

2025 CARROLLTON BOOSTERS SOFTBALL 9-10-YEAR-OLD RULES

A) THE GAME

1. Five balls constitute a walk; three strikes constitute a strikeout.
2. Distance: Mound 35'; Bases 55' Ball size: 11 inches. Ball type: RIF 10
3. Time Limit: Five innings or 1 hour and 15 minutes (whichever occurs first). During the regular season, a new inning may not start after 1 hour and 10 minutes. If an inning starts within 1 hour and 10 minutes, it must be completed. An inning is deemed started once the last out of the preceding inning has been made. In case of rain, three innings constitutes an official game. If less than three innings have been completed, game will be resumed from point of stoppage, with appropriate allowance made for personnel differences. In the event that a full five-inning game is played to a tie, and there is still regulation time remaining, extra innings will be played within the time limit.
4. Each team is limited to scoring 4 runs in the first 2 innings of regular season games. The 4-run limit does not apply after the 2nd inning and does not apply in the playoffs. 10-run mercy rule after three innings.

B) PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

1. If a team fields less than 7 players at any time during the game, it will forfeit the game. Each player must participate in the field and at bat.
2. Teams will field ten players. Every player must play in the field at least every other inning. After the first pitch of an inning, all players must complete the inning, except in the event of injury or umpire ejection. **Exception: a player may be substituted from the bench after an inning has started for the pitcher only. In this situation, the pitcher being replaced must then go to the bench. This will encourage more flexibility in coaches' choice of substitutes.**

****Penalty for violation of this rule is FORFEITURE OF THE GAME****

3. **All teams shall bat through the batting order, without substitution in the batting order.**
4. Players are encouraged to arrive at least 15 minutes prior to game time so that coaches may properly enter lineups in the scorebook. A player who arrives after the start of the game but before the start of the second inning will be placed at the end of the batting order. **Any player arriving after the first pitch of the second inning will be ineligible to play in that game. No exceptions.**

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5. **Injury/Illness** General rule: If a player becomes ill or injured during the course of a game, she will be ineligible to participate for the remainder of the game if she does not bat in her assigned position, or if she does not participate defensively in a half-inning in which she was supposed to play. If a player becomes ineligible, rule B1 may apply. If the player becomes ineligible, her position in the batting order will be vacated.

Notes regarding injuries/illness:

- a) If a player cannot take the field at the start of an inning due to illness or injury, she will be designated as a fielding substitute for the duration of that inning *unless* she had been a substitute the previous inning or if her team has an insufficient number of players present to have fielding substitutes. If she is designated as a substitute in the current inning, she must participate in her team's next defensive half-inning or become ineligible for the remainder of the game. If she is not designated as a substitute, she may, upon recuperation, be put back in the field prior to the end of the current half-inning.
- b) If a **fielder** becomes ill or injured after an inning has started and must leave the field, a substitute, if available, will replace her. The ill/injured player may, upon recuperation, go back in for the substitute prior to the end of the inning.
- c) If a **batter** becomes ill or injured and cannot complete her at bat, the next scheduled batter will complete the at bat. The ill/injured player is not ruled ineligible unless she misses her next at bat or defensive inning, as per above.
- d) If a **baserunner** becomes ill or injured and is unable to run the bases, the last batted out shall run for her. The injured/ill player may not go back in for the pinch-runner, but resumes her spot in the batting order next time through. Additional note: "designated runners" may not be used; a player cannot be replaced every time she reaches base due to a preexisting condition; if she is too injured to run, she is too injured to play.

