



Burnt Hills–Ballston Lake (BHBL) Girls Softball

2026 Recreational League – Minors Division Rules

The Minors Division is designed to bridge the gap between Instructional play and full USA Softball Rules. Emphasis is placed on skill development, game awareness, sportsmanship, and safe competitive play.

1. Safety & Weather

- At the first sign of visible lightning or the sound of thunder, all play must be immediately suspended for a minimum of thirty (30) minutes.
- The 30-minute clock resets with any additional lightning or thunder.
- Fielding masks are required for all defensive players.
- Anyone under the age of 18 MUST wear a catcher's mask when warming up a catcher, whether on the field or behind the dugouts.

2. Game Rules & Regulations

- All games will be played according to USA Softball rules, except as noted in this document.
- The batting order will consist of all players present for that game.
- Players arriving late will be added to the bottom of the batting order.
- An eleven-inch (11") softball will be used.
- Pitching distance is thirty-five (35) feet.
- All pitchers must start from the pitcher's mound.
- The Infield Fly Rule will NOT be enforced.

Defensive Alignment (10 Players):

- Pitcher
- Catcher
- Four (4) infielders
- Four (4) outfielders
- Outfielders must remain on the outfield grass until the ball is hit.
- Full catcher's gear is mandatory for any player playing the catcher position.

3. Base Running & Stealing

- Stealing is permitted on all pitches.
- Base runners must remain in contact with the base until the pitcher releases the ball.

Look-Back Rule:

- Runners must immediately return to the last base, or
- Advance directly to the next base without stopping

- Failure to do so results in an out.

4. Dropped Third Strike Rule

- When first base is unoccupied, or
- When there are two (2) outs

5. Run Limit Per Half Inning

- Each team may score a maximum of four (4) runs per half inning.
- Once the fourth (4th) run has scored, the half inning shall immediately end.
- The opposing team will then take its turn at bat.
- The run limit applies separately to each half inning and to both teams equally.

6. Scoring & Time Limits

- In the last declared inning, if a team is trailing by four (4) or more runs, that inning will be played with no run limit.
- No new inning may start after one (1) hour and twenty (20) minutes.

7. General Rules & Sportsmanship

- No jewelry may be worn on the field.
- All hair past shoulder length must be securely tied back.
- Players and coaches will line up at home plate to shake hands following the game.

Bat Safety Rule:

- First offense: Warning
- Second offense: Batter is declared out

Post-Game Field Responsibilities:

- Rake and level home plate
- Rake the pitcher's mound
- Rake base paths
- Return equipment to storage
- Ensure all equipment is secured

8. Final Authority

- Umpires
- BHBL league officials
- Player safety, sportsmanship, and development remain top priorities.

League Philosophy

- Instruction
- Teamwork
- Sportsmanship
- Goal: Build confidence in pitching and hitting in a safe environment.