



# PYAA Fast Pitch Softball Rules & Regulations

## Rules for Recreation Leagues Grades PreK-8th

Revised 7/1/2024

### Introduction

The recreation leagues are instructional leagues with modified rules to aid in the training of our young players. Many rules apply to all ages; therefore, this set of rules was created to simplify the rules of fast pitch softball. Section I – General Rules applies to all leagues. Section II- League Specific Rules to assist in the development of our youth.

### Section I – General Rules

The following general rules apply to all leagues of Pickerington Fast Pitch Softball.

#### 1) Goals and Objectives:

- a) Teach the rules and skills of fast pitch softball.
- b) Teach and encourage the values of team play, fairness, and sportsmanship.
- c) Have Fun.

#### 2) Sportsmanship:

- a) Player/Parent Code of Conduct - The PYAA sportsmanship guidelines will be strictly adhered to. If a player or parent does not conduct oneself in an appropriate manner, actions may be taken and applied as outlined in the Charter & By-Laws of the PYAA, Section 1-Behavior and Attitude. All player participants and their parents were required to review, understand and sign the Registration Form.
- b) Coach Code of Conduct - All coaches are expected to conduct themselves in a respectable, responsible, and mature manner at all times to achieve the goals and objectives in Section 1, Item 1. If a coach does not conduct oneself in an appropriate manner, actions may be taken and applied as outlined in the Charter & By-Laws of the PYAA, By-Laws, Section 1-Behavior and Attitude.



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## 3) Eligibility:

a) This program is available to all youth who are residents of the Pickerington Local School District. Girl's grades PreK through 8<sup>th</sup> as of (spring ball) current school year (fall ball) entering school year, are allowed to play in the following leagues:

- 1) Little Diamonds TeeBall: Grades PreK-Kindergarten
  - 2) Copper: Grades 1<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup>
    - a) Any Kindergarten athlete who is 6YO as of May 1<sup>st</sup>, may elect to 'play-up' into this Copper League. Otherwise, it is advised they register for TeeBall.
  - 3) Bronze: Grades 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>
  - 4) Silver: Grades 5<sup>th</sup>- 8<sup>th</sup>
    - a) All Silver participants must attend pre-draft evaluations.
- b) OHSAA Rules – PYAA must monitor compliance with OHSAA rules. Please refer to OHSAA rules 10.A.1, 10.A.2, 10.A.3, 10.A.4, 10.A.5, 10.B and 10.C. Basically, a school player may not meet, practice, scrimmage, game play or tournament play during school season (3/1 to 6/1). From 6/1 to 7/31, school players may meet, practice, scrimmage, game play and tournament play. From 8/1 to 3/1, not more than four school players from the same school, same squad, may meet, practice, scrimmage, game play and tournament play. DO NOT take the above definition as the exact interpretation. If you have any doubt as to the interpretation of the rules, please contact the Softball President to assist in the interpretation. ANY RULES NOT OUTLINED IN PYAA RULES WILL REVERT TO OHSAA RULES.
- c) Call-Up Players: Directors of each league will compile a list of available players to "play up". The coaches will ask the parents if they want to make their athlete daughter available to "play up". The coach will forward the name and phone number of the interested players to the League Director. The Director will provide the "play-up" list to all the team coaches in the league. Under no circumstances may a coach utilize non-roster players. If a player is used that is either not on the roster or was not obtained through the League Director's "play up" list, that team will forfeit that game. "Play up" athletes may only be used to fill out a roster of the call up team to a total of 10 players. If an athlete has been requested to "play up" and 10 or more players show up for the call up team, that player will not be allowed to play. Call-Ups cannot be utilized if it is during players regularly scheduled game or practice. Call-Up players are not eligible to play the pitcher position (Silver league) or in any tournament games.



