



MANDATORY RULES FOR ALL COACHES

ALL Coaches:

First and foremost, the League wishes to thank all coaches for donating their time and energy to coaching for the NSPL. Your efforts are much appreciated by players, parents and the NSPL family!

In general, games that move along quickly, at a brisk pace, are preferred by parents, coaches and players. Please do your best to have the field and your team ready at the start of the game and keep warm up time between innings down to a minimum.

All coaches (Head Coaches and Assistant Coaches) acknowledge and agree to coach in accordance with the NSPL Mission Statement which is, as follows:

“NSPL is dedicated to helping girls enjoy the game of softball, developing their skills, learning about good sportsmanship, making new friends and having fun in a healthy, outdoor, athletic setting. The aim is to accomplish this through positive reinforcement and fundamental training such that it builds confidence and positive attitudes.”

Pre-season:

1. All coaches agree to read, and comply with, the League’s “Code of Conduct” which is posted on the League’s website.
 2. All coaches agree to remind players and parent about the “Code of Conduct” which is posted on the League’s website.
 3. Coaches agree to review, understand and follow all the rules for their Division.
 4. Coaches must attend coach reviews/clinics as specified by the Board of Directors.
 5. Coaches agree to review medical information/food allergies for their team’s players (from the registration data) and be alert to any special medical needs of their players.
 6. Coaches are asked to enforce these rules at all of their games and practices.
 - No smoking or other use of tobacco is permitted on the playing field side of the paved driveway that provides access to Troop Field.
 - No DOGS or pets of any kind (excluding service animals) on the playing field or on the driveway
 - Park only in designated spots—special note for the no parking area across from the snack bar
 7. A person can be head coach of **only one (1)** team within NSPL. If needed, a person can be an assistant coach for an additional team within NSPL, with approval by Board of Directors. Please note no special scheduling considerations will be given.
 8. At the time of player assignments or league draft each team can have no more than one (1) head coach and two (2) assistant coaches. Additional coaches may be added to a team, if needed, **AFTER** the teams are assigned or drafted
 9. Head coaches and assistant coaches are assigned by the Division Head. Head coaches may request up to two (2) assistant coaches but the Division Head has the final say on team assignments.
 10. Each head coach and assistant coach must complete and send in an appropriate background check as
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specified by the Board of Directors **before they will be assigned to a team** at the draft. A copy of an approved application must be sent to the Division Head or the Vice President.

11. Any coaches added after the draft, must complete and send in an appropriate background check to the Division Head before they can begin coaching – this includes any practices.
12. Evaluations will be held a few weeks before the first game – date to be set by Board of Directors. Draft will follow shortly after – date to be set by Division Head.
 - Coaches may attend evaluations for their own division for observation
 - Coaches are asked to attend evaluations for other divisions and submit their ratings of the players to that Division Head
 - Ratings provided by coaches from the other divisions will be used during your division’s draft.
13. Game schedule will be sent out at the beginning of the season. Games will only be re-scheduled for weather or as specified by the Board of Directors

Game Procedures:

14. Only those coaches/ volunteers who have submitted the required background checks and have been NSPL approved coaches/ are allowed on the field, in the batting cages, or in the dugout – this includes any games or practices.
 15. Coaches are required to submit game results to the Division Head or others, as specified by the League within 2 days.
 16. Pre- and post-game preparation of playing fields is the responsibility of the coaches. Coaches should review the “Field Preparation” instructions on the League’s website under the “Coaches” tab.
 - Home team: field prep before the game
 - Visiting team: raking the fields after the game and removing the bases if you are the last game. (field should be raked even if there is a game after your game)
 - Both teams: pick up any trash in the dugouts/stands and surrounding area
 17. Once coaches start to prepare the field for play, no warm-up practice is allowed on the infield before a game. The outfield area may be used.
 18. Team line up must be presented to the opposing coach before the start of the game. The line-up must include players’ name (first or last is fine) and **PLAYER #**.
 19. Standings (Majors, Juniors, Seniors)
 - Teams are awarded one (1) point for each win and one half (1/2) point for each tie
 - When a tie exists in the standings, the following will be used to decided standings
 - First, head to head records of tied teams.
 - Second, lowest average per game of runs against
 - Third, coin flip
 - For playoffs, the home team will always be the team listed higher in the standings (calculated at the end of the regular season) per the above criteria.
 20. Regarding inclement weather --- coaches should assume games are “on” unless it is posted on the
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MANDATORY RULES FOR ALL COACHES

League's website that the fields are closed. If adverse weather conditions arise once the game begins, cancelling play will be determined by the umpire, or if no umpire is present, the coaches.

21. A game must be called if the coaches and/or umpire see lightning
 - All players and spectators must leave the stands and field and seek shelter at once
 - Umpire will decide when it is safe to resume play
 - Umpire is empowered to call a game at any time due to adverse playing conditions.
22. If the umpire fails to report for your game, any mutually agreed upon person may serve as umpire.
23. Call Ups – if coaches know they will be short of players in advance of a particular game, they may call up “Alternate” players from the next lower age division.
 - Each coach must give their Division Head the names of any alternate players who are qualified *and* have parent approval to play in a higher division.
 - A player may only play in one division higher, and may never play in a lower division – regardless of age.
 - No more than three (3) Alternate players per team may be used in a regular season game.
 - The Alternate may not miss her own game.
 - Alternates are called up only to bring a roster to the minimum full playing squad (10 players).
 - The Alternate can only bat at the bottom of the hitting order for that game.
 - If a regular team player shows up late, she enters the game for one of the Alternates after the Alternate player has been permitted to play two (2) full innings.
 - If before the game starts, the team with the alternate player unexpectedly has enough regular players, the call-up should be allowed to play the 2 inning minimum.
 - Before the start of the game, coaches must identify the Alternate(s) to the opposing coach.
 - Alternate from a division where sliding is not allowed, will *not* be required to slide in the upper division. This must be mentioned at the start of the game to the umpire and the opposing coach.
24. Each roster player present at the start of a game must play a minimum of three (3) innings (or ½ the game in a shortened game) defensively. If not, the game will be forfeited.

