



Youth Softball Rules and Regulations

The purpose of Youth Recreational Athletic Leagues is to provide an enjoyable organized experience under capable adult supervision for youth in Botetourt County. The program is organized to promote sportsmanship, cooperation, and fair play at all times while developing knowledge and skills of the game.

The Botetourt County Youth Softball leagues are governed by **Little League International** and will apply except as modified herein.

Any team participating in leagues outside Botetourt County will be required to adhere to that area's rules and regulations

Age Classification: Playing age is the age attained by a player on or before December 31st of the previous year (2021).

League	Ages	Roster Size	Playing Field	Ball Used	Bats Used
Coach Pitch (No score kept)	7-8	Min- 9 Max- 15	Bases- 60' Toe Plate 35'	Yellow 11" RIF Level 1 or equivalent	Length of 33" or under and no greater than 2 1/4" Barrel- BPF of 1.20
Minor League	9-10	Min- 9 Max- 15	Bases- 60' Toe Plate- 35'	Yellow RIF Level 10 or equivalent	Length of 33" or under and no greater than 2 1/4" Barrel- BPF of 1.20
Major League	11-12	Min- 9 Max- 15	Bases- 60' Toe Plate- 40'	Yellow 12" Official NFHS	Length of 33" or under and no greater than 2 1/4" Barrel- BPF of 1.20
Junior League	13-14	Min-9 Max- 16	Bases -60' Toe Plate – 43'	Yellow 12" Official NFHS	Length of 34" or under and no greater than 2 1/4" Barrel- BPF of 1.20
Senior League	15-16	Min-9 Max- 16	Bases -60' Toe Plate – 43'	Yellow 12" Official NFHS	Length of 34" or under and no greater than 2 1/4" Barrel- BPF of 1.20

I.

Player Eligibility

- A. A child must play for the booster club that represents the elementary school district in which they live or school they attend. The Recreation department reserves the right to move a player to a different booster club based on registration numbers
- B. Players wishing to play when their club is not fielding a team may choose to play for the nearest club that is fielding a team in that league.
- C. All players must be registered with the recreation department before he or she is allowed to practice or play in a game.
- D. Players must be a Botetourt County resident or attend a Botetourt County public school to be eligible to participate in any Botetourt County athletic league. If a player moves out of the county, they may continue to participate in the program until they age out, as long as their participation is continuous in that specific sport with no breaks between the age classifications.

II.

Team Rosters

- A. Rosters sizes are listed above to allow teams to adhere to rules here in.
- B. Any booster club fielding more than one team ages 9 and up must place players on teams by using the drafting procedures.
- C. Transfer of players during the season is prohibited, **although teams may borrow players to field the minimum number to play a game, contingent to borrow player rule.**
- D. Coaches must consent to a background screening and be cleared to coach before he or she is allowed to coach a team during a practice or game.
- E. Only four (4) coaches allowed for tee ball and coach pitch. Three coaches (3) allowed for all other age groups.
- F. Any coach found to be using an ineligible player may be suspended from coaching for a period of one year. The suspension is applicable to any and all sports from the date formal action was taken.

League Rules

- A. Practices may begin mid-March and games may begin mid-April.
- B. A maximum of 3 hours of practice sessions may be held in a week.
- C. A week starts on Monday and ends on Sunday.
- D. After games begin, a maximum of three (3) mandatory events may be held in a week (including games), at no more than two hours per session. A double-header will only count as one event.
- E. Umpires will be assigned per game for Minor divisions and above. No umpires will be assigned for Coach Pitch, instructional aged leagues.
 1. No team shall have the right to refuse an umpire.
 2. One umpire shall be sufficient to play a game.
- F. Umpires are authorized and required to enforce all rules and may order a player, coach or spectator to refrain from interfering with the umpire's ability to administer these rules. The umpire has the authority to eject any player, coach or spectator from participating or observing the game, for objecting to calls, using abusive language, improper gestures, or physical contact, or other unsportsmanlike conduct not specifically listed in these rules.
- G. Each team must supply a scorekeeper for each game (Minor divisions and above). The home team will keep the official scorebook. The scorekeepers should confer with each other at the end of each inning to be sure the score is correct and proper substitutions are being made. Scorekeepers should sign each scorebook at the end of the game.
- H. Each coach must submit a line up card with players' names to each scorekeeper ten minutes before scheduled start time. This **full roster-batting lineup** will be used for the entire game. If a player is unable to finish the game, that position in the lineup will be skipped.
- I. All players in attendance must play a minimum of 6 complete outs on defense within the first four innings.
- J. If any player is benched for disciplinary reasons, the opposing coach and the official scorekeeper must be notified prior to the start of the game.
- K. A team must have six (6) players to play a game in Coach Pitch. All other age groups must have (7) players to play a game. **During regular season play teams may**

borrow players from other teams (if available) from the same age group/division. Teams may only borrow enough players to meet the minimum player rule. The borrowed player(s) must wear their original team's jersey, cannot pitch, cannot hind-catch or play more time than the original team players.

