



Coaches Packet

2024

Collegedale Recreation Association
CDaleSoftball.com

Welcome! We're Glad You're Here!

Thank you for volunteering to guide our youth! This is a big, fun responsibility. We do not want you to become overwhelmed by the thought of what you've gotten yourself into by volunteering to coach, so we have put together this information packet to help you through possible bumps along the way. We hope there will not be many, however. You've got this!!

Thank you again! We appreciate you and all you will do for our children and our league!

Collegedale Recreation Association Employees

Scott Dempsey	Commissioner	commissioner@cdalesoftball.com
Molli Paige	League Coordinator	info@cdalesoftball.com
Justin Arner	Umpire in Chief	

Collegedale Recreation Association Executive Board

Gary Blinn	President
Jason Herod	Vice President
Joe Oswald	Treasurer
Jenny Sue Hocking	Secretary
Darlene Hubbartt	Board Member
Earl Sigsworth	Board Member
Jackie Duffy	Statistics
Jennifer Dempsey	Concessions Manager
Jennifer Zepeda	Scheduling
Michelle Porter	Website
Rebekah Spears	Social Media
Candice Minton	Board Member

Contact us at:

cdalesoftball.com

Commissioner - Commissioner@cdalesoftball.com

League Administrator - info@cdalesoftball.com

League Support

Besides this packet, our website is a valuable resource. There are several training resource videos on **CDaleSoftball.com** under the **>Coaches** tab at the top of the page. **>Game Information** will have tabs for **>Game Schedules**, **>Standings** (divided by division), **>Calendar**, and **>Locations**. League rules are listed under **>Programs >Youth >Youth Home Rules**.

If you do have any questions that are not answered in this packet or on the website, and have need of support, please contact our Commissioner, Scott Dempsey or League Coordinator, Molli Paige. They can answer many of your questions or point you in the right direction.

League Philosophy

The Collegedale Recreation Association hopes that all players, coaches, parents, and fans will work together to learn the game of softball and enjoy the play, regardless of who may win or lose games. We hold a draft every season, so the players are encouraged to prioritize cooperation over competition. With this in mind, we can avoid “cliques” by helping every player feel a part of The League, not just a singular team. With a new team every year, our hope is that players new to The League will feel as welcome as veteran players, and that returning players will find new friends.

We believe that what makes softball fun is playing! Teams that only play their best players in important positions are jeopardizing the development of all players. While sitting on the bench can be a valuable skill to learn, we do not want any player subjected to riding the bench an above average amount of time. We *highly* recommend rotations that incorporate *all* players having a turn to learn and experience important roles on your team. A player that experiences being part of a hands-on, big play is a player that will work harder to make plays like that again in the future. All of your players should be taught to play the game by the rules and to respect for the other teams, coaches, and umpires.

While the League *does* keep scores and standings, we wish to stress the importance of participation, over win records. We want to instill the belief that while winning is fun; it is also okay to lose. The great success of our League is due to a philosophy that welcomes every player that wishes to play, encourages players to have a good time, and helps players develop, learn, and grow into the best players they can be.

We hope that your whole family will come out to the ball fields and cheer on all players as they improve their skills from game to game. Our idea of a perfect season is one in which all of your players improve, and everyone signs up to play again next season.

You've Volunteered to Coach, Now What?!

If you're a first-time coach, you may be thinking, "Where do I begin?" "How should I start?" "Why did I volunteer?" The thought of imparting your softball wisdom to the next generation is all of these. BUT, we think deciding to coach is one of the best decisions you will ever make. You will learn more about yourself this season than you could have imagined when you clicked the "volunteer" button. And while the League definitely wants you to have fun, we also want you to succeed, but we hope you do not take this responsibility lightly. You will be leaving a watermark on the young minds in your care.

In the August 2001 issue of *Sport Illustrated for Kids*, a survey in the article entitled Kids Speak Out found that:

- 74% said they had witnessed out of control parents at their games
- 36% said they were embarrassed when witnessing bad parental behavior
- 37% said they witnessed parents yelling at kids
- 27% said they had witnessed parents yelling at coaches or officials
- 25% said they had witnessed coaches yelling at kids or officials

We want to avoid any of the above scenarios. The first assessment that we recommend you make is in evaluating your personal sportsmanship. As a Collegedale Youth Softball League Coach, you are a member of our Culture Keepers, and as such are expected to foster an environment of good sportsmanship within the team as well as encourage good sportsmanship with opponents and officials.

When asked "who most influenced you", many people respond with, "*my coach from...*" You may not realize it yet, but "Coach" is not the only way you will be viewed by your team, your team's parents, and the Collegedale Softball community. This position will frame you as: role model, teacher, parental & authority figure, leader, partner, and FRIEND. The softball players on your team will watch your every move. They will take their cues for all things softball-related from you. So, please, mind your attitude, your words, and your actions. They are watching you, and, sooner or later, will start to emulate you. We want to be sure the impression we leave is a positive one.

The lessons we expect players to learn include the following: ethics, teamwork, cooperation, how to follow rules and directions, how to set and achieve goals, respect for authority, cheering teammates, cheering opponents, hitting, throwing, fielding, and base running.

