

NCGSL 8U Rules

*The focus of the 8U division will be **teaching softball fundamentals**, introducing the girls to pitching, and allowing each player to have the opportunity to play as many positions as possible and to have the opportunity to pitch. Good sportsmanship and learning to be competitive will also be focused upon.*

Coaches: This is a developmental league. **The rules must be followed as written!!** Changing or amending rules will result in game losses as well as removal from coaching in NCGSL. All coaches of this league should have been at the **REQUIRED** coaches meeting before the season to ask questions. Coaches DO NOT have the ability to do as they wish on the field. **This will be strictly enforced.**

Player Eligibility: The 8U league is for girls age 8 and under, age as of January 1, 2023. There is not a minimum age requirement; it is at the discretion of each district and their parents to allow younger girls to play.

Games: 8U games will consist of 6 innings or 1 ½ hr. time limit, whichever comes first. Time limit is no new inning started after 1 ½ hrs. **Games start at 6:00 P.M. unless a double header is scheduled. In this case game times will be 5:00 P.M and 6:30 P.M.** Home team must have the field prepared for play and provide the game balls. Balls shall be regulation 11" optic yellow, leather, raised seam balls (no safety balls). The pitching rubber shall be placed at 30'. We do not require sanctioned umpires. Instead, there shall be a designated person in charge behind the plate, who must be high school age or older.

Rain Outs: All rainouts must be rescheduled and all games played.

Batting: All players must bat. Games can be started with a minimum of 6 players, with no outs at vacated positions. Late arrivals will be placed at the bottom of the lineup. If there is an injury to a player or if a player has to leave the game, there will be no out in that position. A player may reenter in her position in the lineup. There will be a maximum 5 runs per inning per side.

Pitching: Pitchers may pitch a maximum of 2 innings. Each batter will receive a maximum of 7 pitches, unless the last pitch is a foul ball, which would extend the at-bat. **An out will be recorded if the 7th pitch is not a foul ball, or the ball is not put into play.** The pitches will be a combination of kid pitch and coach pitch. A player-pitcher will be allowed to throw up to 3 pitches, then the offensive coach will pitch the final 4 pitches. **There are no called balls or strikes. Batters should be encouraged to swing at all hittable pitches due to no balls or strikes being recorded.** The coach pitching cannot speak or yell to the batter or any base runner once the pitch is released. Players and coaches must pitch from the pitching rubber, **no exceptions.**

Fielding: There can be a maximum of 10 defensive players in the field, with 4 in the outfield grass. If the outfield grass is too deep, a line can be chalked on the dirt 10' behind the baseline to indicate where the outfield begins. Outfielders must remain in the outfield unless attempting to field the ball once batted. The kid pitcher must be in the pitching circle, behind the pitching rubber when the coach is pitching. Coaches are highly encouraged (not required) to rotate players to as many positions as possible for them to gain experience. A coach will be allowed in the field to instruct defensive players. Coach must be positioned in the outfield behind 2nd base. The coach is not allowed to touch the players, only verbal instruction is allowed.

Hitting: Bunting and slap hitting will be allowed **off of kid pitchers only!!** There is no infield fly rule.

Helmets: Every child will be required to wear a helmet with **approved face guards** when they are batting and running bases. This is **MANDATORY** for all batters/base runners. Helmets must be kept on until the player returns to the dugout.

Throwing of the helmet or the bat will be considered unsportsmanlike conduct, which will incur a warning. A second offense will result in restricting the player to the dugout for the remainder of the game.

Base Running: Batter/runner may advance as long as the ball is in the outfield. Once there has been a legitimate attempt at a throw to the infield the runner must stop at the base they are closest to. **No advancement on any overthrows to any base.** Runner may advance one base **only** on a ball hit in the infield. Defensive players cannot block the base unless they have the ball. Sliding is not required, but is allowed, **feet first slides only.** No leading off or stealing of bases allowed. Base runners can leave the base once the ball is hit. Leaving early will result first in a warning, then a second offense will be called out. A courtesy runner can be used for a catcher that is on base with 2 outs.

*The 8U division will follow all other rules of conduct as stated in the NCGSL rules guide.
Rules Adopted 3/21/2018 wre Revised 01/20/23 AJH*