- L. Teams will be given ten (10) minutes after the scheduled start time to produce the minimum number of players to begin the game. The 10-minute waiting period counts towards time limit.
- M. Each team must be supervised by a certified/background screened Parks and Recreation coach of at least 18 years of age at all times during practice and games.
- N. Botetourt County Parks and Recreation will handle all official makeup games.
 - 1. Teams should notify Parks and Recreation of an impending forfeit or known cancelled game so that umpires and field set-up can be cancelled in advance.
- O. Any game called early because of inclement weather or other act of God will be considered a complete game when:
 - 1. Coach Pitch - when both teams have batted two times.
 - 2. All other age groups - when both teams have batted four times, or three times when the home team is leading.
 - 3. Tie games are allowed in all divisions where a score is kept, providing both teams have batted an equal number of times and the minimum number of innings has been played.
 - 4. Games not meeting the minimum inning requirements will not be considered an official contest and will not count towards either teams win/loss record.
- P. Game cancellation information can be obtained by calling 992-0012 after 4:00pm on weekdays and 7:30am on Saturdays.

Game Play - Coach Pitch

General

- 1. No score will be kept.
- 2. Maximum length of games will be one hour and 30 minutes or 5 innings.
- 3. No infield fly.
- 4. No tagging up – On a caught pop fly, runners may not advance and will be returned to occupied base with no penalty.
- 5. No bunting.
- 6. No base stealing.
- 7. 60-foot base lengths.
- 8. The coach/pitcher will pitch from toe plate (35' feet from home plate).
- 9. Bats may not exceed 33" in length and barrels may not exceed 2 1/4" in diameter with a BPF of 1.20.
- 10. Play will be considered dead when any defensive player has control of the ball within the 8' radius circle that surrounds the pitching rubber.
- 11. Hash marks shall be placed half way between each base. If the runner is past the hash mark when the ball becomes dead, the runner must advance to next base. If runner is not yet past the hash mark, the runner must return to previous base.
- 12. Putouts count as outs for the purpose of retiring a side and will remove the runner from the respective play.
- 13. An inning will end when the defensive team makes three outs or after the ninth offensive player in an inning has batted and the ball is declared dead.

Batting/Base Running

- 1. Every child in attendance must be listed on the initial lineup. Up to nine players may bat each inning or three outs whichever comes first.
- 2. Any player throwing a bat is automatically considered out.
- 3. A ball is considered fair once the batter strikes the ball with the bat causing it to travel forward within the playing area and beyond the 25-foot radius from home plate.
- 4. A ball not traveling past the 25-foot radius shall be called a foul ball.
- 5. A defensive player that touches the ball before traveling beyond the 25-foot radius shall immediately cause the ball to become foul.

6. Each batter will be allowed three swings or five total pitches. If after five pitches, a batter has not hit the ball in play, the batter will be declared out. If on the fifth pitch the batter fouls the ball off, the batter will receive additional pitches until an acceptable play results.
7. There are no base on balls (walks) or hit by pitch advancements.

Defense

1. A maximum of 9 defensive players are allowed on the field at a time. Positions should consist of a pitcher, catcher, first base, second base, third base, shortstop and three outfielders. Outfielders should be placed at least five feet beyond bases and base paths.
2. Each player is required to play at least two complete innings (6 outs) on defense within the first four innings.
3. The catcher must wear all required catcher's safety equipment.
4. The player/pitcher is required to stand with both feet inside the 8' radius circle, even with or behind of the pitcher's plate. Player/pitcher does not have to be in contact with the pitching rubber.

Coaches Participation

1. One coach will be allowed on the infield to assist as defensive fielding coach.
2. One coach is allowed in the home plate area to ensure the batter is properly positioned in the batter's box.
3. At no time can a coach physically assist a fielder or runner in their actions.
4. The coach/pitcher must deliver the ball to home plate in an underhanded motion.
5. The coach/pitcher must make every effort to avoid interfering with any ball put into play by either being hit by the batter or thrown by a defensive player.
6. If a batted ball makes contact with the coach pitcher, it will be considered a foul ball.
7. A coach should use discretion when receiving the ball from the catcher after a pitch and allow the player-pitcher to receive the ball from the catcher as much as possible.

Game Play - Minor League

General

1. Maximum length of games will be one hour and 30 minutes or 6 innings. No new inning should be started after 1 hour and 30 minutes.
2. Infield fly will be in effect.
3. 8' radius circle around pitching rubber will be in effect.
4. 60-foot base lengths.
5. 35-foot pitching distance.
6. Mercy rule, 10 runs after 5.