We know you will do your best to bring your "A-game" to training and coaching of your team!!
Congratulations on choosing to coach and good luck in your season!

League Divisions

Tee-Ball (3 to some 5-year-olds) – Tee-batters are little kids, and, as such, you should expect a long and slow learning process. This is where patience as a coach is a most helpful skill. Skill focus should be on learning the very basics of the sport: how to hold and swing a bat, how to hold the ball and throw, how to run through 1st base, and how to listen to the coaches.

Rookie (K-1st) – Intro players may, or may not, have some knowledge of softball. The learning process will still be slower, but the older kids are starting to get a firm understanding of the basics. Skill focus should be mostly on throwing technique, and proper batting stance and grip.

Junior (2nd-3rd) – Junior players will have differing degrees of ability because some have played in previous years, but some will be new players. Those that are new will need a little more training and attention than veterans that have played the past few years. Skill focus should be on proper throwing technique and contact with a pitched ball. By the season's close, every player should be able to throw, catch, hit a pitched ball, and run bases skillfully. They should also have knowledge of the fielding positions and understand games-situation play making.

Intermediate (4th-5th boy; 4th-6th girls) – Intermediate players will continue to be a mix of newbies and veterans, and their level of game knowledge may be surprising. This is where the game will start to look more like “real ball.” Players are developing nicely now and becoming aware of team interaction. While continuing work on throwing and hitting skills, skill *focus* should be on overthrows and backing up teammates, base running, catching fly balls. Players should also understand games-situation play making.

JV Boys (6th-8th) - For boys, JV is where we introduce player pitch, and, in doing so, the tone of the games change. Players pitch for the whole game. The level of player skill and knowledge becomes more defined, and players start taking their roles in the game more seriously. Skill focus should be on pitching strength, sliding, and complex playmaking. Skills from lower divisions should also be included in practice plans.

Senior Girls (7th-12th) – Senior Girls is where we introduce player pitch for the ladies. As with JV, girls pitch for the entire game. The level of player skill and knowledge becomes more defined, and players start taking their roles in the game more seriously. Skill focus should be on pitching strength, sliding, and complex playmaking. Skills from lower divisions should also be included in practice plans.

Senior Boys (9th-12th) – Senior Boys division is unlike any other division in our league. This is the only division that plays modified fast pitch softball, and, therefore, the speed of the game is very quick. Skill focus for Senior Boys should be on sliding, stealing bases, fast pitching, and complex playmaking. Skills from lower divisions should also be included in practice plans.

Getting Ready

Evaluation Day (a.k.a. Try-Outs)

This is the first event of the season. As Coach, we strongly suggest that you attend, watch, take notes, and participate in your division's evaluation day. This will give you a sense of Player skill level in your division and will familiarize you with the Players from which you will be selecting at Draft. The League will have evaluators at each station rating Players on ability and technique. Each Player will be given a score that will be used during the Draft to help establish balanced teams within the division.

Coaches Meeting

YOU ARE HERE! The season is palpable now. We hope everyone's questions are answered in the Coaches Meeting, but if they are not, please do remember to reach out to us!

Draft

Draft Day is where the bat meets the ball, so to speak. Hopefully, before Draft Day, you have spoken to or met with your Head / Assistant Coach and gotten to know one another a bit.

Coaches **MUST** choose an Assistant Coach **PRIOR** to entering the Draft room. If either Coach has children in the division, they will be added to said Team before the beginning of the Draft.

Draft will begin by placing all children of Coaches on the appropriate teams, thereby, giving each Team a default Team Score. Drafting will then circle to the Coach with the lowest Team Score. The Coach with the lowest score will choose from among the pool of Players; the Player's evaluation score will be added to that Coach's Team Score and will result in a new Team Score. Drafting will again circle to the Coach with the lowest Team Score and will proceed in this manner until all eligible Players are chosen.

Draft Rules

Points based Draft

If there is concern about a Player's Score, major scores adjustments can be discussed prior to starting the draft.

Lowest points total picks first

2-minute selection time

- At the buzzer, if no choice has been made, the points-based top available Player is awarded

Only Head Coach and ONE Assistant may attend the Draft

Trading of Players after Draft will **not** be allowed

****A Zoom option will be available for those that cannot attend in person. Contact the Commissioner for more information.****

Your Team

Equipment

The League will loan out basic equipment on Draft Day after your scheduled draft time. This equipment includes balls, helmets, batting tees, face masks, and catcher's equipment, depending on the divisional needs. Players are expected to provide their own ball gloves, cleats, batting gloves, and pants. Equipment will be returned to the commissioner upon completion of your final game. The league will also provide each player with a team shirt that is part of their uniform. Each player is required to wear their team shirt for game eligibility.

Players

Every Player is different. Each will have their own strengths and weaknesses. Just as each player is different so will each age group have their own advantages and struggles. Your job as Coach is to understand and embrace those strengths AND weaknesses, and to be mindful of the abilities and limitations of the level at which you are coaching, not only physically, but mentally as well.

Player Etiquette

In recent seasons, there has been an increasing incidence of poor sportsmanship in the form of taunting, foul language, and disrespect of Officials and opposing Players. This has been seen mostly in the Senior Boys division, but it is trickling down to the middle divisions. This behavior is absolutely unacceptable!