C) PITCHING

1. All pitchers are required to wear protective face masks while pitching during the game.
2. At the beginning of each half inning, or when a pitcher relieves another, not more than one minute may be used to deliver not more than five warm-up pitches. Note: a pitcher returning to pitch in the same half inning will not receive warm-up pitches. A pitcher is deemed to have begun pitching once she has thrown one warm-up pitch and must pitch at least until the first batter facing her has completed her at bat or until the side is retired.
3. An underhand pitch will be used. Pitchers must begin their pitching motion with one or both feet in contact with the pitching rubber. The pitcher is allowed to step back and then deliver the ball to the plate. Any illegal motion in the pitching delivery will result in the pitch being ruled an illegal pitch. Umpire's judgment call.
4. An illegal pitch is defined as a pitched ball that violates Rule C2, above, or is illegally delivered, or is delivered after the pitcher hesitates in her pitching motion. If an illegal pitch is delivered to the plate, the ball will be ruled dead by the umpire at the end of playing action. If the ball is not hit fair or foul, the pitch will be ruled a ball on the batter. If the pitcher completes delivery of the ball to the batter, and the batter hits the ball, the offensive coach shall have the option of the result of the play or the penalty for an illegal pitch, which is that the pitch be ruled a ball. In the case of a pitcher hesitating in her motion, any runner leaving the base before the ball leaves the pitcher's hand will be allowed to return to that base and will not be called out for violating the lead rule. *Since stealing is not permitted, runners are not awarded the next base on an illegal pitch.*
5. On the second charged defensive conference in the same inning, the pitcher must be replaced and may not pitch again in the same inning. The pitcher may return to pitch in a different inning. For the purposes of this rule, a half inning is deemed started once the first pitch of the half inning is thrown.
6. A pitcher that hits three (3) batters in the same inning or a total of four (4) batters in a game must be removed from the mound for the remainder of that game. The player removed from the mound may stay in the game but must play another position. A hit-by-pitch occurs when a batter is struck by a pitched ball in the air. A hit-by-pitch also occurs when a batter is struck by a pitched ball off of the ground and the batter is unable to avoid it. Umpire's judgment call.
7. Pitching Rotation Rule. Anyone who pitches three or more innings in a game will be limited to pitching only one inning in her team's next game. Anyone who pitches less than three innings in a game can pitch an unlimited number of innings in her team's next game. One pitch constitutes an inning. Any make up game(s) will be considered as the next game for the purpose of this rule. Games played to break any ties in the standings will not count toward any pitching totals. Extra innings (sixth inning and beyond) will not count toward innings pitched. All round robin and playoff games, except the true championship game, are subject to the pitching rotation rule. However, teams may begin a new pitching rotation with the first game of the round robin and the first game of the playoffs. A true championship game is defined as that playoff game that, regardless of the outcome, is the absolute last game of the playoffs. Teams may use any player as pitcher in the true championship game.
8. Designated Pitcher (DP) Rule. After the first two walks (maintained in scoreboard by home team) in an inning (hit batter does not count as a walk), an offensive coach will come in to pitch to the batter after five (5) balls have been thrown by one (1) player pitcher. When the DP is pitching, the player-pitcher must take a position either to the left or right of the DP and even with the rubber. The batter will be allowed three pitches when the coach pitcher comes into the game (no warm-up pitches). If the batter fouls off the last pitch, additional pitches will be given until the ball is put in play, the batter strikes out, or the batter does not swing and will be out. The coach pitcher must attempt to throw the ball in a manner that is consistent with fast pitch and not lob the ball in with an arc. The player-pitcher cannot move to another defensive position until the current batter has completed her at bat, at which time she may pitch to the next batter or be replaced. The coach must make an attempt to leave the field when the ball is put into play or there is a strikeout. Note: any player who is hit by a pitch delivered by a player-pitcher *will* be allowed to reach first base with all forced runners advancing one base.

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D) BATTERS - RUNNERS

1. *No intentional walks are permitted without throwing pitches.*
2. Only the on-deck batter is allowed in the on-deck area of the field. No one else is allowed to swing a bat in the on-deck area.
3. Bunting (not slap bunting) is permissible. If a batter attempts to bunt, she may not pull the bat back and swing at the pitch. This action will result in an automatic out to the batter. Additionally, a batter cannot turn and wave or wiggle the bat in a bunting action to distract the pitcher. The first instance will result in a warning, and the second instance result in a called strike.

4. Team with a batter throwing bat will receive one warning per game. After the first warning, that team's batters will be called out when a bat is thrown. Ball is dead and all runners return to bases occupied without risk.

5. No infield fly or dropped third strike rule.

6. Any batted ball that strikes a power line in fair territory is to be played as a ground ball. Ball that travels over fence after striking power line in fair territory is a home run. Any ball that strikes a power line in foul territory is a foul ball and ball is dead.

