://www.usasoftballnjdistrict2.com/Default.aspx?tabid=2674312>
- The number of teams in this league depends on enrollment
- Players may only play on one team
- Potential Scotch Plains playing fields include:
 - Evergreen Elementary School – 2280 Evergreen Avenue
 - Farley Avenue Park – 436 Farley Avenue
 - Jerseyland Park – 2377 Richmond Street
 - Kramer Manor Park – 1950 Evelyn Street
 - Park Middle School (JV Field) – 580 Park Avenue
 - SPFHS (Varsity Field) – 667 Westfield Road

5. GAME PLAY

For all situations not specifically listed below, the Official Softball Playing Rules of USA / ASA Softball for youth fastpitch will be applied.

- Game Balls
 - When playing against a Scotch Plains opponent, both teams will supply the game balls and ensure that all necessary equipment is present
 - When playing against a non-Scotch Plains opponent, the home team will supply the game balls and ensure that all necessary equipment is present





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- Timing
 - Games consist of 6 innings or 1 hour and 45 minutes of play (whichever comes first)
 - No new inning may begin after the designated time limit has been reached
- Line up cards must be presented to the opposing coach prior to the start of the game
- The home team keeps the “official” scorebook and must report scores to the Recreation Department following each game
- Coaches must learn the rules of this division and follow them

5.1 FIELD SET-UP

- The pitching rubber should be set 35 ft. from the back point of home plate to the front of the pitching rubber
- The pitching rubber should be approximately 6” wide x 24” long
- The distance between bases should be set 60 ft. apart

5.2 UMPIRES

- The Recreation Department, through its Umpire Assigner, will assign an umpire for each game
- All umpires have been background checked
- Teams must use the umpire provided
 - If the umpire is late, coaches from both teams may officiate until they arrive
- Prior to each game, coaches from both teams should meet with the umpire to cover ground rules, discuss any modifications, and identify dead ball areas
- The umpire has control of the game once it begins
 - Disputes over an umpire’s judgment call will not be entertained
- The umpire will keep the official game clock

5.3 PITCHING

- Players pitch in this division (not coaches)
- Each pitcher may only pitch 3 innings per game
 - Innings do not need to be consecutive
 - 1 pitch = 1 inning
 - At least 1 foot must be on the pitching rubber to begin each pitch
- No intentional walks





5.4 DEFENSE (FIELDING)

- 10 players maximum on defense (Pitcher, Catcher, 1B, 2B, 3B, SS, LF, LCF, RCF, RF)
- There is no minimum number of players required on defense
 - No special accommodations will be made other than no outs will be recorded for missing players
- Outfielders must be on the grass with each pitch
- Free substitutions with the exception of the pitcher (see 5.3 PITCHING)
- No infield fly rule
- Infielders cannot stand directly in the base path unless she is making a play on the ball

5.5 INNING END

- There are 2 ways in which an inning can come to an end (whichever comes first)
 - 3 outs are made
 - 5 runs are scored (EXCEPT in the last inning)

5.6 OFFENSE (BATTING)

- All batters must wear helmets with face masks
- Bunting is permitted
 - Fake bunts are also permitted, but they cannot be followed by a swing
- “Cinderella Batting” also known as “Roster Batting”
 - All present players must be included in the batting order regardless of whether they are in the game defensively
 - If a player must leave the game for any reason, she is skipped in the batting order without penalty
 - If a player arrives late, she will be added to the bottom of the batting order without penalty
- No dropped 3rd strike

5.7 BASE RUNNING

- If a batter is hit by a pitch, she is only awarded 1B if she makes a reasonable attempt to avoid being hit
- When a ball is hit into play, the batter-runner must run along the 1B line and through the safety base unless doing so would interfere with a fielder attempting to catch a ball in foul territory
 - If a collision occurs in this instance, the batter-runner will be called out





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- No leading
- Stealing is permitted – but only from 2nd to 3rd base
 - The ball must be crossing the plate before the runner may leave the base
 - There is no limit on the number of steals per inning
- If a runner is struck by a ball thrown by a fielder, she is automatically awarded the base in which she was headed toward
- If the runner is struck by a batted ball that has not been first touched by a fielder, she is declared out and the play is dead
- Players must slide to avoid contact
 - Head-first sliding is not permitted
- Courtesy runners may be used for pitchers, catchers, and injured players
 - Must be the last batted out

5.8 SCORING

- There is a 5-run maximum allowed per inning except in the last inning (see 5.5 INNING END)
- Mercy Rule:
 - 15 runs after 4 innings
 - 12 runs after 5 innings
 - By coach agreement, teams may continue to play for as long as time allows

5.9 PLAY END

- Play stops when the ball is secured by the pitcher in the “pitcher’s circle”
 - Return to the previous base if they are not more than halfway to the next base
 - If the base runner is more than halfway to the next base and chooses to continue, the infielder in possession of the ball may attempt to get her out

