

Division Specific Rules: 8U Softball Division Rules (Ages 6–8)

8U Softball is a developmental division focused on fundamentals, confidence building, and learning the game in a fun and supportive environment. Emphasis is placed on instruction, equal participation, and sportsmanship.

Age Group

- Open to players ages 6–8 as of December 31 of the year prior to the playing season
- 6 Year olds must have completed at least one season of T-Ball within the Escalon Recreation Program to be eligible for 8U Softball.

Teams & Format

- Girls Division
- 10-12 players per team
 - Games may start with a minimum of 8 players
 - Teams may borrow players from another team if needed to avoid forfeits
- Up to 10 players on the field defensively
- 1 Head Coach, 1 Assistant Coach (not mandatory but recommended)

Field Dimensions

- Base paths: 55-60 feet
- Pitching distance (coach pitch): approximately 30–35 feet
- Safety base used at first base
- *Field dimensions may be adjusted based on available space and facility limitations*

Game Length

- 60-minute time limit
- No new inning may start after 50 minutes

Equipment

- 11” youth softball (optic/safety or reduced injury factor recommended)
- Softball bats only (ASA/USA Softball approved)
- Batting helmets with face guards required
- Fielders mask required for infielders
- Rubber cleats only (no metal spikes)

Coaches & Conduct

- Coaches may be on the field or in the dugout
- Positive coaching is expected at all times
- Teach and encourage. Do not over-coach or pressure players

Batting

- Continuous batting order (all players bat)
- No walks
- No bunting
- No dropped third strike
- Maximum five (5) runs per inning

Coach Pitch Format

- A rostered coach pitches to their own team
- Each batter receives up to five (5) pitches
- No called strikes
- Batters must attempt a swing each pitch
- If the ball is not put in play after five pitches, the batter is out
- Foul balls on the fifth pitch do not count as an out; the batter continues until the ball is hit fair or missed

Base Running

- No stealing or leading off
- Runners may advance only on a batted ball
- Play stops when the defensive player controls the ball inside the pitching circle
- Runners must return to the last safely reached base when play is stopped

Defense

- Up to 10 defensive players allowed
 - 6 infielders
 - 4 outfielders
- Player pitcher stands behind the coach pitcher for defensive purposes
- Players may not sit more than two defensive innings unless due to injury or low roster numbers
- Rotate positions throughout the season

Outs & Instruction

- Three outs or five runs end the half inning
- Coaches may provide instruction on the field
- Emphasis is on teaching proper fundamentals and sportsmanship

Scorekeeping

- Score will be kept during games
- No official standings or playoffs
- Emphasis remains on development, sportsmanship, and learning the game

Substitutions & Playing Time

- Free defensive substitutions between innings
- Equal playing time is expected for all players

Safety & Sportsmanship

- First base safety bag required
- Throwing bats or unsportsmanlike behavior will result in instruction/removal
- Teams must clean up dugouts after games
- Good sportsmanship is expected from players, coaches, and parents

Rule Authority

- Only the rules listed in this document apply to the 8U Softball division.