GENERAL RULES - T-Ball, Baseball & Softball

City of Princeton Youth Sports

Official **NFHS Baseball** & **USA Softball** Rules will be used along with the league rules as set forth in this document.

- **GAME BALLS:** Home Team will furnish 2 game balls of appropriate size that meet current guidelines.
- **SCOREKEEPER:** Home Team will be responsible for furnishing an official score keeper. In case of a neutral site please see who is listed as home team on the schedule.
- **BAT REGULATIONS:** All bats must be stamped by 1 of the following: ASA/USA, USSSA or BBCOR.
- **PROTEST:** Protests will be allowed for rule interpretation only. No protest will be allowed on umpire judgement calls. To file a protest, the official protest form must be submitted before the end of the game. The game will proceed, and the protest will be reviewed by the Parks Director within 48 hours. Email form to: Jsexton@Princetontx.us. A $100 protest fee will apply. Click the following link to access the form: Protest Form
- **EJECTION:** If a coach, parent, or fan is ejected from a game by an official, the associated player will also be removed, and both must leave the premises immediately. Non-compliance or engaging in verbal or threatening behavior may lead to immediate removal and an indefinite suspension from league events, subject to review by the Parks & Recreation Director. Following ejection, the coach, parent, or fan will be suspended from attending the next two games, while the player will not face additional suspension. Ejection of a player results in a two-game suspension. A second ejection will lead to removal from the league for up to one calendar year.
- **PLAYERS:** Teams may play with 8 players but an out will be taken for the 9th player in the lineup. A team forfeits if they have 7 or less players 10 minutes after official game time. Forfeit score is recorded as 6-0.
- **PLAY TIME:** Every rostered player present must participate in each game for a minimum of ONE defensive inning.
- **PLAYER ELIGIBLITY:** Player's age must be within the eligibility range provided for each division. Any player with a classification ranking of AA or higher shall NOT play for any team that is not within their specific ISD or residence. Players may only be assigned to one team roster.
- **GUEST PLAYERS:** Up to (2) guest players may be used and must be from another team in your town. They must wear their team's uniform and can only play to bring your team up to 9 players, (10 players for 6U & 8U). If a team has 9 players by regulation start time, guest players may not be used. Guest players may only play an outfield position and must bat at the bottom of the lineup. Guest players must be declared at Home Plate meeting with both coaches and officials. A player who is participating in a higher-level division during the season is not permitted to guest play in a lower-level division.
- **PLAYER INJURY:** Player injuries will not count as an out. The injured player may be removed and replaced, however if removing the player reduces the team to 8 players, an out will be enforced.
- **THROWN BATS:** the first offense will result in a team warning; the second offense will result in the batter being called out.
- **WEATHER:** If a regular season game is called because of weather, or other unexpected reasons, the game is considered complete if 2 full innings were played or a total of 30 minutes was played for 6U & 8U and 40 minutes for 10U-14U.
- **ENDING A GAME:** No new inning will begin with less than 5 minutes remaining IF either team is mathematically eliminated from scoring enough runs to win or tie. Regular season games that are tied after time expires and the

home team has batted will be recorded as a tie. Tie breaker rules will only apply during the post season tournament.

- **TOURNAMENT RULES:** Regular season rules remain in effect throughout the tournament except for the following.
    - Tie Breakers and Overtime: In the event of a tie at the end of regulation, overtime will be played with bases loaded (last 3 batters), starting with 1 out. Overtime periods will continue until a winner is determined.
    - Full Game Completion: All games must reach full completion, including those affected by weather-related cancellations or delays.

4U T-BALL SPECIFIC RULES

- Ball: Official League Baseball
- Game Time: 2 Full Innings
- Base Distance: 55'
- Pitching Distance: 35'
- Fair Ball Arc: There shall be a ten (10) foot arc drawn from first (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. A batted ball must go past this line to be fair
- There will be no catcher and no officials
- Full defensive team shall play in the field
- The defensive player listed as pitcher shall stay in contact with the pitchers' plate until the ball is hit
- Two defensive coaches shall be allowed on the field of play
- Offensive coach will assist with adjusting the tee
- The batting order shall constitute all present players on the team roster at the beginning of the game. Late arrivals shall be inserted at the bottom of the batting order. All players on the roster shall bat before returning to the top of the batting order
- A batter shall receive a maximum of three (3) swings to put the ball in play. If the ball is not put into play after the 3rd swing the runner will still advance to 1st base
- Outs are not applied. Even if an out is made runner will still continue to run bases until they've reached home plate
- **ALL TEAMS MUST BAT THE FULL ROSTER**
- Runners cannot advance any base on an overthrow
- Runners shall not lead-off or steal bases
- Will play 2 full innings with each team batting their full roster each time
- No score is kept

6U T-BALL SPECIFIC RULES

Official play will be governed by **NFHS Baseball** except where the below mentioned league rules will apply.