As Coach, Player sportsmanship is ultimately YOUR responsibility. If you notice this behavior, please address it with your Players as it arises. If the behavior cannot be curbed by your interaction with the Player, next steps may be needed, including bringing in the Commissioner, Player Parent(s), and the Board. Please contact us if you need our help addressing a situation.

Your expectations for Player behavior should be clearly stated at the beginning of the season. We suggest gathering your Players at your first practice, make introductions, and then have a conversation about your expectations, not only for their growth as Players and what they will learn this season, but about your expectations for their behavior during practices *and* games.

For the younger players, this is probably all you will need, and maybe, it won't be needed at all. For older players, be upfront about possible repercussions for poor sportsmanship behaviors. Keep it short and to the point, then move on to your practice plan. When/if problems arise during the season, it will be easy to refer to your initial meeting and remind them of the conversation and your stated expectations.

Parents

Your Players' Parents can be a Coach's biggest ally! Communication with them will be the key to a smoothly run season. Communication can be one of the most important and most difficult undertakings, of your coaching career. **We recommend that you contact them as soon as you receive your player list from the Commissioner.**

Planning a Parent Meeting at the beginning or end of your 1st practice may be highly beneficial for you and your team. It only needs to take about 10-15 minutes and in that time you can:

- Make Introductions & talk about your background
- Explain YOUR practice & team philosophy
 - Values & expected culture for your team
 - Hopes & goals for the team's season and for each player
 - Policy on player field time
- Discuss *Parent Etiquette*
 - The League's expectations of Parent behavior
 - Respect the Rules – Help Players understand why we have rules & encourage conversational & healthy conflict resolution.
 - Respect the Officials & their authority during games – No arguing, booing, taunting, profane language. Only coaches should address game officials!
 - Respect the Scorekeepers – Please give them space. The more people bother them, the more likely they will miss something.
 - Respect the Coaches – Let the coach do the coaching! No bleacher coaching!
 - Respect the Players – Ridiculing or yelling at any child from any team is unacceptable.
 - Respect the Opposing Team – They are here to have fun & learn while trying to win also. *They are also our friends!* Please applaud them for a job well done too!
 - Be a positive role model & encourage sportsmanship – Praise Players for competing fairly & trying hard, this takes priority over the desire to win.
 - Remember when children hear Parents talk about their coach, their teammates, & the League, it can taint their view of the game and their desire to play. It can also taint their view of the Parent. Don't make them choose sides!
 - Prompt drop-off & pick-up
 - Late pick-up procedures
 - Carpool needs
 - Game Day instructions
- Distribute practice schedule & explain how practices will be run

- Explain Player equipment needs
 - ball glove
 - hat & helmet
 - bat & batting gloves
 - face mask
 - cleats
 - ball pants
- Discuss important dates for the team & The League
- Ask for volunteers & circulate a sign-up sheet
 - snack coordinator
 - team scorebook manager
 - dugout organizer
 - outfield / base coaching helpers
- Double check Parent email addresses and phone numbers
 - discuss preferences for communication
 - set up a team text/email
- Distribute Rainout phone number
- Answer Parent questions

You are responsible for parent behavior. If you address a problem with a parent, but there is no adjustment to behavior, please contact the commissioner or a board member. We will be happy to help resolve the situation.

Practices

Schedule

The League will schedule several practices for your team ahead of Opening Ceremonies. The League Coordinator will contact you with your team's practice schedule. **Please share the practice schedule with your team immediately so Parents and Players can plan for them accordingly.** Remember, good communication is key to successful attendance.

You are welcome to schedule practices beyond what the League schedules for you, only if said practices do not interfere with another team's scheduled practice time. *Extra practices must be requested via email to the League Coordinator.*

Plan and Drill

Practices are the foundation to great game play! The more your Players get together, using the softball and bat, the faster they will learn, and the more they will start to function as a unit. A well-run practice will keep every Player busy and engaged every minute of the practice and eager for the next drill. Since the focus of The League is Player development, each practice should contain drills in all the fundamentals of the sport - throwing, fielding, hitting, and base running. Repetition of these skills is essential to building solid, fundamentally sound Players.

Create a practice plan and set a routine! If YOU know what is coming next in your practices, you will be able to relax and have fun while keeping the kids focused and your practices from falling into chaos. A practice plan is as simple as scheduling which drills to run in what order and for

how many minutes. Always add warm-ups and cool-downs to the beginning and end of the practices. This will aid muscle recovery for the Players.

Coaching 101

If you missed our Coach's Training, then you missed some great pointers and drills for your use from former NCAA Division II Coach and Athletic Director, Brad Durby! Clips from his talk can be found at **CDaleSoftball.com** at the top of the page under the **>Coaches >Coach Training** tabs. There, you will find **>Catching**, **>Hitting**, **>Fielding**, and **>Throwing Drills** broken down into easy-to-use procedures so you can teach even the youngest players to use proper technique. These are great drills on which to build practices.

During practices, be sure Players are hustling on and off the field when getting water and changing drill stations. (This is good practice for games!) Call drills by their name so Players associate that specific drill with the drill's set up. This allows for quick transition on the Player's part to what you are planning next.