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## 4) Format:

- a) Official Time - **It is important that all games start on time.** The umpire will have the official time and coaches should check with the umpire prior to the game to avoid problems. All coaches should have their players at the field 15 minutes prior to the scheduled start time.
  - i. Official Time for TeeBall is **45 Minutes**
  - ii. Official Time for Copper/Bronze is **60 Minutes**
  - iii. Official Time for Silver Games is **90 Minutes**
- b) Home / Away Designation - Home team will sit on first base side. Visitors will sit on the third base side. Designation will be determined by which team is listed first or second on the schedule. Home team is listed second.
- d) Suspended Play - The umpire can call or suspend a game at his/her discretion if there is inclement weather. If thunder is heard or **lightning is sighted before or during a game, the game will be delayed a minimum of 30 minutes.** Players should leave the field and sit in their cars. If a game cannot continue after reasonable time and is not a complete game, it is declared a "no game" and will be rescheduled or canceled if unable to reschedule. Stats and innings pitched will not be counted if the game is a "no game". If teams have completed three innings or at least 60 minutes and the game is called, the score will revert back to the end of the last full inning played and will be declared a complete game. Exception: Any Silver or Gold tournament game must resume exactly where it was stopped, and finished at another time. The rescheduled remainder of the game is chosen by the league director—not the coaches. I.e: The rescheduled game may conflict with certain players. Batting order must stay the same unless you are missing a player or adding a player. If you are missing a player she will be removed without penalty. Any additional player will be added to the bottom of the lineup. If any players are on base at the time of delay are unable to make the makeup game, they will be replaced by the last recorded out.
- e) Cancelled Games- The League Director or a Diamond Board member will notify coaches of cancelled games. Please do not assume a game is called because it is raining. We will try to give as much notice as possible so the coaches can contact the parents. Field status will be updated on the PYAA Facebook page, as soon as possible.



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## 5) Facilities:

- a) Diamond Set Up – PYAA field maintenance is responsible for preparing the field prior to play.
  - i. A chalk circle 8 feet radius should be placed around the pitching machines/plates.
  - ii. Batter boxes should be made to regulation with frames that are provided.
- b) Equipment Care & Pick Up Trash - Remind players and parents to please help take care of the equipment and to use the trash receptacles. After each game, teams are responsible for picking up trash in their dugout area. Please designate a parent or assistant coach to help. If the game completed is the last of the day, make sure all equipment is placed into the field boxes and ensure the boxes are locked.
- c) Base Path Distances - The distances for base paths will be:
  - i. TeeBall: 45 ft, throwdowns
  - ii. Copper/Bronze/Silver- 60 ft, pegged
- d) Pitching Rubber Distances - The pitching rubbers will be:
  - i. Softball TeeBall/Copper Leagues – 35 feet; Coaches pitching distance should be appropriate for the batter to have success at the plate.
  - ii. Softball Bronze League- 35 feet; Coaches must be inside the pitching circle.
  - iii. Softball Silver League – 35 feet; Kid-pitcher 1 foot on the pitching rubber.
- e) Official Ball – The official balls to be used will be:
  - i. TeeBall- Optic Yellow 10" Softball
  - ii. Copper, Bronze, & Silver Leagues – Optic Yellow 11" Softball
- f) Pitchers Circle - The diameter of the pitcher's circles will be 8' radius (16' diameter).

## 6) Coaches:

- a) Official Game Results - Coaches should verify score with each other after each inning to ensure no disagreement. Both coaches must e-mail final score to League



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Director within 24 hours of game end. League Directors will post league standings weekly.