Miscellaneous:

25. Playoffs will be held for the Majors, Juniors and Intermediate divisions at the end of the season. Please see the playoff rules for supplemental information.
 26. Only registered players of NSPL are allowed to participate in the game, pre-game warm-ups or practices.
 27. **ONLY ASA APPROVED NON-COMPOSITE BATS ARE ALLOWED AT ANYTIME AT NSPL.**
 - This includes games or practice.
 - Only single walled, one-piece construction bats are allowed to be used.
 - No composite bat of any type, no hybrid or half and half technology bat and no bat with fiber/composite reinforced core or handle is to be used.
 - If a batter enters the batter's box with a composite/illegal bat, the batter will be out.
 - If a batter makes contact with a pitched ball using a composite/illegal bat, the batter is immediately called out and the runners are returned to their bases.
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MANDATORY RULES FOR ALL COACHES

28. Helmets must be worn by batter and base runners during all games and practices.
29. Face masks are **strongly recommended** to be worn by all infielders, including pitcher. They will be required in majors, juniors, and seniors beginning with the 2020 season.
30. All other ASA/USA Softball coaches' rules will apply unless a conflicting rule is set forth in this document. Those rules in this document take precedence over the ASA/USA Softball rules.



T-Ball Division Rules

1. Games length

- Three (3) innings or one hour, whichever comes first

2. Game Play

- No score keeping of any games.
- No outs are recorded
- Stress fundamentals – this is an instructional division.
- Play may be delayed any time for instruction/coaching. (use discretion concerning frequent stoppages)
- Only two (2) defensive coaches, may be positioned on the field to instruct the players during the game.

3. Equipment

- Ball is to be an 11” Incrediball supplied by the league.
- Regulation softball bats or league supplied bats – No composite or baseball bats

4. Field dimensions

- Base distance to be forty (40) feet.

5. Defense

- No pitching by players.
- Players may play one defensive position for no more than two (2) innings per game.
- A maximum of seven (6) infielders will be used in the field:
 - 1 pitcher (fielding only) / no catcher
 - 5 infielders (first, second, third base, short stop, short field)
 - Balance of team are to be outfielders
- Fielders may make plays at any base but the runners will always be safe

6. Offense

- Each team member will bat in order, using all team members in the lineup.
- All batters will advance ONE base per at bat, last batter runs through all bases
- The maximum number of batters in an inning will be the highest number of players present on *either team*.
- Players not on defense must stay behind the fences at all times unless batting or base running.
- The inning ends after the maximum number of batters have batted.
- The offensive coach must inform the defensive team when the last is at the plate.
- Batting
 - Helmets must be worn by batter and base runners during games and practices.
 - Start of season - a batting Tee is to be used for all innings.
 - Offensive coach may begin to pitch to their batters with permission of Division Head
 - All batters should be attempting to hit from pitched ball by mid-season
 - A Tee should be used after two (2) strikes.
 - There will be no strikeouts – if a batter has difficulty, a coach may assist.
 - No base on balls will be awarded.
 - No outs are recorded

7. Base Running

- Leads are NOT permitted - runners must stay in contact with the base until the ball is hit.
- Each runner may only advance one base per play, last batter runs around the bases to home

8. Miscellaneous

- Only those coaches/ volunteers who have submitted the required background checks and have been
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T-Ball Division Rules

NSPL approved coaches/ are allowed on the field, in the batting cages, or in the dugout – this includes any games or practices

- No smoking or other use of tobacco is permitted on the playing field side of the paved driveway that provides access to Troop Field.
 - No dog or pets of any kind (excluding service animals) are allowed on the field or in the areas surrounding the field – this includes any games or practices.
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Minors Division Rules

1. Players

- Ten (10) players are to be fielded
- Game may be played with a minimum of seven (7) players.

2. Equipment

- Face masks are **strongly recommended** to be worn by all infielders, including pitcher. They will be required in majors, juniors, and seniors beginning with the 2020 season.
- Helmets must be worn by batter and base runners during games and practices
- **ONLY ASA APPROVED NON-COMPOSITE BATS ARE ALLOWED AT ANYTIME AT NSPL.**
 - This includes games or practice.
 - Only single walled, one-piece construction bats are allowed to be used.
 - No composite bat of any type, no hybrid or half and half technology bat and no bat with fiber/composite reinforced core or handle is to be used.
 - If a batter enters the batter's box with a composite/illegal bat, the batter will be out.
 - If a batter makes contact with a pitched ball using a composite/illegal bat, the batter is immediately called out and the runners are returned to their bases.

3. Field dimensions

- Base distance to be fifty (50) feet.
- Pitching distance to be thirty-two (32) feet (measured from the back point of the plate to the front of the pitching rubber)
- Ball is to be an 11" Incrediball supplied by the League.