As your Players develop, you may think to use more complex drills. Unless your Team is truly advanced, the basic, fundamental skills are really what needs to be taught. All drills can be modified to create a bigger challenge, and the layout of practice can be rearranged to create more interest.

Also, we recommend avoiding practices that focus on a solitary skill; as in, only focusing on hitting for the entirety of the practice. These types of practices can leave most Players on the sidelines while everyone focuses on the single Player at bat. And, this type of practice can compromise the skills that have been developed in previous practices.

Play Ball!

Opening Ceremonies

Ready or not, we have arrived at the beginning of the season. Watch your email for instructions from the LEague Coordinator related to scheduled events for the day. If your Team has a game today, don't forget the equipment and water for the team. We also suggest bringing a Sharpie, so you, or a volunteer, can write Player names on the hats before they are distributed.

Advise Parents to arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the start time! You and your players will pick-up uniform shirts for your team right before Opening Ceremonies. Find your Team's position along the outfield fences, then inform your Parents where to find you. After all Players arrive and are dressed out, you may want to snap a couple Team photos to distribute to Parents later. (Be sure to check with parents before posting on social media.)

At this point, Parents should go find a seat because festivities are about to begin!

Game Day

Prior to game day, touch base with your volunteers to clarify whether they have any questions about their role. At your final practice before game day (and probably via the group text the day before), remind Parents to **arrive at least 30 minutes prior to game time** for Player warm-ups and last-minute game preparations. This will help you complete your batting line-up and field rotation schedule.

Dugout Organizers will help keep equipment orderly as well as keeping the on-deck and “in the hole” Players ready for their turns at bat.

Snack Coordinators, if you choose to have one, will have arranged a schedule for Parents to bring pre- or post-game snacks for the kids. This schedule should be set prior to the first game day.

Outfield helpers are allowed only in the Tee-Ball and Rookie divisions. Some Coaches choose to work this position themselves for consistency in Player instruction. Some Coaches choose to manage from the dugout while the Team is in the field so Players can get used to watching and listening to Coach instruction from the sidelines. Only two may be utilized, and they must stay in the grass while a play is live.

Base coaching helpers are allowed at all levels. Again, it is at Coach's discretion whether to coach a base or manage from the dugout during a Team's at-bat.

Team Scorekeepers are useful by providing a backup to the League's Official Scorekeeper's book. Additionally, keeping team stats on the GameChanger® app can provide valuable data that can inform future coaching decisions. Team Scorekeepers can help you keep track of how well your Players are doing, see where Players need work, and keep an eye on the competition. The traditional way to keep score is with pencil and a scorebook. However, it's a new era, and we recommend the Game Changer® app. It is as simple as putting finger to screen and anyone can use it!

Safety

We encourage you to be vigilant about basic team safety. Make sure players never step onto the field, both in practice and at a game, without the proper protective equipment, or P.P.E.

Little pitcher must always wear a face mask. Defensive players should never enter the field of play without a glove to protect themselves. Batters should never exit the dugout without a helmet. Catchers must always wear a helmet and face mask. Chest-pad, knee & shin guards are also required for catchers in Senior Boys division.

If a Player forgets, a gentle reminder will get them back on track.

Two Adults

In the unlikely event of a Coach or Player injury, or other emergency that could remove a Coach from the ball field, it is good practice to always have another adult on-hand. The second person does not have to be a Coach. If the Coach needs to leave for a medical reason or attend to an injured Player, the second adult would be available to call 911, call parents, and to supervise the other Players until help arrives. In this event, practice should be halted, and Players dismissed to their parents, when available.

Ice & Bandages

In the same vein, items we suggest bringing to every Team event are: ice, a few plastic sandwich bags, ACE-style bandages, and adhesive bandages. Accidents happen. The Coach needs to be prepared, even if no one else is.

In case a player gets hit by a ball, bat, or another player, ice will help soothe the pain until they can get the injury assessed by a parent or medical professional. At the practice & game fields, ice is not easily accessible. If you keep some ice in a cooler or a large double-walled cup, you will always be ready in case of emergency.

ACE-style bandages can help stabilize or immobilize a wound that should not move. Adhesive bandages will cover any minor scrape or cut, but for larger injuries, medical attention will be required.

First-Aid

Most injuries that you will encounter at the ball field will be simple scuffs, bumps, and bruises. However, softball is an active, contact sport and more severe injuries *can* happen.

We will address some of the most common injuries below. However, this list is *not* comprehensive, nor is it meant to ever replace professional medical advice. We expect **you**, the Coach, to use your best judgment when managing any in-game injury and to call for assistance immediately when needed.

We also encourage you to NEVER let the Player or Parent make the decision (or influence you) about whether the Player is well enough to return to the field of play. This is YOUR decision. The safety and well-being of Players and the Team is your responsibility. **If you need support in a no-play decision, please call the Commissioner.**

Basic Injury Care:

Basic injury care begins with R.I.C.E. It is the way to treat most minor injuries on the ball field.

R.I.C.E stands for:

R-est: Wounded tissues will need recovery time. 24 – 48 hours without stress to the area is best, if possible. If a problem persists, the Player should seek the advice of a medical professional.