- b) Coaches Boxes - Offensive coaches may be placed in the first and third base coaching boxes. If a coach touches a player during live play, that player will be automatically out.
- c) Speed of Play – Let's keep the innings moving. Have line-ups ready before you send the kids out. Have the players hustle on and off the field. Have a coach assist the catcher with her equipment. Players should be encouraged to run on and off the field between innings. There is to be no balls on field during inning switches.
- d) Total Number of Coaches On The Field- There is a maximum limit of 3-coaches allowed in live ball territory for Teeball/Copper/Bronze Leagues and 2-coaches allowed in live ball territory for Silver League.
- e) Throwing Bats- There will be one team warning for a thrown bat, unless that bat hits any person, then it will be an automatic out. All subsequent thrown bats will be an automatic out.
- f) High School Coaches – High School Students can be **Assistant coaches only. Each high school coach must be approved by the softball director.** One high school Assistant per team.

a The Highschool Coach **MAY NOT** be the only coach present at a game or practice.

## 7) Umpires:

- a) Sanctioned and Non-Sanctioned Umpires - PYAA umpires will officiate the games. If for any reason an umpire is not available, coaches or board members are to perform this function.
- b) Strike- Zone – The umpires will be calling a big strike zone; shoulders to knees and one ball width on either side of the plate. A knee-high fastball is our goal.

## 8) Equipment:

- a) Players will be prohibited from wearing metal cleats of any kind or metal toe plates. Players are allowed to wear tennis, soccer, or turf shoes.



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- b) No jewelry will be allowed to be worn by any player at any time. Exception: A player may tape a stud on a recently pierced ear.
- c) Players are required to wear helmets with a face guard.
- d) Players in the pitcher position must wear a face covering (face mask or helmet with a face guard).
- e) Bats must be compliant with OHSAA rules.

## 9) Disputes:

- a) In the event of a play or event that is disputed between coaches, and unresolved by the game official for the reason(s) of the rules being unclear, contradiction, or a paradox, the final call will be decided by the league director's discretion. If the league director happens to be a coach on either team that is in dispute, the final call will be made by the next closest league director. (ie. Silver uses the Bronze director, Bronze uses the Silver director.)

## Section II – Modified Rules for Divisions

The recreation leagues are instructional leagues with modified rules to aid in the training. All OHSAA, ASA, and Section I-General Rules apply to each age group except as described below.

**Little Diamonds Teeball (PreK-Kindergarten): This is an all-girls tee ball league for beginning players as an introduction to softball.** Any player not quite ready for Coach-Pitch only softball also welcome. This is an **instructional** league.

- 1) Game Length: 3 innings/45 minutes.
  - a. Pre-Game Warm-Up: 15 minutes
- 2) Ball Size: 10in
- 3) Pitching Distance: 35 ft\* Coach to pitch from appropriate distance to encourage success at the plate.
- 4) Base Patch Distance: 45 ft; throwdowns
- 5) End of Inning: After all batters have batted. Last batter is the Home Run hitter.
- 6) Scorekeeping: No official score kept.
- 7) Pitching: Coach Pitch encouraged for 3 pitches, if coach feels appropriate for batter and pitch underhand with minimal arc to encourage success at the plate. Tee to be used otherwise or after 3 coach pitches. Player in pitcher position must start each play from inside the pitching circle and wear a face covering. Ball buckets are not to be on field of play. A ball hit off a coach pitcher is considered live.
- 8) Pitches Thrown: Max of 3 Coach pitches thrown. Tee use following.



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- 9) Base limits on a Hit: 1 base per hit. Last batter is the Home Run hitter.
- 10) On-Deck Hitters: Not permitted on field. No practice swings outside of fences will be permitted.
- 11) Hit by Pitch: No base given.
- 12) Lead Off: No. May leave the base when the ball is hit.
- 13) Bunting: Not permitted.
- 14) Base Staking: Not permitted.
- 15) Fake Bunting: Not permitted.
- 16) First Base sliding: Not permitted.
- 17) Sliding (2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, & Home): Permitted.
- 18) Stealing: Not permitted.
- 19) Overthrows: Runners may not advance a base on an overthrow, wild pitch, or passed balls.
- 20) Defensive Players: Traditional positions must be played, excluding Catcher. Deep infield can be considered outfield.
- 21) Defensive Rotation: Required. No player can play the same position in a game.
- 22) Coaching: Defensive on-field coaching is permitted.