4. Game Length

- Starting time is 6:00pm (weeknights)
- Game will last no more than 6 innings, 5 ½ if the home team is ahead
- A new inning cannot be started after 7:45pm (weeknights)
- A new inning cannot be started 1 hour and 45 minutes after start time (weekend)
- Time limit still in effect even if there is no game after
- Forfeit time is 6:15pm on weeknights or 15 minutes after the scheduled game time for weekend games. If both teams are not prepared to play – both forfeit

5. Ending an inning

- Inning ends after the 10th batter has her at bat or there are three (3) outs, whichever comes first
 - Even in the 6th or final inning
 - The offensive coach must inform the umpire if the 10th batter is at the plate.

6. Defense

- Each player must play a minimum of three (3) innings (or ½ the game if shortened game)
 - Players may play one defensive position for no more than three (3) innings per game.
 - Positions
 - 1 playing pitcher
 - 1 catcher
 - 4 infielders (first, second, third base, short stop)
 - 3 outfielders plus short fielder
 - short fielder must play on the grass not in the infield
 - Pitching
 - Coach Pitching
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Minors Division Rules

- Only coaches may pitch until date decided by Division Head
- Coaches will pitch to their own batter
- Coaches must pitch from inside the circle and be within eight (8) feet of the rubber. Do not get too close to the Hitter. Give the child time to swing.
- **Offensive Coach who is pitching is the one and only umpire.**
- Players at the pitcher position must remain even with the pitching rubber for safety and defensive reasons.
- Child Pitch – once date decided by Division Head
 - Windmill pitching is allowed but not required
 - Offensive coach will start behind the plate to call balls and strikes
 - Once the count reaches 4 balls, the offensive coach will return to mound to pitch to their batter – with the pitcher player remaining in the circle even with the pitching rubber.
 - Strike count remains the same when coach comes into pitch
- A foul ball hit by the batter that goes higher than the batter's head and is caught by the catcher will be an out.

7. Base Running

- Leads are NOT permitted - Runners must stay in contact with the base until the ball is hit.
- Stealing is NOT permitted.
- Dropped 3rd strike is NOT in effect.
- Infield fly rule is NOT in effect.
- Sliding is NOT permitted
- If a pitcher drops the ball during the delivery, no bases are awarded to the runners. Play is dead-unless the ball crosses home plate
- Hit to the Outfield
 - On a ball hit in the air onto the grass in the outfield, runners may advance as many bases as possible until the ball is returned to infield and additional play is not attempted.
 - Some examples of a player NOT making an attempt include: holding the ball over their head; holding ball down by their side; holding ball in their glove. These are gestures which stop play.
 - Infield is defined as inside the baselines – not just the dirt.
- Runners can be out by force/tag, at any base or within any base path. in accordance with USA Softball Rules
- Offensive Coach is the one and only umpire

8. Batting

- Each team member will bat in order, using all team members in the lineup.
 - Strikes will be called and three (3) strikes is an out.
 - No base on balls will be awarded.
 - Pinch runner
 - Catcher courtesy runner is permitted with two (2) outs.
 - Pinch runner must be next available player who made the last out.
 - No other pinch runners are allowed, except for injury
 - Bunting is NOT allowed
 - Each team member will bat in order, using all team members in the lineup
 - Helmets must be worn by batter and base runners during games and practices.
 - Throwing the bat is an automatic warning to both teams, regardless of offending player. Second
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Minors Division Rules

offense is an automatic out to the offending team.

9. Double Base

- Not used in Minors

10. Player arriving late/leaving early

- No penalty for players arriving late or leaving early

11. Cancellations

- Assume game is "on" unless cancelled by the League on the League website.
- Games will be made-up as soon as possible

12. Incomplete Games

- Official game is 4 innings, 3 1/2 if home team is ahead
- If less than 1 COMPLETE inning is played, a full makeup game will be played.
- All other games that exceed 1 inning, but are not official, will be picked up where they left off.
 - Play picks up where it left off with same outs, players on base, and pitch count.
 - If a player cannot make the rescheduled game, their place in the batting order is skipped during the continuation game
 - A player who is added to the make-up game is just added to the bottom of the batting order.

13. Standings

- As there are no wins or losses, standings are not kept
- There are no playoffs

14. Miscellaneous

- Free substitution is permitted throughout the game.
 - Only NSPL approved coaches/volunteers are allowed on the field, in the batting cages, or in the dugout – this includes any games or practices.
 - Only registered players of NSPL are allowed to participate in the game, pre-game warm-ups or practices.
 - No smoking or other use of tobacco is permitted on the playing field side of the paved driveway that provides access to Troop Field.
 - No dog or pets of any kind are allowed on the field or in the areas surrounding the field – this includes any games or practices.
 - Official ASA/USA SOFTBALL rules, adjusted herein, will apply.
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Majors Division Rules

1. Players

- Ten (10) players are to be fielded
- Game may be played with a minimum of seven (7) players.

2. Equipment

- Face masks are **strongly recommended** to be worn by all infielders, including pitcher. They will be required in majors, juniors, and seniors beginning with the 2020 season.
- Helmets must be worn by batter and base runners during games and practices
- Ball is to be 11" regulation softball supplied by the League.
- ONLY ASA APPROVED NON-COMPOSITE BATS ARE ALLOWED AT ANYTIME AT NSPL.
 - This includes games or practice.
 - Only single walled, one-piece construction bats are allowed to be used.
 - No composite bat of any type, no hybrid or half and half technology bat and no bat with fiber/composite reinforced core or handle is to be used.
 - If a batter enters the batter's box with a composite/illegal bat, the batter will be out.
 - If a batter makes contact with a pitched ball using a composite/illegal bat, the batter is immediately called out and the runners are returned to their bases.