I-ice:

Ice can relieve swelling and pain induced by an injury. Apply as soon as possible and in 20-minutes on and 20-minutes off increments. Do not apply directly to skin!

C-ompression: A compression wrap to an injured joint or contusion can help reduce swelling. If a problem persists more than 48 hours, the Player should seek the advice of a medical professional.

E-levate: Elevate the injured extremity 6 – 10” above the heart. This will aid fluid drainage and help reduce swelling.

Severe injuries need to be treated by a medical professional immediately. These include dislocations, fractures, or pain and swelling that persist longer than 48 hours, and ANY head injury.

REMEMBER: If an injury cannot be easily treated, the Player will need to seek medical attention, or, in severe cases, you will need to call 911 immediately!

Closed Wounds, i.e., bruises:

Signs/symptoms: Skin will not be broken, no blood on skin's surface. Discoloration, redness, swelling, painful to touch, possible loss of use.

Treatment: Use the R.I.C.E. method.

Open Wounds, i.e., cuts of any kind:

Signs/symptoms: Skin will be broken, and blood may be visible

Treatment: Wear gloves, if available. Clean wound with soap and water. Control bleeding by applying pressure with a clean cloth or sterile gauze. Apply bandage. If you cannot control the bleeding, seek medical help. If the Player has been impaled, **DO NOT REMOVE THE IMPALEMENT**, and seek immediate medical attention!

Muscle Injuries:

Signs/symptoms: Muscle injuries do not always exhibit visible symptoms. Sometimes they exhibit as a contusion, or bruise, below the skin. The injury may be tender for a day or two.

Treatments: Once again, these injuries can be managed with the R.I.C.E. method. If a strain bothers a player for longer than a couple days, the Player should visit their personal physician.

Ankle Injuries:

Signs/symptoms: Often, the difference between a severe sprain or a fracture of an ankle can only be determined by a medical professional. These injuries should all be treated as a possible fracture until the Player can visit their personal physician.

Treatment: Use the R.I.C.E. method. Do not wrap the ankle too tightly. Elevate the injury. If the nature of the injury is unknown, the Player should visit their personal physician.

Breaks/Fractures:

Signs/symptoms: Closed breaks – The skin is not broken or bleeding. No visible bones.
Open breaks – The skin is broken and bleeding externally. Bones may be showing.

Treatment: Use your good judgment! You may need to call emergency services. It is possible, however, that a Player's Parent can take them for treatment if the wound is not severe. Be sure to report injuries of this nature to the Commissioner.

Head & Neck Injuries:

A blow to the head is very dangerous! Any blow to the head can also result in a spinal injury. If you suspect a spinal injury, DO NOT move the Player!! Keep the head, neck, and spine exactly as you found them! If you need guidance, call 911! Head and neck injuries are not for amateurs.

Signs/symptoms:

Unconscious Players – Assume an unconscious Player that has suffered a head injury ALSO HAS a spinal injury. Do NOT bend the neck. Stabilize the Player's head exactly as they were found to prevent movement. Check for severe bleeding. Do not stop the flow of blood or fluid from ears. Do not remove objects embedded in the skull.

Conscious Players – Check for spinal injury by noting arm or leg weakness or paralysis. Stabilize the head and neck as they were found to prevent movement. Do not block the flow of blood or fluid from ears. Ask the Player what day it is, where s/he is, their home address, etc. You can also ask a short list of 5 to 6 items and have the Player repeat them back in order. If the Player cannot complete these simple tasks, there may be a significant problem. Failing short-term memory tests indicates a concussion.

Concussion – Players that experience one or more of the symptoms listed below after a collision, a blow to the head, or fall may have a concussion.

Symptoms reported by athlete:

- Headache or “pressure” in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems
- Double or blurred vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Feeling “not right” or “feeling down”

Signs observed by Coaches or Parent

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets instructions
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even if briefly!)
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes
- Cannot recall events prior to or after the hit or fall

If your Player takes a blow to the head, best practice is to remove the Player for the rest of the game and seek medical attention. Ask for written instructions from the Player’s personal healthcare provider before allowing return to play in future games.

Head Injury Follow-Up

A blow to the head might produce a headache, nausea, vomiting, drowsiness, vision problems, mobility problems, speech problems, seizures, or convulsions. If a headache lasts more than one or two days or increases in severity, seek medical attention. If nausea lasts more than two hours or if vomiting begins a few hours after the injury, seek medical attention.

Seek medical attention immediately if the victim is disoriented or confused, experiences double vision, if the eyes fail to move together, if one pupil appears to be larger than the other, if the victim has mobility problems or is unsteady walking, has slurred speech or cannot talk, or if the victim has muscle spasms, seizures, or convulsions. Seek medical attention immediately whenever you are in doubt about a head or neck injury.

REMEMBER: If an injury cannot be easily treated, the Player will need to seek medical attention, or, in severe cases, you will need to call 911 immediately!!

Adapted from the National Safety Council's *First Aid and CPR*, published by Jones and Bartlett.
Copyright 2004, PONY Baseball/Softball, Inc.

Used without permission.

INJURED PLAYER POLICY (2024)

We support and enforce the USA Softball regulation that "no player shall begin a game with the status of injured." The safety and well-being of each participant in the Collegedale Recreation Association's youth league program is and should always be top priority and should always be put ahead of all other agendas.

