

2024 Frederick County Girls Softball League

8 and Under (8U) (Coach-Pitch) RULES

Revised November 2023

1. A regulation game for 8U is six (6) innings. A complete game for 8U consists of four (4) full innings or three and one-half (3 1/2) innings, if the home team is ahead, or when the two (2) hour time limit has been reached. Games will have a two (2) hour time limit but once an inning starts, you must complete that inning in full, unless the home team is ahead (see General Rules A-5). If an inning starts and the home team does not get to finish, and visitors are ahead, they don't necessarily win. Game reverts back to the previously completed inning. No new inning will start if the time limit expired at the time of the last out of the previous inning. An inning started prior to the time limit will be completed. The time limit or darkness (without a weather delay) constitutes a complete game regardless of the number of innings played.
2. The batting order will consist of all players at the game, and will run in a continuous order. Each team is allowed to substitute fielders freely throughout the game. (General Rules 9-D) All players must play a minimum of three (3) innings in the field (8U & 10U). This rule is suspended in the event of injury, sickness, or disciplinary action taken by the coach (before or during the game).
3. There will be five (5) pitches per player, with the only exception being a foul ball on the 5th pitch. If the batter hits a foul ball on the 5th pitch, then additional pitches will be added to the maximum pitch count until the batter either swings and misses a pitch, fails to swing at a pitch or puts the ball into play. If after five (5) pitches, and excluding a 5th pitch foul ball, the batter fails to put the ball into play, the batter is out.
4. An inning will end in any one of the following ways:
 - a. When three (3) outs are made.
 - b. When five (5) runs are scored in that inning. (Innings 1-5 only; suspended in the 6th inning)
5. Coaches will pitch the ball underhanded to their own players, but must not touch the ball while it is in play. If the ball hits a coach-pitcher it is a LIVE ball and to be played as is. If a live ball is touched by field coaches, runners are awarded an extra base. Coach-pitcher may not interfere with the ball or fielder making play, if so, play is repeated.
6. Coaches or Designated Representative over age of 13 will pitch ball underhanded from within the 8-foot radius circle, and may coach the batter runner only until she reaches 1st base. The Coach-Pitcher may not coach the base runners. The home plate umpire may issue one warning to the offending coach-pitcher, and may *require* another pitcher if the offense continues.

7. Other than on a batted ball, when the player-pitcher or infielder takes control of the ball play stops. The umpire will instruct the runners to advance or retreat to the nearest base. Runners that are ON or PAST the halfway point between bases when time is called by the umpire will be awarded the next base. Runners that have not reached the halfway point will go back. Base runners may not advance on infield overthrows when a play is being made at a base.
8. The player-pitcher must be within the circle when the ball is pitched by the coach-pitcher.
9. Infielders must remain within ten (10) feet of baseline until the ball is hit. No more than six (6) infielders including pitcher and catcher may occupy the infield. Outfielders must stay ten (10) feet behind the baseline until the ball is hit (baseline being a straight line between bases). Bases will be 60 feet.
10. No bunting allowed.
11. No stealing allowed. Base runners may not leave the base until the batter puts the ball in play. Coaches are not permitted to touch the base runners during live play.
12. When running to a base you may not head first slide. You are allowed to head first dive back into a base you have passed; after a runner starts to run to the next base if they decide they want to go back to the previous base to avoid being put out, they can dive head first back into their previous base. This is to avoid injury to the girls General Rules (D-7).
13. NO "Dropped Third Strike" rule.
14. The defensive team in the field may have two defensive coaches in the outfield. They must stay in the outfield equal to or beyond outfielders when the ball is in play. The offensive team at bat may have a base coach for 1st and 3rd base.
15. Face masks are required on all helmets. (See General Rule C-3)
16. General Rule 15-C, 16-D. 8U DIVISION ONLY- Provide home plate umpire, at least 16 years of age. Be sure to alert the umpires to the FCGSL special rules. 8U Division umpire may be at the discretion of the teams playing and may be a coach, parent or anyone deemed acceptable by both teams. If the home team cannot provide a home plate umpire, the visiting team has the option of providing one. If a home plate umpire is not found, the HOME team forfeits the game. Playing field for 8U will have hash marks in-between each base. General Rule—16-a Visiting team responsibilities: 8U Division Only - Provide a base umpire, at least 16 years of age. The base umpire may be at the discretion of the teams playing and may be a coach, parent or anyone deemed acceptable by both teams. If the visiting team cannot provide a base umpire, the home team has the option of providing one. If a base umpire is not found, the game is played, with no penalty involved.
17. No Metal Cleats. Plastic or Rubber only (See General Rule C-7)
- **18. If a ball is hit into the infield, the batter is awarded one base and all players currently on base will

take one base. If a ball is hit, on the ground or in the air, into the outfield (the outfield is defined as the grassline) without being touched by a player, the batter and all players on base can take a second base at their own risk. An error made in the infield does not constitute a batted ball even if it goes into the outfield.

****Rewritten and voted in 11/2023**

General rule updates as of 1/10/2022, modified 11/2022, modified 11/2023

* * Travel softball players, a travel softball player is defined as any player registered with USSSA and that plays C level or above. Travel players are defined from January 1- December 31st of that calendar year. No FCGSL team shall have more than 6 travel players and/or high school players combined on their team. Travel players and/or high school players shall not pitch more than 2 innings per FCGSL game, and a maximum of 4 innings pitched by all travel and high school players on any one team in any one game.

**8U will participate in play-offs, for players to be eligible for play-offs: a player must participate in 7 or more games on that team, in that age group to be eligible for the play-offs for that team. If a player is injured preventing them from playing in 7 or more games, the board can make an exception.

**Guest players: coaches must notify the opposing coach and their age group coordinator via email a minimum of 2 hours prior to the start of the game of any intent to utilize a player who is not rostered on their team.

