

SALEM SPORTS
13U SOFTBALL PLAYING RULES
2023 Version 230315

Equipment

- 12-inch fastpitch softballs conforming to USSSA Official Fastpitch Playing Rules and By-laws will be used in games and will be provided by Salem Sports.
- Bats conforming to USSSA Official Fastpitch Playing Rules and By-laws must be used.
- All batters, on-deck hitters and baserunners shall wear double ear flap helmets. Face masks or shields are recommended for protection from injury, but at the discretion of the parent(s).
- Catchers shall wear a catcher's helmet with mask, throat protector, chest protector, and leg guards.
- All equipment not in use must remain in the dugout.

General

- Uniforms (visors, jerseys, pants, belts, and socks) will be provided by Salem Sports, except in situations such as late signups where providing timely uniform items is not possible.
- Ball gloves, shoes, and other personal items will be the responsibility of the player's family.
- Shoes shall have rubber or other molded material cleats. Metal cleats are not allowed.
- The home team will be listed first on the schedule.
- The pitching distance shall be 40 feet.
- A 16-foot diameter pitching circle shall be marked on the field(s) with the front center edge of the pitching rubber marking the center of the circle.
- Base paths will be 60 feet in length.
- USSSA Official Fastpitch Playing Rules and By-laws shall apply at all times, except as amended herein.
- **There will be a 4 run rule per inning**
- Two umpires will be provided by Salem Sports.
- The home team will provide a capable scorekeeper to run the scoreboard during the game, unless a representative of a Salem Baptist Church ministry is providing that service.
- Before the game, players will line up and a coach from the home team will lead the pre-game prayer.
- A half inning will end after the 3rd out or after 4 runs have scored in that half inning.
- Time between half innings shall not exceed 2 minutes. During this time, the pitcher may have up to 5 practice pitches.
- The game will immediately end at the conclusion of 7 innings or 75 minutes, whichever comes first for all weekday games. The same shall apply for Saturday games, unless the visiting team is batting and has the capability to score enough runs within the four-run per inning limit to tie or take the lead in the top of the inning, or the home team is behind by four or fewer runs when official time expires. If the visiting team is batting at the end of 75 minutes and at any time in

the remainder of the top of the inning the visiting team extends its lead to more than four runs, the game is immediately over. If the top of the inning ends with the visiting team four or fewer runs ahead, the home team shall have an opportunity to win or tie the game in the bottom of that inning, which shall conclude with three outs, or at the moment prior to three outs that the home team gains a lead.

- After the game, players will line up to congratulate each other for a game well played, and a coach from the visiting team will lead the post-game prayer.

Defense

- There will be 10 players on defense – a standard infield and 4 outfielders. If a team has less than 9 players, the opposing coach should arrange a loan of a player or players for defensive purposes, if available. There will be no forfeits in Salem Sports leagues except for a game where one team does not show up for the game.
- Player pitches 4 pitches. If no strikeout, the coach comes and picks up the current hitting count and gets one less pitch than current number of balls. If on the 3rd strike of the at bat, pitched by the coach, is fouled off, then the player will receive one more pitch by that coach.
- No player, unless ill or injured, shall be required to sit out a second inning in a game until all players have taken their turn at sitting out an initial inning. No player should sit out two consecutive innings. This will ensure that all players have equitable playing time opportunities throughout the season.
- When a pitched ball leaves the pitcher's hand, one foot shall be in contact with any part of the pitching rubber.
- The defensive coach can request one timeout per inning to talk to the pitcher without replacing the pitcher. However, on the second timeout the coach must replace the pitcher.
- Intentional walks are allowed in this age group.

Offense

- The offensive team will be made up of the entire team roster. For example, if 12 players are present and not injured or ill, all 12 players will bat. In case of injury or illness, the injured or ill player may miss her turn at bat with no penalty to the team, and may reenter the game when able.
- The Live Ball Rule shall be in effect for this age group and baserunners may attempt to advance one or more bases at their own risk when the ball is in play.
- Bunting shall be allowed in this age group.
- Stealing shall be allowed in this age group. A baserunner may not lead off or initiate a steal attempt until the ball has left the pitcher's hand. A baserunner may steal 2nd or 3rd base after the ball leaves the pitcher's hand, at her own risk. A baserunner may not steal home.
- The infield fly rule shall be enforced in this age group. The batter is out when she hits a fly ball that is ruled an infield fly by the umpire. (Further explanation below.)
 - *An infield fly situation occurs when a fair fly ball, not including a line drive or attempted bunt, can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort, when 1st and 2nd bases or 1st, 2nd, and 3rd bases are occupied and there are less than two outs.*
 - *Any defensive player who positions herself in the infield at the start of the pitch shall be considered an infielder for the purpose of this rule.*

- *When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an infield fly, the umpire shall immediately declare “infield fly – batter out” for the benefit of the baserunners.*
- *The ball is live and baserunners may advance at the risk of the ball being caught.*
- A batter making contact between the bat and ball while her foot is on the ground outside the batter’s box will be called out.
- Bat throwing will not be tolerated. Any batter who throws a bat will receive a warning. If the same batter throws the bat again, she will be called out.
- If the catcher drops the ball on the 3rd strike, the batter is out.
- Baserunners may advance on passed balls, wild pitches, hits, and errors at their own risk. When the pitcher comes into possession of the ball within the pitching circle, any baserunner not on a base is at her own risk.
- A baserunner must attempt to slide or get around a defensive player at any base except 1st base if necessary to avoid a collision when the defensive player is making a play on the ball or has the ball and is waiting to make a tag. The baserunner shall be out if she does not slide or attempt to get around a defensive player and a collision occurs that is not the result of obstruction by the defensive player..
- Baserunners shall not slide headfirst.
- There shall be no “cat and mouse” game between the pitcher and baserunners. When the pitcher receives the ball back from the catcher after a thrown pitch and she is on the mound, the baserunner must commit back to the base she was on or attempt to advance to the next base, the latter at her own risk since the ball is live.
- A new pitcher will be allowed 5 warm-up pitches.
- Any player warming up the pitcher must wear a helmet and face mask or face shield.

Dugouts

- The home team will occupy the 1st base dugout.
- Teams shall remove all equipment, personal items, and trash from the dugouts and vacate the dugouts immediately after the post-game prayer, when another game is scheduled on the same field immediately thereafter.
- Post-game team meetings shall be held elsewhere, when another game is scheduled for the field.