INJURED PLAYER POLICY - INJURY CATEGORIES

Chronic Injury (with the use of injury preventive gear) – This player can participate as normal.

For example, someone who has a chronic knee injury that has recovered to maximum potential and uses gear to prevent a re-injury.

Acute Injury (with use of protective gear) – This player should not participate unless they have medical clearance from a physician or physician extender. For example, someone who has a new injury that is in the acute phase of healing and has protective gear on (i.e. cast/immobilizer/boot).

Definition of gear:

Preventive – allows full range of motion and is intended to prevent injury/re-injury

Protective – limits range of motion or immobilizes a joint or limb.

IN-GAME INJURIES

CRA policy (2016) states: A player who incurs an in-game injury that **greatly impacts their ability to walk or run** should always use good judgment (as should their coach and their parent/guardian) and exit the game completely at the time of injury without penalty. (Reminder: players may always exit game without penalty due to health and/or employment)

If such an injury occurs while the player is a batter-runner or a base runner, and the player has safely reached first base and has a status of "safe" once play stops, then the league's new once-per-player-per-game "courtesy runner" home rule will be invoked/granted (due to it being an in-game injury)

Also, if the injured player decides to remain in the game rather than exit the game completely, they are doing so with the understanding that they must run the bases as a batter-runner (and/or as a base runner) **without the option of additional "courtesy runners."**

One purpose for limiting the use of the "courtesy runner" is to encourage coaches and parents/guardians to remove players completely from the game who incur an injury in an effort to avoid risking further damage to their injury. If they feel the injured player can continue playing defense and bat, then the assumption is that the player is healthy enough to also run bases. Another purpose for limiting its use is to eliminate abuse of the league's home rule for a "courtesy runner" (i.e. coaches and/or players claiming "in-game injury" so that a faster player can run for a slower player).

<https://cdalesoftball.com/content/17470/Youth-Home-Rules>

Youth Softball Home Rules

Rules pertaining to All Divisions

- Length of game is 7 innings and/or 60 minutes (75 minutes for all-star games; 70 minutes for postseason tournament) EXCEPTION: no clock on championship games
- Tied games will be played out until there is a winner via the official International Tie-Breaker rule. This rule will be in effect for all games that exceed 7 innings & still have time remaining on the game clock with the score remaining tied, AND/OR for all games that have a tied score & are starting a brand-new inning after the game clock has expired (applies to regular season, postseason tournament, and all-star games)
- Minimum number of players required is 6 (Meaning: a team must have 6 players from its own official roster to avoid a forfeit). Short-handed teams that have only 6 – 9 of their own players present are allowed the following options: a maximum of 4 play-up players if only 6 are present, a maximum of 3 if only 7 are present, a maximum of 2 if only 8 are present, or a maximum of 1 play-up player if only 9 are present.

Play-up players MUST come from the division immediately below and MUST wear their own team's uniform to be eligible to play in game. A team's late-arriving player(s) MUST substitute in for the play-up player(s) IF it gives their team more than 10 total players!

Meaning: they MUST take over the same exact spot in the batting line-up that was held by the exiting play-up player. Also, if this scenario happens while the team is currently in the field for defense, a simultaneous swap will occur once play stops and "time" is called, resulting in the play-up player[s] exiting the field of play and the late-arriving player[s] entering the field of play.

PLEASE NOTE: this entire home rule now applies to all regular season AND postseason games!

- Teams must bat all their players
- Players and coaches from both teams will line up for pre-game prayer, and are now encouraged to participate in post-game prayer together
- A team's batting line-up is considered "official" at the time of pre-game prayer and no changes can be made after this point! (i.e., moving players to different spots in the order; subtracting listed players who are not present)

EXCEPTION #1: players who arrive late (including play-up players, if a team's numbers warrant such a course) can be added to a team's batting line-up at any point during game and

will be added to the bottom of their line-up (unless they were already listed on the starting batting line-up & left on despite being absent, or unless they are substituting in for a play-up player, in which case they would then take over the same exact spot in the batting line-up that was held by the exiting play-up player.

EXCEPTION #2: players may exit game entirely, without penalty, due to health and/or employment!

PLEASE NOTE: teams are NOT allowed to replace a play-up player[s] with another play-up player[s] in their batting line-up!

- There is a 10-minute grace period for all games! This 10-minute grace period only exists to allow teams to reach their minimum requirement of 6 of their own players! GAME CLOCK WILL STILL START AT GAME TIME! A team will lose its game via forfeit if they do not have 6 of their own players at the conclusion of the 10-minute grace period. If neither team has their 6 players at the conclusion of the 10-minute grace period it will result in the game being a "double forfeit."
- A team will lose their current game via forfeit if they are forced to finish the game with less than 6 of their own players, regardless if they currently have more runs than their opponent or are currently tied with their opponent (game will end in a "double forfeit" if both teams encounter this scenario simultaneously) ONLY EXCEPTION: players may always exit game entirely, without penalty, due to health and/or employment!
- If a player experiences an in-game injury which affects their ability to walk or run, a "courtesy runner" will be granted once the batter-runner safely reaches first base (or for a base runner who has the status of "safe" when play stops). the "courtesy runner" is whichever player was the last "put out". This option may only be used once per player per game! EXCEPTION: any current base runner who experiences blood-related interruptions and has a status of "safe" when play stops can be granted a "courtesy runner", regardless of if they have already previously reached their one-time limit for that game (Reminder: players may exit game entirely, without penalty, due to health and/or employment)
- The ball is "live" if a batter's final "foul" is caught in the air while in foul territory
- Players must be in their league-provided uniform (shirt) to be eligible to play in game (league-provided hat is now optional!). The league asks that its league-provided uniforms not be intentionally altered! (Including the use of duct tape, etc. on shirts) In addition, long pants (baseball style, jeans, etc.) are required--NO SHORTS ALLOWED!

