

NBIAA

Northern Burlington Instructional Athletic Association
P.O. Box 334, Columbus, New Jersey 08022

2012 Minor Softball Rules (3rd, 4th & 5th grades, 9-11 years old) *Northern Burlington Babe Ruth Softball League*

GOAL: To instruct the fundamentals of the game of softball to nine and ten year old children, while providing time for them to recreate and have fun.

Playing Rules: As adopted by the Babe Ruth Softball and amended by agreement of participating Township representatives.

Exception to Babe Ruth Softball Rules:

THE GAME

1. **This is a moderate to fast pitch league.** The intention is to get the girls to start playing regular softball.
2. Weeknight games will start at 6:00 PM. Pre-game field warm-ups must be no longer than 10 minutes for each team. The home team has the field 20 minutes before the game starts, while the visiting team has the field 10 minutes before the start of the game.
3. *Both the home and visiting coaches are responsible to verify that the playing conditions are safe both before and during the game. Both coaches must agree conditions are safe before starting or continuing a game.*
4. The home team coach will notify the visiting team coach within a reasonable amount of time if the game must be postponed for weather or field conditions. **A 1-hour minimum is required.** *The Coach of the home team is responsible to reschedule all make-ups before the end of the season. Coaches must notify their coordinator of any postponed games within one week of the cancellation. If no notification is made, both teams will be charged with a loss. If only one team is unavailable within this time frame, it shall be charged with a loss. In this case, the opposing team coach (available to play) must notify their coordinator who must notify the league immediately for verification.*
5. A regulation game will consist of 6 innings. **There will be a 2-hour limit.** After 2 hours of play, the game will end at the completion of the inning being played. Games can end in a tie.
6. Any games called by darkness or poor field conditions, before 4 innings are played, or 3-1/2 innings if the home team is winning, will be re-scheduled and played as a new game.
7. Any games called by darkness or poor field conditions after 4 innings are played, or 3-1/2 innings if the home team is winning, is complete. A game may end in a tie.
8. The half inning ends when 3 outs are made or 5 runs are scored.
9. The field shall be set with anchored bases at 60 feet.
The pitching rubber will be set at 35 feet from home plate.
10. The home team provides 2 game balls. **“Official 11” Standard Softball** will be used.

11. The game will end by a 10 run rule *option, 15 mandatory* after competing a minimum of 4 innings.

PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

1. The entire roster bats from the beginning of the game. Each coach will provide the umpire and opposing coach with the batting order before the start of the game. A player who arrives after the game starts must be placed at the bottom of the batting order. There is no limit on the number of players on a team roster. A minimum of 8 players per team is required starting a game.
2. Ten fielders will consist of the following positions: Pitcher, Catcher, First Baseman, Second Baseman, Shortstop, Third Baseman, Left Fielder, Center Fielder, Right Fielder, and Short Fielder. The outfielders and short fielder can be positioned anywhere within the boundaries of the outfield. The outfield must be designated as the outfields grass if the infield is dirt. If no such division exists, the outfield will start at a 15' arc beyond first, second, and third base.
3. Each player in attendance must play a minimum of 2 innings in the field during a game.
4. There is no limit on the amount of times a player can be a defensive substitute.

PITCHING

1. **Rules governing the pitching techniques** are to be taken from the Babe Ruth Softball. **Players at this age need to be taught the proper techniques as described in the Babe Ruth Softball rulebook. Keep in mind we want to develop pitcher at this age group.**
2. All pitchers will pitch from a rubber at 35 feet.
3. **The pitcher will be allowed a maximum of 3 innings where balls and strikes shall be called. Therefore walks and strikeouts will occur. The pitcher can only return to pitch one time, with a maximum of 3 innings per game. One pitch in an inning is considered an inning.**
4. **A pitcher must be removed after hitting a second batsman with a pitch in an inning. The pitcher may re-enter in the following inning.**
5. The strike zone is the front of the armpit to the top of the knees when a batter assumes a natural stance.

BATTING AND BASE RUNNING

1. The batter and all runners must wear a helmet at the start of each pitch. The batter or runner must request and receive a time out to retrieve a lost helmet before the start of the next play.
2. One warning will be issued to the team whose first batter throws a bat. If any other violations occur by that team, the batter is called out.
3. Sliding is optional. However, a non-sliding runner cannot crash into a fielder attempting to make a play. **No**, headfirst slides are allowed at any base. If either of these occurs, the umpire will declare a dead ball and the base runner are called out.
4. Base stealing is permitted the entire season. Stealing will be limited to **3** per inning plus **1** successful steal of home per inning for a total of 4 steals. If an attempt is made to throw out a runner stealing third and an overthrow occurs, the runner may advance to home even if there has been 1 successful steal of home. Base runners may not leave the base until the ball crosses the plate.
5. **After the ball is put in play** and the opposing pitcher has possession of the ball (within the 8' radius around the pitching rubber) the base runner(s) cannot advance if on a base. **Runners who are less than half way between bases must return to the last base because the ball is now dead! If the ball is outside the 8' radius the ball remains live and in play. Stealing is permitted between the catcher/pitcher exchange. However, stealing of home is not permitted if 1 successful attempt has been made.**

6. The "third drop strike" rule is not in effect. A batter is automatically out even if the catcher drops a third strike.
7. Bunting is permitted throughout the season.

FOOTWEAR

1. Plastic spikes or cleats are allowed, but not mandatory.
2. Metal spikes or cleats are not permitted.

COACHES

1. Manager/Coaches: There should be one Manager, two Coaches, and one score keeper on the bench. Managers and Coaches should wear a uniform or shirt that represents their township and identifies them as a manager or coach.
2. All coaches should be Rutgers SAFETY trained and should pass the on-line Babe Ruth Baseball coach certification course.

UMPIRES

1. ***If umpires from the league are not available***, both the home and visiting teams should provide one "volunteer" umpire. If the "volunteer" umpires are not available, one coach from each team will assume the role of umpires. All umpire rulings are final. The league will not consider any game protests.

An effort by the league to have trained youth umpires at the Minor level is in place. This depends on availability, but the league will endeavor to schedule at least one umpire for these games.

UN-SPORTSMAN LIKE CONDUCT

1. Team coaches are responsible for the conduct of their players and spectators. Taunting is strictly prohibited. The offended team coach will discuss with the umpire any incidence felt to be offensive. If the umpire concurs, a team warning will be issued. Further offenses by that team will result in ejection of the player(s), or coach (es) from the game or field by the umpire decision.

PLAYOFF AND CHAMPIONSHIP GAMES

1. Regular season won/lost records will determine playoff seedings. Records will be based on a minimum of 12 games. W=5 pts., T=3 pts. and L=1 pt. The highest ranked team will be the home team.
2. Score books must be maintained for every game.
3. The home team coach will notify *Their Sports Coordinator* with the results of each game.
4. ***Rule 11 under "the game" is not effective in playoffs. The 2-hour limit is not in effect during playoffs, the game will continue until a winner is declared.***
5. During playoffs both coaches and parent umpires will meet at home plate before the game begins and go over rulings and call that are to be made. They will go over what is considered a ball and a strike and all must agree before the start of the game. Once this is done **NO ONE** is allowed to question or complain about calls made by the umpire. ***All umpire rulings are final.*** The league will not consider any game protests.