**Copper League (1<sup>st</sup> -2<sup>nd</sup> grade): This is an instructional league. Coach-Pitch Only. No Tees.** This league is intended for athletes who are ready for the next level of softball after Tee Ball.

- 1)Game Length: 3 or 4 innings; Max 60 minutes.
- 2)Ball Size: 11in
- 3) Pitching Distance: 35 ft\* Coach to pitch from appropriate distance to encourage success at the plate.
- 4)Base Patch Distance: 60 ft
- 5)End of Inning: 3 outs or 4 runs scored; after a minimum of 5 batters have batted.
- 6)Scorekeeping: Only to change innings. No official score kept.
- 7)Pitching: Coach-Pitch only; Coach should pitch from a standing position and pitch underhand with minimal arc to encourage success at the plate. Player in pitcher position must start each play from inside the pitching circle and wear a face covering. Ball buckets are not to be on field of play. A ball hit off a coach pitcher is considered live.
- 8)Pitches Thrown: Coach Pitch only. Max of 6 pitches unless 6<sup>th</sup> pitch is fouled. If no live play after 6<sup>th</sup> pitch, batter walks.
- 9)Base limits on a Hit:
  - a. 1 if hit to infield



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- b. 2 if ball is hit to the grass. Players can be thrown out if attempting multiple bases.
- 10) Batting: Every player must be in the batting order. Late players are added to the bottom of the order.
- 11) On-Deck Hitters: Not permitted on field. No practice swings outside of fences will be permitted.
- 12) Hit by Pitch: No base given.
- 13) Lead Off: No. May leave the base when the ball is hit.
- 14) Bunting: Not permitted.
- 15) Base Staking: Not permitted.
- 16) Fake Bunting: Not permitted.
- 17) First Base sliding: Not permitted.
- 18) Sliding (2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, & Home): Permitted.
- 19) Stealing: Not permitted.
- 20) Overthrows: Runners may not advance a base on an overthrow, wild pitch, or passed balls.
- 21) Defensive Players: Traditional positions must be played, excluding Catcher. Outfielders must start each play in the grass.
- 22) Defensive Rotation: Required. No player can play the same position in a game.
- 23) Coaching: Defensive on-field coaching is permitted.

### **Bronze League (3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade): This is a developmental league. Coach-Pitch Only.**

- 1) Game Length: 4 innings. Extra inning can be played if started before minute 60.
- 2) Ball Size: 11in
- 3) Pitching Distance: 35 ft\* Coach to pitch from inside the pitching circle.
- 4) Base Patch Distance: 60 ft
- 5) End of Inning: 3 outs or 5 runs scored; additional runs can be scored on the last play.
- 6) Scorekeeping: Only to change innings. No official score kept. Unofficial score should be kept for developmental awareness.
- 7) Pitching: Coach-Pitch only; Coach should pitch from a standing position and pitch underhand with minimal arc to encourage success at the plate. Player in pitcher position must start each play from inside the pitching circle and wear a face covering. Ball buckets are not to be on field of play. A ball hit off a coach pitcher is considered live.