(Please note: long pants should not have any exposing holes in them prior to start of game)

- Coaches who wish to issue a protest during game MUST inform the umpire(s), prior to next pitch, of their decision to protest (i.e., to continue playing current game "under protest" if done during regular season) and MUST provide a \$20 fee which will be returned to them if final ruling goes in their favor. The requirement of this \$20 fee applies to regular season and postseason tournament. Reminder: ruling on a protest will be made on the spot during postseason tournament, but not during regular season!
- There shall be no agreement between coaches of teams in conflict with any article in these rules. Coaches will be expected to enforce all rules. When coaches make an agreement to disregard or disallow a rule or policy, the infraction can be protested by teams other than those playing in the actual contest, a penalty will be a double forfeit with both teams given a loss in the standings. There is no statute of limitation on filing the protest; the matter need only be brought, in writing, to the attention of The League.
- **Ejection Policy:**

When a player or a member of the coaching staff is ejected from a game, they shall leave the field immediately and take no further part in the game. They MAY NOT sit in the stands and may not be recalled. A member of the coaching staff ejected from a game MUST NOT be present at the game site for the remainder of that game. As an enrolled league participant, any player or member of the coaching staff ejected from a game is automatically suspended for his/her team's next physically played game and MAY NOT be in attendance at the game site.

Any player or member of the coaching staff ejected from a game MUST also appear before the League's Disciplinary Committee, who may recommend no further action, or make recommendations to the full board for further disciplinary action. Players or a member of the coaching staff with more than one ejection will not be allowed to finish coaching or playing the season with their team.

Coaching staff are also responsible for communicating the expected behavior to the team's parents and relatives. In the event that a team's parent or relative is ejected, they will be ordered to leave the complex immediately. If they refuse to go and continue to cause a problem, the umpire will halt the game and ask the coach of the team to handle the problem.

If any ejected person doesn't comply within the ejection policy, disrupting the game, the game will be suspended immediately and subject to forfeiture.

The disciplinary committee has the right to adjudicate ejections on a case by case basis.

Safety Specific Rules

- An automatic "dead ball out" will be called on a batter for slinging their bat during their swing
- Metal/steel cleats are not allowed!
- All batters, base-runners, and on-deck batters MUST wear helmets when they step out of the dugout onto the field of play and are subject to being called "out" if they remove their helmets before entering their dugout (this would be their first "out" if they were "safe" on the play, or their second "out" if already called "out" on the play... also, if this occurs subsequent to or during a run, the run counts, but the player will be called "out")

PLEASE NOTE: chin straps are optional!

- No child under the age of 16 is allowed to be used as a base coach, PERIOD! Minors who are ages 16-17 MUST wear a batting helmet if being used as a base coach!!
In addition, minors who are ages 16-17 MUST pitch from the pitcher's plate (a.k.a. rubber) if they are being used as a "coach pitcher" for Junior and Intermediate divisions!
- A batter-runner who carries their bat with them and reaches or touches first base while still having the bat in their possession will be called "out" (this "out" can occur on a live play or on any scenario where the batter is awarded first base)
- The following types of jewelry are not allowed: all watches, all types of bracelets, all types of necklaces/chains, all dangling piercings (players who refuse to remove said items will not be eligible to play in game!)

EXCEPTION: medical ID's may remain but must be taped to player's body face-up

Division Specific Rules

Senior Girls

USA Softball slow pitch rules will govern play along with the above list of CRA home/local rules, plus the following division-specific home rules:

- This division uses an 11-inch ASA certified softball and approved ASA certified bats
- Per official USA Softball slow pitch rules, batters will now start with a count of 1-1 (1 ball, 1 strike)
- Batters are allowed only 1 "extra foul" once they have 2 "strikes" against them

Senior Boys

USA Softball 10-man modified pitch rules along with the above list of CRA home/local rules will govern play, plus the following division-specific home rules:

- This division uses a 12-inch ASA certified softball and approved ASA certified bats
- Batters are allowed only 1 "extra foul" once they have 2 "strikes" against them
- A "courtesy runner" is required for the catcher if on base with 2 "outs"
- Base runners must remain in contact with base until the pitched ball reaches the front edge of home plate

JV Boys

USA Softball slow pitch rules along with the above list of CRA home/local rules will govern play, plus the following division-specific home rules:

- This division uses a 12-inch ASA certified softball and approved ASA certified bats
- Per official USA Softball slow pitch rules, batters will now start with a count of 1-1 (1 ball, 1 strike)
- Batters are allowed only 1 "extra foul" once they have 2 "strikes" against them