- Ball: Official League Baseball
- Game Time: 55 Minutes
- Base Distance: 60'
- Pitching Distance: 35'
- Fair Ball Arc: There shall be a ten (10) foot arc drawn from first (1st) baseline to third (3rd) baseline in front of home plate. A batted ball must go past this line to be fair. If the fair ball arc is not clearly identified, it will be up to the umpire's discretion to decide whether a ball is fair or foul.
- Runs: 5 (per half inning).
- The catcher shall wear a catcher's helmet with mask. Batting helmet with facemask is acceptable
- Facemask is recommended for the player in the pitcher position, but is not required
- Ten (10) defensive players shall play in the field with four (4) outfielders. The fourth (4th) outfielder shall not assume an infield position. All outfielders shall stay behind the baseline. If a team is playing with 8 players only the 9th player is considered an out in the lineup. 10th player is NOT an out
- The defensive player listed as pitcher shall stay in contact with the pitchers' plate until the ball is hit
- One defensive coach shall be allowed on the field of play
- Offensive coach will assist with adjusting the tee. Tee must be positioned directly on top of existing home plate
- The Infield Fly Rule shall not be in effect at any time
- The batting order shall constitute all present players on the team roster at the beginning of the game. Late arrivals shall be inserted at the bottom of the batting order. All players on the roster shall bat before returning to the top of the batting order
- Teams may use free substitution on defense, but the batting order shall remain the same
- Bunting shall not be allowed
- **ALL TEAMS MUST BAT THE FULL ROSTER**
- Batter receives a maximum of 3 swings to put the ball in play or be called out. No additional swings on foul balls.
- Runners shall not lead-off or steal bases. A runner is out for leaving the base before the ball is hit
- The pitcher must attempt to throw to 1st and is not allowed to run down a player advancing to 1st base. Rolling the ball is **not** permitted
- Umpires shall call "Time" after every play and declare the ball dead. "Time" shall be called as soon as runners are no longer attempting to advance. "Time" does not have to be called by the defense for the purpose of this rule. When a runner stands off a base and "jukes" or "feints" back and forth, this is to be interpreted as "not attempting to advance"

8U BASEBALL COACH PITCH SPECIFIC RULES

Official play will be governed by **NFHS Baseball** except where the below mentioned league rules will apply.

- Ball: Official League Baseball
- Game Time: 55 Minutes finish the inning
- Base Distance: 60'
- Pitching Distance: 38' - The pitching coach shall keep one foot on the pitching rubber
- Runs: 5 (per half inning)
- Coach Pitcher Rules:
    - Once the pitching coach has delivered the pitch, they may no longer coach the batter or runner.
    - The pitching coach shall position self as not to be an obstruction to the defensive team on any possible play once the ball has been hit. Penalty: If a coach violates this rule after the ball is pitched, obstruction shall be called. If a coach violates this rule before the ball is pitched, First Offense: Warning; Second Offense: Removal of coach as the pitcher for the remainder of the game.
    - When a batted ball hits the Pitching Coach, the following shall apply: If in the Umpire's judgment, the coach did not make a legitimate attempt to avoid contact, the batter is declared out and no runners shall advance. If in the Umpire's judgment, the coach did make a legitimate attempt to avoid contact, the ball becomes dead and a no-pitch is declared.
    - The Pitching Coach shall be an adult at least eighteen (18) years of age.
- The catcher shall receive the pitch in the catcher's box in a normal baseball manner
- Ten (10) defensive players shall play in the field with four (4) outfielders. The fourth (4th) outfielder shall not assume an infield position. All outfielders shall stay behind the baseline. If a team is playing with 8 players only the 9th player is considered an out in the lineup. 10th player is NOT an out
- The defensive player listed as pitcher shall not leave the pitching circle until the ball is hit. Penalty: The play continues. After the play has ended, the offensive team has the option of taking the result of the play or no-pitch. First Offense: Warning; Second Offense: Removal of player from the pitching position for the remainder of the game
- Defensive coaches shall not be allowed on the field of play and shall coach from the dugout.
- The Infield Fly Rule shall not be in effect at any time
- The batting order shall constitute all present players on the team roster at the beginning of the game. Late arrivals shall be inserted at the bottom of the batting order. All players on the roster shall bat before returning to the top of the batting order
- Teams may use free substitution on defense, but the batting order shall remain the same. Bunting shall not be allowed
- The batter shall receive a maximum of six (6) pitches or three (3) swinging strikes. Unlimited Fouls.
- Runners shall not lead-off or steal bases. A runner is out for leaving the base before the ball is hit or reaches home plate