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- 8) Pitches Thrown: Coach Pitch only. Max of 6 pitches unless 6<sup>th</sup> pitch is fouled. Continue until the last pitch is in play or struck out.
- 9) Base limits on a Hit:
  - i. 1 base if hit to infield
  - ii. Unlimited if ball is hit to the grass. Players can be thrown out if attempting multiple bases. Batters may continue running until the ball is returned to the infield dirt.
- 10) Batting: Every player must be in the batting order. Late players are added to the bottom of the order. Batting out of order will result in an automatic out.
- 11) On- Deck Hitters: Not permitted on field. No practice swings outside of fences will be permitted.
- 12) Hit by Pitch: No base given.
- 13) Lead Off: No. May leave the base when ball is hit.
- 14) Bunting: Not Permitted.
- 15) Slap Hitting: Permitted.
- 16) Base Staking: Not permitted.
- 17) Fake Bunting: Not permitted.
- 18) First Base sliding: Not permitted.
- 19) Sliding (2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, & Home): Permitted.
- 20) Stealing: Not permitted.
- 21) Overthrows: Runners may not advance a base on an overthrow, wild pitch, or passed balls.
- 22) Defensive Players: Traditional positions must be played. Less than 9 players, catcher position is at coaches' discretion. Outfielders must start each play in the grass.
- 23) Defensive Rotation: Required. Each player must play the infield at least once per game.
- 24) Catchers: Catchers will be in the normal position behind the plate. A coach will back up the catcher to ensure speed of play. The coach must also ensure that the catcher stays far enough back to prevent being hit by swinging bats. The catcher will wear shin guards, chest protector, helmet with facemask, and throat-guard.
- 25) Coaching: 3 defensive on-field coaches are permitted.

### **Silver League (5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade): This is a recreation league. Kid-Pitch Only.**

- 1) Game Length: 90 minutes, finish the inning. Subject to Run Rules. No new innings after 80 minutes.
- 2) Ball Size: 11in
- 3) Pitching Distance: 35 ft, One foot on the pitching rubber.



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- 4) Base Patch Distance: 60 ft
- 5) End of Inning: 3 outs or 5 runs scored; additional runs can be scored on the last play. 6<sup>th</sup> run cannot be a walk.
- 6) Scorekeeping: Yes- scores need reported for standings.
- 7) Run Rules: 9 runs after 4 innings.
  - a. No intentional base stacking allowed.
- 8) Umpire: Yes.
- 9) Pitching: Kid-Pitch. All players are encouraged to pitch, if they so choose. All pitchers must have a face covering.
  - a. Style: Any portion of the 'windmill' is acceptable; emphasis on Fastpitch. If the ball goes more than 6'0" above the ground, will be called a ball.
- 10) Pitching warm-up: A pitcher is allowed 5 warm-ups from the mound before the game begins.
  - a. Pitchers are allowed up to a maximum of 5 warm-up pitches from the mound before each inning begins.
- 11) Pitched Inning Limits: No more than 3 consecutive innings per game. One pitch thrown constitutes an inning.
- 12) Visits to the Mound: When a coach visits the mound, he/she must change pitchers on the second visit in an inning.
- 13) Illegal Pitch- To be called by the Umpire.
- 14) Base limits on a Hit: Unlimited until a play is dead. (Overthrow rules apply)
- 15) Batting: Every player must be in the batting order. Late players are added to the bottom of the order. Batting out of order will result in an automatic out.
- 16) Hit by Pitch: Takes 1<sup>st</sup> base (coach pitch rules apply).
  - a. Hitters need to make an effort to get out of the way of a pitch that is rolling or bouncing on ground.
  - b. Ball is dead at the moment it comes in contact with the batter. If the ball hits the ground or home plate first and then hits the batter, she still gets first base.
- 17) On-Deck Hitters: Not permitted on field. No practice swings outside of fences will be permitted.
- 18) Lead Off: No. May leave the base when ball reaches the plate or is hit.
- 19) Bunting/Slap Hitting: Permitted.
- 20) Base Staking: Not permitted.
- 21) Fake Bunting: Not permitted.
- 22) In-Field fly and dropped third strike: Not Permitted.
- 23) First Base sliding: Not permitted.
- 24) Sliding (2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, & Home): Permitted.
  - a. Runners will be called out in the following situations:
    - i. The runner does not legally slide and causes illegal contact and/or illegally alters the actions of the fielder in the immediate act of



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making a play on her, the ball will be dead, the runner will be called out, and each other runner will return to the last base legally touched. Runners are never required to slide, but if the runner elects to slide, the slide shall be legal. (8.6.13)

- ii. A defensive player has the ball, or is about to catch a thrown ball, and the runner remains on her feet and crashes into the defensive player, the ball will be dead, the runner will be called out, and each other runner will return to the last base legally touched. If the contact is determined to be malicious, the offender will be ejected from the game and will be subject to possible game suspensions. An errant throw drawing the defense into the path of the runner is not interference (8.6.14)

25) Head First Slide: Headfirst slides are not permitted unless to return to a previously occupied base. Runners making headfirst slides while advancing to the next base will receive a warning on the first attempt and be called out on the second slide.