3. Field dimensions

- Base distance to be fifty-five (55) feet.
- Pitching distance to be thirty-five (35) feet (from point of plate to front of pitcher's mound)

4. Game Length

- Starting time is 6:00pm (weeknights)
- Game will last no more than 6 innings, 5 ½ if the home team is ahead
- A new inning cannot be started after 7:45pm (weeknights)
- A new inning cannot be started 1 hour and 45 minutes after start time (weekend)
- Time limit still in effect even if there is no game after
- Mercy rule – Game will end if one team is ahead by 15 runs or more after 4 innings (3 ½ innings for the home team).
- Forfeit time is 6:15pm on weeknights or 15 minutes after the scheduled game time for weekend games. If both teams are not prepared to play – both forfeit
- If a new inning is started before the time limit, and in the middle the inning the game is called for darkness or weather the game will be considered complete and the score will revert back to end of the last full inning.
- All regular season games can end in a tie.

5. Ending an inning

- Inning ends once a team has scored five (5) runs or there are three (3) outs, whichever comes first
- In the final inning, the inning ends only after three outs – no run limit in final inning
- Final inning must be identified by coaches prior to the start of that inning

6. Defense

- Each player must play a minimum of three (3) innings (or ½ the game if shortened game)
 - Positions
 - 1 playing pitcher
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Majors Division Rules

- 1 catcher
- 4 infielders (first, second, third base, short stop)
- 3 outfielders plus short fielder
 - short fielder must play on the grass not in the infield
- Pitching
 - Coach pitching is NOT allowed.
 - Windmill pitching is allowed but not required.
 - Pitcher who has accumulated **nine (9) strikeouts** in the current game may NOT continue to pitch for the duration of that game. A strikeout on one batter registered by both pitchers goes to both pitchers.
 - Hit-by-pitch
 - Pitcher hits three (3) batters in the same inning, she may no longer pitch during that inning.
 - Same pitcher hits two (2) batters in any subsequent inning, then she may no longer pitch during that inning.
 - Same pitcher hits another (6th) batter, then she may no longer pitch in that game.
 - A ball which rolls on the ground into a batter is not considered 'Hit-by-pitch'
 - Batter does not advance to 1st unless it was the 4th ball
 - Pitcher is not charged with a hit batter
 - Pitching rules
 - Both feet must start on the pitching rubber with hands apart.
 - Hands must meet to begin motion.
 - One step forward with front foot is permitted.
 - Back foot does not have to remain in contact with the pitching rubber, but may not leave the ground at any point until the ball is released. Back foot may not lift up and replant during the motion.
 - No steps backward off the rubber are permitted.
 - A backward swing of the arm to begin motion is permitted but not required.
 - Only one full circle is permitted.
- A foul ball hit by the batter that goes higher than the batter's head and is caught by the catcher will be an out.
- A fielder may not take a blocking position at any base (this includes the catcher at the plate) unless she is making a play on the runner. A player is considered making a play on the runner when the fielder has possession of the ball or is in the imminent process of receiving a ball thrown to the fielder to tag the runner or the base.

7. Base Running

- Leads are permitted *after* the ball crosses the plate.
 - Sliding is permitted, but not required
 - No headfirst slides
 - Stealing in NOT permitted
 - Dropped 3rd strike is NOT in effect
 - Infield fly rule is NOT in effect.
 - Tagging up on fly balls is allowed
 - Overthrows into the dead ball area—the runner is awarded two (2) bases from the last occupied base when the throw leaves the hand.
 - Runners can advance on overthrows
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Majors Division Rules

- Hit to the Infield/Outfield
 - Runners may advance as many bases as possible until the ball is returned to the control of any player within pitcher's circle and that player is not making an attempt on the runner
 - Some examples of a player NOT making an attempt include: holding ball down by their side or holding ball in their glove. These are gestures which stop play
 - A runner more than ½ way to the next base when the ball is received in the pitcher's circle may continue on to the base. Less than ½ way they are returned to prior base (Umpire discretion)
- Pinch runner
 - Catcher courtesy runner is permitted with two (2) outs.
 - Pinch runner must be next available player who made the last out.
 - No other pinch runners are allowed, except for injury

8. Batting

- Each team member will bat in order, using all team members in the lineup until end of inning
- **5 run rule**
 - Inning ends once a team has scored five (5) runs or there are three (3) outs, whichever comes first
 - In the final inning, the inning ends only after three outs – no run limit in final inning
 - Final inning must be identified by coaches prior to the start of that inning
- Bunting is permitted – Fake bunts are **NOT** allowed
 - If a player shows bunt and then pulls back and swings away, it is a dead ball and the batter is out, regardless of whether or not contact was made with the pitched ball.
- Helmets must be worn by batter and base runners during games and practices.
- Throwing the bat is an automatic warning to both teams, regardless of offending player. Second offense is an automatic out to the offending team.
- Batting out of order
 - Defensive coach must bring it to the attention of the umpire before the first pitch to the next batter
 - Batter who batted out of order will be declared out and any advance or score made because of a ball batted by the improper batter will be nullified
 - Batting order can continue as normal starting with the batter who was skipped

9. Double Base

- A batted ball hitting the white portion of a double base is fair. A batted ball hitting the colored portion of a double base is foul.
- Whenever a play is being made on batter-runner, the defense **MUST** use white portion and batter **MUST** use the colored portion. On extra base hits or balls hit to the outfield, when there is no play being made at the double base, the batter-runner may touch the white or colored portion. Should the batter-runner return, the runner must return to the white portion
- On any force out attempt from the foul side of first base, the defense and the batter-runner can use either the white or colored portion. **NOTE:** This includes overthrows.
- When tagging up on a fly ball, the white portion must be used.