- A courtesy runner for catcher of only the previous inning may be used. The courtesy runner shall be the player that made the previous out. If no outs have been recorded in the game, the courtesy runner shall be the previous batter not on base. If the team batting has not played defense yet and a courtesy runner is used for a player, the player that was run for must assume the catching position the next inning. This scenario only applies in the first inning for the visiting team

- Umpires shall call “Time” after every play and declare the ball dead. “Time” shall be called as soon as the all runners are not attempting to advance. “Time” does not have to be called by the defense for the purpose of this rule. When a runner stands off a base and “jukes” or “feints” back and forth, this is to be interpreted as “not attempting to advance”

10U BASEBALL SPECIFIC RULES

Official play will be governed by **NFHS Baseball** except where the below mentioned league rules will apply.

- Ball: Official League Baseball
- Game Time: 80 Minutes or 6 innings
- Base Distance: 65'
- Pitching Distance: 46'
- Runs: 5 (per half inning)
- Tight Bases: No
- Stealing: Yes
- Dropped third strike: Yes
- Infield Fly Rule: In effect
- Balk Rule: 1 warning per pitcher
- Hit By Pitch: If a pitcher hits 3 batters in one inning or 4 batters total during the game, the pitcher must be removed from the pitcher position
- Once a pitcher is removed from the pitcher position, they may not re-enter as a pitcher for the remainder of the game
- Game run rule (mercy rule): 15 runs after 3 complete innings, 8 runs after 4 complete innings
- No Slashing: Squaring to bunt to entice the infielders to charge in toward the hitter to field the bunt, then drawing back the bat and swinging away full force. 1st Offense: Player is called out. Warning to Coach. 2nd Offense: Player & Coach are ejected.

League Age	Daily Max (Pitches)	Required Rest (Pitches)	Required Rest (Pitches)	Required Rest (Pitches)	Required Rest (Pitches)	Required Rest (Pitches)	Weekly Max (Pitches)
		0 Days	1 Day	2 days	3 Days	4 Days	
9-10	75*	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+	75*
11-12	85*	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+	100*
13-14	95*	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+	125*

* If a pitcher reaches a day(s) of rest threshold imposed for his/her league age while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any one of the following conditions occurs: 1.That batter reaches base; 2. That batter is put out; 3. The third out is made to complete the half-inning. The pitcher will only be required to observe the calendar day(s) of rest for the threshold he/she reached during that at-bat, provided the coach 'declared' this will be the last batter faced for that pitcher prior to reaching the day(s) of rest threshold and the pitcher is removed before delivering a pitch to another batter.

12U BASEBALL SPECIFIC RULES

Official play will be governed by **NFHS Baseball** except where the below mentioned league rules will apply.

- Ball: Official League Baseball
- Game Time: 90 Minutes or 6 innings
- Base Distance: 70'
- Pitching Distance: 50'
- Runs: 7 (per half inning)
- Tight Bases: No
- Stealing: Yes
- Dropped third strike: Yes
- Infield Fly Rule: In effect
- Balk Rule: In effect
- Hit By Pitch: If a pitcher hits 3 batters in one inning or 4 batters total during the game, the pitcher must be removed from the pitcher position
- Once a pitcher is removed from the pitcher position, they may not re-enter as a pitcher for the remainder of the game
- Game run rule (mercy rule): 15 runs after 3 complete innings, 8 runs after 4 complete innings
- No Slashing: Squaring to bunt to entice the infielders to charge in toward the hitter to field the bunt, then drawing back the bat and swinging away full force. 1st Offense: Player is called out. Warning to Coach. 2nd Offense: Player & Coach are ejected

League Age	Daily Max (Pitches)	Required Rest (Pitches)	Required Rest (Pitches)	Required Rest (Pitches)	Required Rest (Pitches)	Required Rest (Pitches)	Weekly Max (Pitches)
		0 Days	1 Day	2 days	3 Days	4 Days	
9-10	75*	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+	75*
11-12	85*	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+	100*
13-14	95*	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+	125*

* If a pitcher reaches a day(s) of rest threshold imposed for his/her league age while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any one of the following conditions occurs: 1.That batter reaches base; 2. That batter is put out; 3. The third out is made to complete the half-inning. The pitcher will only be required to observe the calendar day(s) of rest for the threshold he/she reached during that at-bat, provided the coach 'declared' this will be the last batter faced for that pitcher prior to reaching the day(s) of rest threshold and the pitcher is removed before delivering a pitch to another batter.