7. No leads - the runner must remain on the base until the ball leaves the pitcher's hand. Penalty for failure to do this is an automatic out. Runners are forced back to the base if the ball is not put into play by the batter. No tag is necessary. This is a free throw for the catcher, i.e.; the runners may not advance on an overthrow. If a runner attempts to advance, she is liable to be put out; however, if she safely secures an additional base, she will be returned to proper base by the umpire. **Exception: on the 3rd or subsequent pickoff attempt in each half-inning, all runners will be permitted to advance, after tagging up, one base only, at their own risk.**

8. **(Pilot Fall 2025)** Stealing: Baserunners are allowed to steal second base and third base after the ball crosses home plate. Base runners may take a lead at their own peril but the runner's foot may not cross the lead line (10' or as drawn) until the ball crosses the plate. The base runner will be called out if she crosses the lead line early. Baserunners are not allowed to steal home. If the runner overruns or continues past the base, she can be tagged out. If a runner safely secures a subsequent base or safely crosses home plate, she will be returned to the proper base by the umpire at the conclusion of the play. Stealing is not allowed when the DP is in the game. Each team will be allowed 4 successful steals per inning. **There is no advancing on an overthrow when attempting to steal even if the ball is thrown into live play area.** -eg, a throw to 2B that goes into Centerfield or 3B that goes into Leftfield.

9. All base runners may advance only one base on an overthrow provided the ball travels outside of the foul line. This does not count towards a steal. Runner must secure next base safely. The definition of a secured base is that the runner must have been on the base for the umpire to judge that it had been safely secured. If the runner overruns or continues past the base, she can be tagged out. If a runner safely secures a subsequent base or safely crosses home plate, she will be returned to the proper base by the umpire at the conclusion of the play.

10. **Look-Back (Hesitation) Rule:** When the pitcher is in possession of the ball in the pitching circle, all runners who are between bases must proceed directly to the next base or return directly to the previous base. Runners may be called out if they "hesitate" or dance back and forth between bases to engage the pitcher. However, if the pitcher is deemed to be making a play on a runner, all runners may hesitate or change directions. **NOTE: there is a great deal of umpire judgment involved in this play. It shall only be called if the runner is trying to make the pitcher initiate a throw or run-down and not if she is simply rounding a base.**

11. Any base runner that intentionally removes her helmet while play is ongoing will be called out. Umpire's judgment call.

12. Only one offensive conference will be allowed per inning.

13. **Double-Base.** For safety purposes, a double-base will be used at first base, with half the base (white portion) in fair territory and half the base (normally orange portion) in foul territory. The following rules apply when using the double base:

- A batted ball which strikes the white portion of the base is fair, whereas a batted ball which strikes the orange portion of the base is foul.
- Whenever a play is being made on the batter-runner prior to her reaching first base, the fielders must use the white portion of the base and the batter-runner must use the orange. On such plays, the batter-runner can be called out for interference if she runs into the fielder while trying to reach the *white* portion of the base. However, if a throw is being made from the foul side of first base, or if an errant throw either pulls the fielder into foul territory or goes past the fielder, both the fielder and the runner may use either part of the base.
- Once the batter-runner has reached first base, or even if she misses first base, all subsequent plays on this runner will involve the white portion of the base only, including leads, tag-ups, returning to the base after overrunning or rounding, etc.
- When there is no play being made on the batter-runner at first base, she may use the white portion of the base, as in rounding first base on a hit to the outfield. In this case, since no play is being made, obstruction can be called on a fielder blocking the base. It is always the duty of fielders to yield to a runner if they do not have the ball, they are not making a play on a batted ball, and they are not taking a throw from a teammate.

14. **All batters and runners must wear batting helmets with face masks.**

15. **Interference:** the runner is out, and the ball is dead, when the runner interferes, *whether intentionally or not*, with 1) a fielder attempting to field a batted fair ball, 2) a fielder attempting to catch a fly ball over foul territory, or 3) with a fielder attempting to throw the ball.

Interference is also called if the runner *intentionally* interferes with a thrown ball or with a fielder attempting to field a deflected batted ball.

Interference is also called if the runner remains on her feet and **crashes** into the fielder who has the ball. In order to prevent the crash ruling, the runner may slide, jump over the fielder, go around her (but not deviate more than 3 feet from her direct line to the next base), or return to the previous base. Interference *is not called* if an errant throw draws the fielder into the runner's path, or if the ball, runner, and fielder all arrive at the same time.