10. Players arriving late/leaving early

- Coaches, **before** the start of the game, must inform any opposing coach of any player(s) who are arriving late or leaving early
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Majors Division Rules

- These players must be placed at the bottom on the batting order
- If the player leaves, for any reason other than injury, without prior notification, it shall be declared an out when the player is scheduled to come up to bat.
- If a call-up is being used for a late arriving player, the regular player cannot enter the game until the call-up player has been permitted to play two (2) full innings.

11. Cancellations

- Assume game is “on” unless cancelled by the League on the League website.
- Games will be made-up as soon as possible

12. Incomplete Games

- Official game is 4 innings, 3 1/2 if home team is ahead
- If less than 1 COMPLETE inning is played, a full makeup game will be played.
- All other games that exceed 1 inning, but are not official, will be picked up where they left off.
 - Same score, outs, bases occupied, and pitch count.
 - If a player cannot make the rescheduled game, their place in the batting order is skipped during the continuation game
 - A player who is added to the make-up game is just added to the bottom of the batting order.

13. Standings

- Teams are awarded one (1) point for each win and one half (1/2) point for each tie
- When a tie exists in the standings, the following will be used to decide standings
 - First, head to head records of tied teams.
 - Second, lowest average per game of runs against
 - Third, coin flip
- For playoffs, the home team will always be the team listed higher in the standings (calculated at the end of the regular season) per the above criteria.

14. Miscellaneous

- Free substitution is permitted throughout the game.
 - Only those coaches/ volunteers who have submitted the required background checks and have been NSPL approved coaches/ are allowed on the field, in the batting cages, or in the dugout – this includes any games or practices
 - Only registered players of NSPL are allowed to participate in the game, pre-game warm-ups or practices.
 - No smoking or other use of tobacco is permitted on the playing field side of the paved driveway that provides access to Troop Field.
 - No dog or pets of any kind (except service animals) are allowed on the field or in the areas surrounding the field – this includes any games or practices.
 - Official ASA/USA SOFTBALL rules, adjusted herein, will apply.
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Juniors Division Rules

1. Players

- Ten (10) players are to be fielded
- Game may be played with a minimum of seven (7) players.

2. Equipment

- Face masks are **strongly recommended** to be worn by all infielders, including pitcher. They will be required in majors, juniors, and seniors beginning with the 2020 season.
- Helmets must be worn by batter and base runners during games and practices
- Ball is to be 12" regulation softball supplied by the League.
- ONLY ASA APPROVED NON-COMPOSITE BATS ARE ALLOWED AT ANYTIME AT NSPL.
 - This includes games or practice.
 - Only single walled, one-piece construction bats are allowed to be used.
 - No composite bat of any type, no hybrid or half and half technology bat and no bat with fiber/composite reinforced core or handle is to be used.
 - If a batter enters the batter's box with a composite/illegal bat, the batter will be out.
 - If a batter makes contact with a pitched ball using a composite/illegal bat, the batter is immediately called out and the runners are returned to their bases.

3. Field dimensions

- Base distance to be sixty (60) feet.
- Pitching distance to be forty (40) feet (from point of plate to front of pitcher's mound)

4. Game Length

- Starting time is 6:00pm (weeknights)
- Game will last no more than 7 innings, 6 ½ if the home team is ahead
- A new inning cannot be started after 8:00pm (weeknights)
- A new inning cannot be started 2 hours after start time (weekend)
- Time limit still in effect even if there is no game after
- Mercy rule – Game will end if one team is ahead by 15 runs or more after 5 innings (4 ½ innings for the home team).
- Forfeit time is 6:15pm on weeknights or 15 minutes after the scheduled game time for weekend games. If both teams are not prepared to play – both forfeit
- If a new inning is started just before the time limit, and in the middle of that inning the game is called for darkness or weather the game will be considered complete and the score will revert back to end of the last full inning.
- All regular season games can end in a tie.

5. Ending an inning

- Inning ends once a team has scored five (5) runs or there are three (3) outs, whichever comes first
- In the final inning, the inning ends only after three outs – no run limit in final inning
- Final inning must be identified by coaches prior to the start of that inning

6. Defense

- Each player must play a minimum of three (3) innings (or ½ the game if shortened game)
 - Positions
 - 1 playing pitcher
 - 1 catcher
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Juniors Division Rules

- 4 infielders (first, second, third base, short stop)
- 3 outfielders plus short fielder
 - short fielder must play on the grass not in the infield
- Pitching
 - Windmill pitching is allowed but not required
 - Pitcher who has accumulated **nine (9) strikeouts** in the current game may NOT continue to pitch for the duration of that game. A strikeout on one batter registered by both pitchers goes to both pitchers.
 - Hit-by-pitch
 - Pitcher hits two batters in the same inning, she may no longer pitch during that inning.
 - Same pitcher hits one batter in any subsequent inning, then she may no longer pitch during that inning.
 - Same pitcher hits another (4th) batter, then she may no longer pitch in that game.
 - Pitching rules
 - Both feet must start on the pitching rubber with hands apart.
 - Hands must meet to begin motion.
 - One step forward with front foot is permitted.
 - Back foot does not have to remain in contact with the pitching rubber, but may not leave the ground at any point until the ball is released. Back foot may not lift up and replant during the motion.
 - No steps backward off the rubber are permitted.
 - A backward swing of the arm to begin motion is permitted but not required.
 - Only one full circle is permitted.
- A foul ball hit by the batter that goes higher than the batter's head and is caught by the catcher will be an out.
- A fielder may not take a blocking position at any base (this includes the catcher at the plate) unless she is making a play on the runner. A player is considered making a play on the runner when the fielder has possession of the ball or is in the imminent process of receiving a ball thrown to the fielder to tag the runner or the base.