Intermediate

The above list of CRA home/local rules applies, plus the following division-specific home rules:

- The division uses an 11-inch ASA certified softball and approved ASA certified bats
- A team's maximum number of runs per inning is 7
- Maximum number of pitches per batter is 5; however, a batter's at-bat is now final if they swing-n-miss while already having 2 "strikes" against them
- If a batted ball hits the pitching coach it is ruled as a "dead ball, no pitch" (which does not count as a pitch against batter)
- Intentional walks are NOT allowed in this division
- Infield Fly rule does not apply to this division

- Maximum number of players allowed on defense is 10 (coaches are NOT allowed in the outfield while their team is playing defense)
- The little/player pitcher spot is no longer required at time of each pitch if a team has less than its max of 10 players on defense.

REMINDER: little pitcher MUST always start with at least one foot inside (or touching) the circle until batter makes contact with pitch and, for safety reasons, MUST wear a fielder's mask!

Junior

The above list of CRA home/local rules applies, plus the following division-specific home rules:

- This division now uses a 10-inch softball and approved ASA certified bats PLEASE NOTE: baseball bats are no longer allowed for this division!!
- Regular fair/foul territories will now dictate play
- A team's maximum number of runs per inning is 7
- Maximum number of pitches per batter is 5
- If a batted ball hits the pitching coach it is ruled as a "dead ball, no pitch" (which does not count as a pitch against batter)
- Intentional walks are NOT allowed in this division
- Infield Fly rule does not apply to this division
- All players play on defense
- The little pitcher spot is no longer required at time of each pitch (regardless of how many players a team has on defense)

Reminder: little pitcher must always start with at least one foot inside (or touching) the circle until batter makes contact with pitch and, for safety reasons, MUST now wear a fielder's mask! (League-provided hat is optional for player[s] wearing a fielder's mask)

- Only up to 2 coaches are allowed in the outfield (in the grass and in fair territory) while their team is playing defense

Rookie

- The following items must be worn at all times during a game: league provided uniform shirt and hat. Pants without holes. Shorts are not allowed. Metal cleats are not allowed.
- This division now uses a 9.5" ball. The use of a batting tee is optional for every swing. The following safety gear is required at all times: catcher's mask for the catcher, batting helmet(s) for all batters, on-deck batters, and base runners (chin straps are optional)
- Outs are counted in Rookie. When a player is out, he/she must be removed from the field of play, however, each team takes a turn and bats through their line-up and then switches sides.
- The game is 60 minutes.
- Score is not kept.
- Each player is allowed up to 5 swings at batting, either by coach pitch or by tee.

- All players are allowed to play defense.
- All players must bat.
- For safety reasons, a player will be called out if he/she throws the bat while in the process of swinging at the pitch, whether contact with the ball is made or not. (Coaches need to teach and emphasize this during practice time!)
- No more than 6 players may play in the infield, this includes little pitcher and catcher; all others must be beyond the baseline.
- The Little Pitcher must start each play with at least one foot inside the pitching circle.
- Bunting is NOT allowed; a player must take a full swing.
- A batted ball hit into fair territory will be considered legal ONLY if the ball goes beyond the chalked arc in front of home plate or the batter's box. A batted ball that does not go beyond the chalked arc or batter's box will be considered a dead ball and counts as one of the five pitches.

T-Ball

- The following items must be worn at all times during a game: league provided uniform shirt and hat. Pants without holes. Shorts are not allowed. Metal cleats are not allowed.
- Players must wear a helmet at all times while on the playing field. Chin straps are required! The use of a tee is optional for every swing. T-ball uses a Flexi-ball.
- There are no outs in t-ball, if a player gets tagged the player can remain on base.
- Each team takes a turn and bats through their line-up and then switches sides.
- The game is 60 minutes.
- Each player is allowed up to 5 swings at batting, either by coach pitch or by tee.
- All players may play on defense.
- All players bat.
- T-ball does not use a player in the catcher position.
- Little Pitcher must start each play with at least one foot inside the pitching circle.
- Due to T-ball being introductory, there is no limit to the number of infielders.

Ground rules for VM fields

- Baseline fencing outlines field of play
- Batted balls that hit wires over the infield or outfield, regardless of occurring in foul territory or fair territory, are ruled as a "dead ball" (redo pitch)
- Batted balls that stay in fair territory and hit wires beyond the home run fence are ruled as a "home run"

Ground rules for CA field

- Baseline fencing outlines field of play
- Batted balls that stay in fair territory and make contact with the ground prior to entering the outfield trees/bushes are ruled as a "ground rule double"

- Batted balls that stay in fair territory and directly reach the outfield trees/bushes while remaining in the air are ruled as a "home run"

Field dimensions for all CRA youth league games

- Distance between bases: 60' for all divisions (measured from the back point of home plate to the back edge of first/third base)
- Distance for pitcher's plate: (measured from back point of home plate to the front edge of pitcher's plate)
50' for Sr Girls and JV Boys
46' for Sr Boys
- Radius for pitcher's circle: 8' (does not apply to Sr Girls and JV Boys)

<https://cdalesoftball.com/content/17470/Youth-Home-Rules>