26) Stealing: Not Permitted.

27) Overthrows: Runners may not advance a base on an overthrow.

- a. [We don't want home runs scored on singles. We want fielders to try and make plays and shouldn't punish an error by having multiple runs scored. The focus is making plays at bases and playing the positions.]

28) Defensive Players: No more than 10 on the field (6 infield, 4 outfield).\*

29) Defensive Rotation: Not Required.

30) Blocking Bases: Fielders cannot block or stand on a base without the ball when a base runner is advancing around the bases. If they do, the umpire may award extra bases to the runner. Catchers- The catcher cannot block home plate unless she has the ball.

31) Catchers: Catchers will be in the normal position behind the plate. The catcher will wear shin guards, chest protector, helmet with facemask, and throat-guard.

- a. Pinch runner for the catcher is permitted if there are 2 outs. The player that made the last out is the pinch runner.

32) Coaching: Coaches are to encourage all kids to learn the strike zone and learn to hit off the kid-pitch balls.

- a. Max 3 offensive coaches allowed in live ball territory, with emphasis on allowing players to develop situational awareness. Defensive on-field coaches, not permitted.

33) Speed of Play: There will be no infield or outfield warm-ups between innings.

**Teams shall take no longer than 2 minutes between innings.** If either team delays play, the umpire shall begin a ball/strike count.

- a. Example: If after 2-minutes the defensive team fails to take their positions and the pitcher is NOT ready to pitch, the umpire will instruct



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the batter to step into the box and will call BALL 1 and will continue to increase the BALL count every 20-seconds after. Likewise if the offensive team delays the game and the batter does not step into the batter's box when directed by the umpire, the umpire will call STRIKE 1 and will continue to increase the STRIKE count every 20- seconds after.

- 34) Forfeit: A team may begin the game with no fewer than 7 players. If a team has less than 7 players present at the scheduled starting time, the team with the lesser players to determine forfeit or play. 10-minute grace period if there are known players in route.
- a. Coaches need to error on the side of playing ball. In the event of a forfeit, field can be used for unofficial scrimmage.
  - b. If coaches are aware of players being out, they need to utilize the "Call-Up" system for other divisions.
    - i. Call-Up players must have participated in their own league game for the day before/after being called up, or on a bye.
    - ii. Call-Up players are not permitted to play the pitcher position.
    - iii. Call-Up players are not permitted to participate in tournament.
- 35) Bench Sitting: No player shall sit the bench twice until all players on the same team have sat the bench once.

### **PYAA Softball End of Season Tournament Rules (Silver ONLY):**

- 1) Top 4 teams will participate in the end of Season Tournament, based on season standings.
  - a. Only when inclement weather is delaying end of season tournament should the tournament be shortened based on Diamond Sports Board discretion.
- 2) In-Season rules apply to tournament, with the following exceptions:
  - a. Max 4 innings, tie breaker applies.
  - b. Run rules do not apply.
  - c. Unlimited runs on inning 4.
  - d. 9 defensive position players allowed, same player cannot sit the bench twice in a game.
- 3) Call-Up players are not permitted to participate in tournament games.
- 4) Each game will be played until there is a winner.
- 5) All games will be 4 innings unless the game is tied.
  - a. After completion of the fourth inning a Tie Breaker will go into effect.
    - i. Last completed at bat in the previous inning will start on second base. Unlimited runs allowed in extra innings.