7. Base Running

- Leads are permitted after the pitcher releases the ball.
 - Sliding is permitted
 - A player must either slide or give herself up on any play at home plate.
 - Stealing is permitted
 - Three (3) stolen bases per team, per inning
 - One (1) steal home per inning is allowed (included in the 3 steal limit)
 - A double steal (two runners stealing on the same pitch) will count as one stealing event. (Example: Runners on first and second steal on the pitcher's release. This is counted as one (1) steal)
 - Delayed steals are NOT permitted – a runner must leave the base before the ball is on the way back to the **pitcher**
 - If a catcher throws to a base, and there are steals remaining, runners may steal -this is not a delayed steal. (i.e. runner on third can steal home, provided there is a steal to home left, if the catcher chooses to throw to second base)
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Juniors Division Rules

- Only one base per runner - no advances on an overthrow during a steal
- If a team is ahead by ten (10) runs or more they are not permitted to steal until the lead is nine (9) runs or less.
- Continuation steals after a walk are not allowed

- A runner who attempts to steal a base after the maximum number of steals has been reached is at risk of being tagged out by defense. Return to prior base is not guaranteed.
- Umpires are NOT responsible for keeping track of number of steals. It must be kept by both teams.
- Dropped third strike is NOT in effect
- Infield fly rule is NOT in effect.
- Tagging up on fly balls is allowed
- Overthrows into the dead ball area—the runner is awarded two (2) bases from the last occupied base when the throw leaves the hand.
- Runners may advance at will, until umpire calls the play over.
- Pinch runner
 - Catcher courtesy runner is permitted with two (2) outs.
 - Pinch runner must be next available player who made the last out.
 - No other pinch runners are allowed, except for injury

8. Batting

- Each team member will bat in order, using all team members in the lineup until end of inning
- Bunting is permitted – Fake bunts are NOT allowed
 - If a player shows bunt and then pulls back and swings away, it is a dead ball and the batter is out, regardless of whether or not contact was made with the pitched ball.
- Helmets must be worn by batter and base runners during games and practices.
- Throwing the bat is an automatic warning to both teams, regardless of offending player. Second offense is an automatic out to the offending team.
- Batting out of order
 - Defensive coach must bring it to the attention of the umpire before the first pitch to the next batter
 - Batter who batted out of order will be declared out and any advance or score made because of a ball batted by the improper batter will be nullified
 - Batting order can continue as normal starting with the batter who was skipped

9. Double Base

- A batted ball hitting the white portion of a double base is fair. A batted ball hitting the colored portion of a double base is foul.
 - Whenever a play is being made on batter-runner, the defense MUST use white portion and batter MUST use the colored portion. On extra base hits or balls hit to the outfield, when there is no play being made at the double base, the batter-runner may touch the white or colored portion. Should the batter-runner return, the runner must return to the white portion
 - On any force out attempt from the foul side of first base, the defense and the batter-runner can use either the white or colored portion. NOTE: This includes overthrows.
 - When tagging up on a fly ball, the white portion must be used.
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Juniors Division Rules

10. Players arriving late/leaving early

- Coaches, **before** the start of the game, must inform any opposing coach of any player(s) who are arriving late or leaving early
- These players must be placed at the bottom on the batting order
- If the player leaves, for any reason other than injury, without prior notification, it shall be declared an out when the player is scheduled to come up to bat.
- If a call-up is being used for a late arriving player, the regular player cannot enter the game until the call-up player has been permitted to play two (2) full innings.

11. Cancellations

- Assume game is “on” unless cancelled by the League on the League website.
- Games will be made-up as soon as possible
- Games cancelled without approval by umpire or Division Head will be a forfeit.

12. Incomplete Games

- Official game is 5 innings, 4 ½ innings if home team ahead.
- If less than 1 COMPLETE inning is played, a full makeup game will be played.
- All other games that exceed 1 inning, but are not official, will be picked up where they left off.
 - Same score, outs, bases occupied, and pitch count.
 - If a player cannot make the rescheduled game, their place in the batting order is skipped during the continuation game
 - A player who is added to the make-up game is just added to the bottom of the batting order.

13. Standings

- Teams are awarded one (1) point for each win and one half (1/2) point for each tie
- When a tie exists in the standings, the following will be used to decide standings
 - First, head to head records of tied teams.
 - Second, lowest average per game of runs against
 - Third, coin flip
- For playoffs, the home team will always be the team listed higher in the standings (calculated at the end of the regular season) per the above criteria.