16. **Obstruction** is called when a fielder who is neither in possession of the ball nor in the act of fielding a batted ball impedes the progress of a runner. When obstruction occurs, a *delayed dead ball* is called, and play continues.

E) PROTEST AND EJECTION

1. Protests must be made before another pitch is thrown or within 10 minutes of the end of the game, whichever is sooner. Only the head coach can make the protest. Time is suspended while the protest is being made. An umpire's judgment call may not be officially protested. Only the head coach may speak to the umpire to question a call or inquire about a rule. Any assistant coach that speaks to the umpire will receive one warning. A second violation of this rule will result in the assistant's ejection from the game. Penalty for ejection of an assistant is the same as a coach's ejection.
2. Any player that is ejected from a game by an umpire shall not be suspended from any future game without the approval of the league coordinator. If a player is ejected rule B1 may apply. The league coordinator's decision shall be rendered within 48 hours of the ejection or 24 hours prior to the commencement of the next game, whichever is the earlier to occur. In the absence of the league coordinator, the vice-president of softball may make the decision.
3. If an umpire ejects a coach from a game, that coach is automatically suspended from the following game. If a coach is ejected more than once, that coach is automatically suspended for the next game and shall be subject to additional suspensions or expulsion as may be determined by the coordinator for the league with the approval of the vice-president in charge of softball.
4. A league coordinator may suspend a coach for one or more games, as well as practices with his/her team due to misconduct and/or unsportsmanlike conduct of any nature occurring during or outside of games. This applies even if the coach's misconduct or unsportsmanlike conduct occurring during a game does not result in ejection by an umpire.

F) CARROLLTON BOOSTERS' POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1. The league coordinator will reschedule all rained out games. A rained out game can be rescheduled on any day, weekends included. Only the 4th of July and before noon on Sundays are excluded without the prior approval of the Carrollton Booster Board. A game is subject to be rescheduled as early as the next day. No special arrangements with the league coordinator will be permitted. All rainout games will start over from the beginning and not from the point where the game was stopped. However, if a game completed three innings of play or two and a half innings when the home team is leading it is considered a complete game. Any innings pitched by a pitcher in a game that must be replayed will not count toward her innings pitched for the sake of the pitching rotation rule. However, the new date for a replayed game shall follow the pitching rotation rule in effect on date of replay.
2. Round Robin and Playoff games may be scheduled prior to dates of printed schedule if deemed necessary.
3. Only coaches (maximum of three, adult only), a scorekeeper, and team members will be allowed in the dugout for each team. Home team is responsible for keeping scorebook. Home team will use first base dugout.
4. **CARROLLTON BOOSTERS IS A NON-SMOKING FACILITY.** There is NO SMOKING at the ballpark and NO BEER or ALCOHOL is permitted inside the dugout, outside the dugout or on the field by coaches while coaching. Use of cell phones while coaching is prohibited.
5. Official Carrollton Booster team shirts and team caps/visors must be properly worn by all players except the pitcher and catcher, who need not wear their cap/visor. If a player does not have a team shirt and cap/visor before she must first bat or before she must first play in the field, she will be ineligible to play in that game. Players' shirts must be tucked in during play.
6. Only tennis shoes or rubber cleats will be allowed.
7. No jewelry. Any player wearing earrings that cannot be removed must cover the front and the back of the earring with a bandage or tape.

8. Any player wearing a hard cast or splint on any part of her arm or leg is not eligible to play in any games. If a player is ineligible rule B1 may apply.

9. Players shall not be assessed more than a total of \$20 per player per season per sport by any coach for any expense, including but not limited to rental of courts, fields, batting cages, parties, or coach's gift, without prior approval from the commissioner of that sport.

10. ASA softball rules will apply to any other situation. Only softball bats may be used.

G) SPRING SEASON PLAYOFF SEEDING

1. Playoff Seeding for Spring Season:

1. Winning Percentage – Descending
2. Number Wins – Descending
3. Number Loses – Ascending
4. Tied Teams - Head to Head
5. Win percentage of head to head teams against each other
6. Coin flip are draw from a hat (all coaches present)