Batting/Base Running

1. Every child in attendance must be listed on the initial lineup. Up to nine players may bat each inning or three outs, whichever comes first.
2. If the ninth batter walks, is hit by pitch, or catcher interference, all base runners, whether forced or not, shall advance two (2) bases.
3. Bunts are allowed. NO fake bunting allowed.
4. Batter may not run on dropped third strike.
5. Base stealing permitted once ball crosses plate. Runners must keep in contact with base until ball crosses the plate.
6. Once pitcher has possession of the ball inside the 8' radius circle, play is stopped. All runners off a base must either retreat or advance.
7. Head first slides are not permitted and runner will be called out.

Defense

1. A maximum of 9 defensive players are allowed on the field at a time.
2. Each player is required to play at least two complete innings (6 outs) on defense within first four innings.

Pitching

1. Pitcher inning count and pitcher rest requirements are found on page 59 of the little league rule book.

2. Throwing one pitch constitutes an inning pitched.
3. Each team is required to keep the pitch count for each pitcher in a game and carry this with them to each game showing who pitched in previous games.
4. After three (3) total walks per inning, the current pitcher must be displaced from the act of pitching but will remain in the pitchers position and the batting teams coach will finish the team's turn at bat by pitching to his/her own team. The coach pitcher must pitch from a standing position, delivering the ball in an underhand motion. The coach will throw up to five pitches until either an out or hit is recorded. If the fifth pitch or each subsequent pitch is fouled off, another pitch will be given. This may take place until allowed innings per game are met. This rule is in place to keep the game moving.
5. A pitcher must be removed after hitting three batters in one game.
6. Pitchers mask must be worn by pitcher.

All other rules are governed by Little League Softball Rule Book

Game Play - Major League

General

1. Maximum length of games will be one hour and 30 minutes or 6 innings. No new inning should be started after 1 hour and 30 minutes.
2. Infield fly will be in effect.
3. 8' radius circle around pitching rubber will be in effect.
4. 60-foot base lengths.
5. 40-foot pitching distance.
6. Mercy rule, 10 runs after 5.

Batting/Base Running

1. Every child in attendance must be listed on the initial lineup. Up to nine players may bat each inning or three outs, whichever comes first.
2. If the ninth batter walks, is hit by pitch, or catcher interference, all base runners, whether forced or not, shall advance two (2) bases.
3. Bunts are allowed. NO fake bunting allowed.
4. Batter may run on third strike, if ball is not caught by catcher and providing less than two outs and first base is not occupied, or first base is occupied with two outs.
5. Base stealing permitted once BALL is pitched. Runners must keep in contact with base until pitcher releases the ball.
6. Once pitcher has possession of the ball inside the 8' radius circle, play is stopped. All runners off a base must retreat or advance.
7. Head first slides are not permitted and runner will be called out.

Defense

1. A maximum of 9 defensive players are allowed on the field at a time.
2. Each player is required to play at least two complete innings (6 outs) on defense within first four innings.

Pitching

1. Pitcher inning count and pitcher rest requirements are found on page 59 of the little league rule book.
2. Throwing one pitch constitutes an inning pitched.
3. Each team is required to keep the pitch count for each pitcher in a game and carry this with them to each game showing who pitched in previous games.
4. The pitcher should be removed after hitting three batters in one game.
5. Pitchers mask must be worn by pitcher.

All other rules are governed by Little League Softball Rule Book

Game Play – Junior/Senior League

General

1. Maximum length of games will be one hour and 45 minutes or 7 innings. No new inning should be started after 1 hour and 45 minutes.
2. Infield fly will be in effect.
3. 8' radius circle around pitching rubber will be in effect.
4. 60-foot base lengths.
5. 43-foot pitching distance.
6. Mercy rule, 10 runs after 5.

Batting/Base Running

1. Every child in attendance must be listed on the initial lineup. Up to nine players may bat each inning or three outs, whichever comes first.
2. If the ninth batter walks, is hit by pitch, or catcher interference, all base runners, whether forced or not, shall advance two (2) bases.
3. Bunts are allowed. NO fake bunting allowed.
4. Batter may run on third strike, if ball is not caught by catcher and providing less than two outs and first base is not occupied, or first base is occupied with two outs.
5. Base stealing permitted once BALL is pitched. Runners must keep in contact with base until pitcher releases the ball.
6. Once pitcher has possession of the ball inside the 8' radius circle, play is stopped. All runners off a base must retreat or advance.
7. Head first slides are not permitted and runner will be called out.

Defense

1. A maximum of 9 defensive players are allowed on the field at a time.
2. Each player is required to play at least two complete innings (6 outs) on defense within first four innings.

Pitching

1. Pitchers mask must be worn by pitcher.

All other rules are governed by Little League Softball Rule Book