14. Miscellaneous

- Free substitution is permitted throughout the game.
 - Only those coaches/ volunteers who have submitted the required background checks and have been NSPL approved coaches/ are allowed on the field, in the batting cages, or in the dugout – this includes any games or practices
 - Only registered players of NSPL are allowed to participate in the game, pre-game warm-ups or practices.
 - No smoking or other use of tobacco is permitted on the playing field side of the paved driveway that provides access to Troop Field.
 - No dog or pets of any kind (excluding service animals) are allowed on the field or in the areas surrounding the field – this includes any games or practices.
 - Official ASA/USA SOFTBALL rules, adjusted herein, will apply.
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Intermediate/Senior Division Rules

1. Players

- Ten (10) players are to be fielded
- Game may be played with a minimum of seven (7) players.

2. Equipment

- Face masks are **strongly recommended** to be worn by all infielders, including pitcher. They will be required in majors, juniors, and seniors beginning with the 2020 season.
- Helmets must be worn by batter and base runners during games and practices
- Ball is to be 12" regulation softball supplied by the League.
- ONLY ASA APPROVED NON-COMPOSITE BATS ARE ALLOWED AT ANYTIME AT NSPL.
 - This includes games or practice.
 - Only single walled, one-piece construction bats are allowed to be used.
 - No composite bat of any type, no hybrid or half and half technology bat and no bat with fiber/composite reinforced core or handle is to be used.
 - If a batter enters the batter's box with a composite/illegal bat, the batter will be out.
 - If a batter makes contact with a pitched ball using a composite/illegal bat, the batter is immediately called out and the runners are returned to their bases.

3. Field dimensions

- Base distance to be sixty (60) feet.
- Pitching distance to be forty-three (43) feet (from point of plate to front of pitcher's mound)

4. Game Length

- Starting time is 6:00pm (weeknights)
- Game will last no more than 7 innings, 6 ½ if the home team is ahead
- A new inning cannot be started after 8:00pm (weeknights)
- A new inning cannot be started 2 hours after start time (weekend)
- Time limit still in effect even if there is no game after
- Mercy rule – Game will end if one team is ahead by 15 runs or more after 5 innings (4 ½ innings for the home team).
- Forfeit time is 6:15pm on weeknights or 15 minutes after the scheduled game time for weekend games. If both teams are not prepared to play – both forfeit
- Forfeit time may push back to 6:30pm with **prior** approval of the Division Head – When both teams have at least 7 players, game will start, with late arrivals to be added per Rule #10.
- If a new inning is started before the time limit, and in the middle the inning the game is called for darkness or weather the game will be considered complete and the score will revert back to end of the last full inning.
- All regular season games can end in a tie.

5. Ending an inning

- Inning ends after three (3) outs or based on run rules above

6. Defense

- Each player must play a minimum of three (3) full innings defensively.
 - Positions
 - 1 playing pitcher
 - 1 catcher
 - 4 infielders (first, second, third base, short stop)
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Intermediate/Senior Division Rules

- 3 outfielders plus short fielder
 - short fielder must play on the grass not in the infield
- Pitching
 - Windmill pitching is allowed but not required
 - Pitcher who has accumulated **twelve (12) strikeouts** in the current game may NOT continue to pitch for the duration of that game. A strikeout on one batter registered by both pitchers goes to both pitchers.
 - A dropped third strike which results in the batter safe at first, is **not** registered as a strike out to the pitcher
 - Hit-by-pitch
 - Pitcher hits two batters in the same inning, she may no longer pitch during that inning.
 - Same pitcher hits one batter in any subsequent inning, then she may no longer pitch during that inning.
 - Same pitcher hits another (4th) batter, then she may no longer pitch in that game.
 - Pitching rules
 - Both feet must start on the pitching rubber with hands apart.
 - Hands must meet to begin motion.
 - One step forward with front foot is permitted.
 - Back foot does not have to remain in contact with the pitching rubber, but may not leave the ground at any point until the ball is released. Back foot may not lift up and replant during the motion.
 - No steps backward off the rubber are permitted.
 - A backward swing of the arm to begin motion is permitted but not required.
 - Only one full circle is permitted.
- A foul ball hit by the batter that goes higher than the batter's head and is caught by the catcher will be an out.
- A fielder may not take a blocking position at any base (this includes the catcher at the plate) unless she is making a play on the runner. A player is considered making a play on the runner when the fielder has possession of the ball or is in the imminent process of receiving a ball thrown to the fielder to tag the runner or the base.

7. Base Running

- Leads are permitted after the pitcher releases the ball.
 - Sliding is permitted
 - A player must either slide or give herself up on any play at home plate.
 - Stealing is permitted
 - Unlimited steals per inning
 - Delayed steals are permitted
 - If a team is ahead by ten (10) runs or more they are not permitted to steal until the lead is nine (9) runs or less.
 - Dropped third strike is in effect
 - Batter may advance on strike three if the catcher fails to catch the ball and first base is open, or there are two outs.
 - If batter reaches 1st base safely, it does not count as a strikeout for pitcher
 - Infield fly rule is in effect
 - fair fly ball (not a line drive or bunt) that, in the judgment of the umpire, can be caught by an infielder, pitcher, or catcher with ordinary effort and when there are runners on first
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Intermediate/Senior Division Rules

and second or first, second, and third and less than two outs

- Tagging up on fly balls is allowed
- Overthrows into the dead ball area—the runner is awarded two (2) bases from the last occupied base when the throw leaves the hand.
- Runners may advance at will, until umpire calls the play over.
- Pinch runner
 - Catcher courtesy runner is permitted with two (2) outs.
 - Pinch runner must player who made the last out.
 - No other pinch runners are allowed, except for injury