14U BASEBALL SPECIFIC RULES

Official play will be governed by **NFHS Baseball** except where the below mentioned league rules will apply.

- Ball: Official League Baseball
- Game Time: 90 Minutes or 6 innings
- Base Distance: 90'
- Pitching Distance: 60'
- Runs: 7 (per half inning)
- Tight Bases: No
- Stealing: Yes
- Dropped third strike: Yes
- Infield Fly Rule: In effect
- Balk Rule: In effect
- Game run rule (mercy rule): 15 runs after 3 complete innings, 8 runs after 4 complete innings
- No Slashing: Squaring to bunt to entice the infielders to charge in toward the hitter to field the bunt, then drawing back the bat and swinging away full force. 1st Offense: Player is called out. Warning to Coach. 2nd Offense: Player & Coach are ejected
- Hit By Pitch: If a pitcher hits 3 batters in one inning or 4 batters total during the game, the pitcher must be removed from the pitcher position
- Once a pitcher is removed from the pitcher position, they may not re-enter as a pitcher for the remainder of the game

League Age	Daily Max (Pitches)	Required Rest (Pitches)	Required Rest (Pitches)	Required Rest (Pitches)	Required Rest (Pitches)	Required Rest (Pitches)	Weekly Max (Pitches)
		0 Days	1 Day	2 days	3 Days	4 Days	
9-10	75*	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+	75*
11-12	85*	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+	100*
13-14	95*	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+	125*

* If a pitcher reaches a day(s) of rest threshold imposed for his/her league age while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any one of the following conditions occurs: 1.That batter reaches base; 2. That batter is put out; 3. The third out is made to complete the half-inning. The pitcher will only be required to observe the calendar day(s) of rest for the threshold he/she reached during that at-bat, provided the coach 'declared' this will be the last batter faced for that pitcher prior to reaching the day(s) of rest threshold and the pitcher is removed before delivering a pitch to another batter.

8U SOFTBALL COACH PITCH SPECIFIC RULES

Official play will be governed by USA Softball Rules except where the below mentioned league rules will apply.

- Ball: 11" Little League Softball
- Game Time: 55 Minutes finish the inning
- Base Distance: 60' – Double base to be used at first
- Pitching Distance: 35'
- Runs: 5 (per half inning)
- Pitching circle to measure 16 ft in diameter
- Player in the pitcher position is required to wear a fielding facemask
- Coach Pitcher Rules:
    - Once the pitching coach has delivered the pitch, they may no longer coach the batter or runner.
    - The pitching coach shall position self as not to be an obstruction to the defensive team on any possible play once the ball has been hit. Penalty: If a coach violates this rule after the ball is pitched, obstruction shall be called. If a coach violates this rule before the ball is pitched, First Offense: Warning; Second Offense: Removal of coach as pitcher for remainder of the game.
    - When a batted ball hits the Pitching Coach, the following shall apply: If in the Umpire's judgment, the coach did not make a legitimate attempt to avoid contact, the batter is declared out and no runners shall advance. If in the Umpire's judgment, the coach did make a legitimate attempt to avoid contact, the ball becomes dead and a no-pitch is declared.
    - The Pitching Coach shall be an adult at least eighteen (18) years of age.
    - Coach Pitcher may pitch from anywhere within the 16' circle as long as his/her foot is on or in front of the halfway line. The coach pitcher must always keep at least one foot within the 16' circle when ball is released.
- Ten (10) defensive players shall play in the field with four (4) outfielders. The fourth (4th) outfielder shall not assume an infield position. All outfielders shall stay behind the baseline. If a team is playing with 8 players only the 9th player is considered an out in the lineup. 10th player is NOT an out.
- The batter shall receive a maximum of six (6) pitches or three (3) swinging strikes. Unlimited Fouls.
- Run ahead rules will be at discretion of the coaches. If losing team wants to play out clock without adding to the score and both coaches agree, umpire will finish out time.
- A play may be considered dead once the defensive pitcher has control of the ball within the 16' circle unless making a play.
- Base Stealing is not allowed.

10U SOFTBALL MODIFIED KID PITCH SPECIFIC RULES

Official play will be governed by USA Softball Rules except where the below mentioned league rules will apply.