8. Batting

- Each team member will bat in order, using all team members in the lineup until end of inning.
- Bunting is permitted – Fake bunts are **NOT** allowed
 - If a player shows bunt and then pulls back and swings away, it is a dead ball and the batter is out, regardless of whether or not contact was made with the pitched ball.
- Helmets must be worn by batter and base runners during games and practices.
- Throwing the bat is an automatic warning to both teams, regardless of offending player. Second offense is an automatic out to the offending team.
- Batting out of order
 - Defensive coach must bring it to the attention of the umpire before the first pitch to the next batter
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Batting order can continue as normal starting with the batter who was skipped

9. Double Base

- A batted ball hitting the white portion of a double base is fair. A batted ball hitting the colored portion of a double base is foul.
- Whenever a play is being made on batter-runner, the defense **MUST** use white portion and batter **MUST** use the colored portion. On extra base hits or balls hit to the outfield, when there is no play being made at the double base, the batter-runner may touch the white or colored portion. Should the batter-runner return, the runner must return to the white portion
- On any force out attempt from the foul side of first base, the defense and the batter-runner can use either the white or colored portion. **NOTE:** This includes overthrows.
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- Coaches, **before** the start of the game, must inform any opposing coach of any player(s) who are arriving late or leaving early
- These players must be placed at the bottom on the batting order
- If the player leaves, for any reason other than injury, without prior notification, it shall be declared an out when the player is scheduled to come up to bat.
- If a call-up is being used for a late arriving player, the regular player cannot enter the game until the call-up player has been permitted to play two (2) full innings.

11. Cancellations

- Assume game is “on” unless cancelled by the League on the League website.
 - Games will be made-up as soon as possible
 - Games cancelled without approval by umpire or Division Head will be a forfeit.
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Intermediate/Senior Division Rules

12. Incomplete Games

- Official game is 5 innings, 4 ½ innings if home team ahead.
- If less than 1 COMPLETE inning is played, a full makeup game will be played.
- All other games that exceed 1 inning, but are not official, will be picked up where they left off.
 - Same score, outs, bases occupied, and pitch count.
 - If a player cannot make the rescheduled game, their place in the batting order is skipped during the continuation game.
 - A player who is added to the make-up game is just added to the bottom of the batting order.

13. Standings

- Teams are awarded one (1) point for each win and one half (1/2) point for each tie
- When a tie exists in the standings, the following will be used to decide standings
 - First, head to head records of tied teams.
 - Second, lowest average per game of runs against
 - Third, coin flip
- For playoffs, the home team will always be the team listed higher in the standings (calculated at the end of the regular season) per the above criteria.

14. Miscellaneous

- Free substitution is permitted throughout the game.
 - Only those coaches/ volunteers who have submitted the required background checks and have been NSPL approved coaches/ are allowed on the field, in the batting cages, or in the dugout – this includes any games or practices
 - Only registered players of NSPL are allowed to participate in the game, pre-game warm-ups or practices.
 - No smoking or other use of tobacco is permitted on the playing field side of the paved driveway that provides access to Troop Field.
 - No dog or pets of any kind (excluding service animals) are allowed on the field or in the areas surrounding the field – this includes any games or practices.
 - Official ASA/USA SOFTBALL rules, adjusted herein, will apply.
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Scheduling:

- to be determined by League

Game Play

- Game length
 - Seniors: 7 innings
 - Juniors: 7 innings
 - Majors: 6 innings
- Games must be completed in full, or as specified by the Board of Directors
- Mercy rules NOT in effect
- Starting Times
 - All weeknight playoff games will start at 6pm. Games not started by 6:15pm are subject to forfeit.
 - Weekend games not started within 15 minutes of their scheduled start time will be Subject to forfeit.
- Pitching - Regular season limit on strikeouts applies and hit batters – even in extra innings
- Steals – Regular season rules apply.
- Extra Innings - Any game tied after regulation will proceed with International Tie Breaker rules.
 - At the start of each inning, a runner is placed on second base
 - The runner is the last batter to make an out in the previous inning.
 - At least one full inning is played, allowing each team the same chance to score.
 - If the score remains tied, the same process is used in each inning until one team scores more runs than the other at the end of a complete inning

Call-ups

- Maximum of three (3) players from the Division directly below approved by that division's head
- A player called up may not pitch in playoffs
- All other regular season call-up rules apply

Playing Time

- Each player must play minimum of 3 full innings defensively (9 outs). If not, the game will be forfeited.
- All other rules from the Regular Season apply.

Standings for inclusion in Playoffs.

- Standings are based on winning percentage
 - Teams are awarded one (1) point for each win and one half (1/2) point for each tie
 - When a tie exists in the standings, the following will be used to decided standings
 - First, head to head records of tied teams.
 - Second, lowest average per game of runs against
 - Third, coin flip
 - For playoffs, the home team will always be the team listed higher in the standings (calculated at the end of the regular season) per the above criteria.
 - Match-ups
 - With more than four teams in the division, playoffs are single elimination
 - Six team division – 1st and 2nd advance to 2nd round and 3rd thru 6th play each other in bracket play
 - Five team division – 1st advances to 2nd round and 2nd thru 5th play each other in bracket play
 - Four team division – 1st thru 4th play each other in bracket play
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Playoff Rules

- Three team division – 2 game elimination will be used
 - Division head, with approval of the Board of Directors, will make decisions if division has more than six (6) teams
 - The home team will always be the team listed higher in the standings (calculated at the end of the regular season) per the above criteria.
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