- Ball: 11" Little League Softball
- Game Time: 70 Minutes finish the inning
- Base Distance: 60' – Double base to be used at first
- Pitching Distance: 35'
- Runs: 5 (per half inning)
- Pitching circle to measure 16 ft in diameter
- Player in the pitcher position is required to wear a fielding facemask
- Ten (10) defensive players shall play in the field with four (4) outfielders. The fourth (4th) outfielder shall not assume an infield position. All outfielders shall stay behind the baseline.
- Open substitutions
- Run ahead rules will be at discretion of the coaches. If losing team wants to play out clock without adding to the score and both coaches agree. Umpire will finish out time.
- The last batted out player may pinch run for a player who is obviously injured. The injured player may re-enter the game.

Pitching

Player pitcher (these rules are in affect when a player pitcher is pitching)

1. If the pitcher delivers 4 balls with less than 3 strikes, a coach-pitcher of the hitting team will begin pitching with the existing strike count.
2. No bases will be awarded to the batter unless hit-by-the pitch of a player-pitcher.
3. There is no limit on fouled third strikes.

Coach pitcher (these rules are in affect when a coach pitcher is pitching)

1. A pitch delivered with an arch exceeding six (6) feet above the ground will result in a dead ball strike.
2. Each pitch delivered will count as a strike.
3. There is no limit on fouled third strikes.
4. The batter will **not** be awarded a base if hit by a pitch.
5. While a coach is pitching…
   - -the player pitcher will have at least one foot inside the pitching circle
   - -the player pitcher will not interfere with the delivery of the coach's pitch,
   - -the coach must pitch with at least one foot in contact with the pitcher's rubber.
   - -the coach must pitch underhand, but no other formalities apply to the coach pitcher.
   - -the coach should make every attempt to not interfere with fielding or throwing of the defensive team.
   - -once the ball is in play, the coach pitcher should leave the field as quickly as possible to avoid interfering with the play.

-the umpire may make the interference call in instances where the coach pitcher blatantly interferes with the play. This will result in a dead ball, the batter being called out and all base runners returning to the base they occupied when the pitch was made.

6. Illegal pitches will be called.

Base Stealing

1. Base stealing is **not** allowed when a coach pitcher is pitching. Base stealing is permitted only during player pitching.
2. Stealing home is **not** permitted.
3. Players may advance as far as third base on an overthrow of any base during a steal attempt, but cannot go home on an overthrow of any base during a steal attempt as stealing home is **not** permitted.

Example… The base runner is on 1st base. She leaves the base once the ball is released from the player pitcher's hand in an attempt to steal 2nd base. The catcher's throw to 2nd base does not reach 2nd base, whether this is an under throw, over throw or wild throw does **not** matter. The base runner can continue onto 3rd base at her own peril, but cannot advance home.

4. The only ways to proceed home from 3rd base is either on a hit ball or bases loaded hit-by-pitch batter from a player pitcher.
5. The "last base acquired" rule is **NOT** in play during steals or attempted steals.

Base Running

On a batted ball bases are open and the runners are free to circle the bases until the pitcher has control of the ball in the pitching circle and is not in an attacking position.

Examples of "attacking positions" are: ball in hand while looking at a base runner, ball in hand in glove while looking at a base runner, ball in hand in throwing position.

Examples of NON-"attacking positions" are: ball in hand or ball in hand in glove while not looking at base runners or while looking directly at home plate area

RULES *NOT* IN PLAY

1. Dropped Third Strike
2. Infield Fly Rule
3. Continuation Rule (there are no walks)

12U SOFTBALL SPECIFIC RULES

Official play will be governed by USA Softball Rules except where the below mentioned league rules will apply.

- Ball: 12" Little League Softball
- Game Time: 70 Minutes finish the inning
- Base Distance: 60' – Double base to be used at first
- Pitching Distance: 40'
- Runs: 5 (per half inning)
- Pitching circle to measure 16 ft in diameter
- Player in the pitcher position is required to wear a fielding facemask
- Illegal pitches will be called
- Run ahead rules will be in effect
- Third Strike Rule – In Effect – Batter can advance on dropped third strike unless first base is occupied
- Infield fly rule is in effect
- Base stealing is allowed

14U SOFTBALL SPECIFIC RULES

Official play will be governed by USA Softball Rules except where the below mentioned league rules will apply.

- Ball: 12" Little League Softball
- Game Time: 70 Minutes finish the inning
- Base Distance: 60' – Double base to be used at first
- Pitching Distance: 43'
- Player in the pitcher position is required to wear a fielding facemask
- Runs: 5 (per half inning)
- Pitching circle to measure 16 ft in diameter
- Illegal pitches will be called
- Run ahead rules will be in effect
- Third Strike Rule – In Effect – Batter can advance on dropped third strike unless first base is occupied
- Infield fly rule is in effect
- Base stealing is allowed