

PARKS, RECREATION AND TOURISM DEPARTMENT

2016

ATHLETIC RULES AND POLICIES

GIRLS SOFTBALL RULES

City of Chesapeake



These Athletic Rules and Policies are approved by the Chesapeake Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. They are in effect for the 2016 Sport Season. The new rules are identifiable by bold type.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

"As a recipient of Federal financial assistance, the Chesapeake Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department's programs and activities are open to all persons regardless of race, sex, religion, color, national origin, age or handicap."

"If anyone believes he or she has been subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age or handicap, he or she may file a complaint alleging discrimination with either Eugene Rosier, Equal Employment Opportunity Specialist, Department of Human Resources, Post Office Box 15225, Chesapeake, Virginia 23328, telephone 382-6492; or Director, Office for Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, World Trade Center, 101 West Main Street, Suite 4300, Norfolk, VA 23510."



GIRLS' SOFTBALL RULES

3.0 GOVERNING RULES - Amateur Softball Association rules will govern play with the exceptions covered herein.

3.1 PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

League and Age Requirements - Players' ages will be determined by their age as of May 31 of the current year. All players must be enrolled in secondary school at the time of registration to participate in the program.

Age Categories:

Girls T-Ball	- ages 5 and 6
Training League	- ages 7 and 8
Midget League	- ages 9 and 10
Junior League	- ages 11 and 12
Teen League	- ages 13 and 14
Senior League	- ages 15 and 16
Super Senior League	- ages 17 and 18

If participation is not great enough, the players may be divided into 3 year increments citywide.

3.2 TEAMS

A. Seating - The home team will occupy the third base bench; the visiting team will sit on the first base bench. Only players, one scorer, one manager, one head coach and two assistant coaches will be allowed on the bench.

B. Team Number – T-Ball and the Training League teams will normally consist of a maximum of 13 girls per team. All other league teams will normally consist of a maximum of 15 girls per team.

The Senior and Super Senior League teams will normally consist of a maximum of 17 girls per team.

C. The use of bat girls will be restricted to registered youth girls softball participants who are members of their respective teams. The bat girl must not enter the playing field until time has been called by the umpire. Coaches are responsible for sending a bat girl onto the field at the appropriate time when time is called by the umpire.

D. Number of coaches- there will be a limit of three (3) coaches per team, one head coach and two (2) assistant coaches.

E. DRAFTING RULES:

1. Chesapeake Slow Pitch Softball League uses a Horseshoe type draft for each league except TINY TOT and TRAINING leagues. All players in those leagues will be placed randomly on teams by the Athletic Staff.

2. Each league will select teams based on the participant evaluation and coaches draft, except for the TINY TOT and TRAINING leagues. All players in all drafted leagues will be required to attend the Evaluation Day to be guaranteed a spot in the league. During this time, all participants are given an identification number and then perform a number of routine skills. Coaches will observe the players and then evaluate them based on their ability. After the Evaluation Day is concluded, the coaches will meet with the Athletic Staff to execute the player draft.

3. Most teams will receive the same number of players. Participants who miss the Evaluation Day or sign up late may be added to teams that are a player short.

4. The picking order of the draft will be selected by random draw, immediately prior to the draft. If any league is split into divisions, all teams will draft in order, alternating divisions. Draft format will remain the same.

5. The number of teams will be determined by the number of registered participants.

6. Teams must select a player and cannot pass if a player is available.

7. The sons/daughters of head coaches will be automatic picks in the draft and considered an "X" on the draft sheet.

8. Assistant coaches sons/daughters will be automatic first round draft picks.

Only one assistant coach pick per team in the draft will be allowed. If the player is not picked in the first round by that team, he/she will be available for selection by any team beginning in round 2.

9. The number of rounds in the draft depends directly upon the number of participants registered.

10. The draft will be conducted in the Horseshoe Style.

Example of a Horseshoe Style Draft

Team	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
A	1	10	11	20	21	30	31	40	X	X
B	2	9	12	19	22	29	32	39	X	X
C	3	8	13	18	23	28	33	38	X	X
D	4	7	14	17	24	27	34	37	X	X
E	5	6	15	16	25	26	35	36	X	X

The X's represent the players that are returning to the team. (Note: All returning players must re-register and be re-drafted each season).

11. Eligible returning players who participated the previous season must re-register and participate in the Evaluation Day.
12. All players in the MIDGET, JUNIOR, TEEN, and SENIOR leagues are required to participate in the draft. Any no-shows at Evaluation Day may be drafted after all participating players have been chosen (if there is availability left on teams).
13. Any player who does not like the team they are selected to must either play for that team or not participate. There will be no refunds once drafts in that participating facility are concluded. Under very unusual circumstances, the Athletic Staff has the authority to allow a player to switch teams if it is determined such a change is critically necessary.
14. Brother/sister combinations will automatically be placed on the same team. Parents may request (for any reason) that siblings not be drafted to the same team. Note: If one sibling is drafted and the other has not, the other sibling will be designated by an "X" on the draft board and the drafted player will count as a draft pick.
15. There will be absolutely no trading or "swapping" of players for any reason once the draft for that age division is concluded. Once a player is drafted or placed on a team he/she will remain on that team for the duration of the season, unless an unforeseen problem arises that must be resolved by the Athletic Staff. Any coaches found guilty trading or using ineligible players after the draft will forfeit all games in which the ineligible player participated, be removed from all coaching responsibilities (all sports) for a minimum of one year and the offending team will be ineligible for any regular season trophy or participation in any post season games.

Once the draft is concluded and no other special circumstances are acknowledged, there will be no swapping or trading of players for any reason. If a trade is proposed for a special circumstance during the draft, and the Athletic staff concurs, all head coaches must approve the swap by majority vote. No swaps or trades can be made after the draft is concluded!

16. Requests to play on certain teams for any reason (friends, transportation, etc.) WILL NOT BE HONORED by the Chesapeake Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department. All players must play on the team by which they were drafted or placed by the League Coordinator.

3.3 SCHEDULES

- A. Number of Games – Girls T-Ball and Training league will play as close to eight (8) games as possible. All other leagues will play as close to ten games as possible.
 - 1. In the event of a significant number of inclement weather cancellations, games may be re-scheduled in a double header format.
- B. Practices - Teams are limited to three 1-hour practice sessions on the field within a calendar week if field space exists. Teams may have a 15 minute off field warm –up before practice and 15 minute team meeting after practices off the field or a thirty (30) minute before practice off field warm-up. If teams have two games in a calendar week they are limited to one (1) – hour practice session in field space or lighting permits. Practices are not permitted on the same day as a scheduled game unless the game was postponed on that day. On school nights Girls T-Ball and Training League teams are to practice no later than 8 p.m. The Midget League teams are to practice no later than 8:30 p.m. The Junior League teams are to practice no later that 9:00 p.m. The Teen, Senior, and Super Senior League teams are to practice no later than 10 p.m. Teams are limited to no more than three (3) outings per week which includes practices and games.

3.4 PLAYING RULES

- A. Girls T-Ball and Training League Rules – This program for young girls provides youngsters with the opportunity to enjoy the game and develop and practice softball skills at an early age. Conventional softball does not accomplish these goals because the pitcher has difficulty getting the ball into the strike zone. As a result, the batter does not gain confidence to hit or run the bases, and fielders do not learn how to field ground balls, catch fly balls, or throw. The average youngster can learn to play and enjoy softball with good instruction and day-to-day experience.

For the beginner, the learning experience must be fun, with ample opportunity to practice all the fundamentals of the sport, like batting, throwing, fielding, and running.

The Softball Off the Tee program should be organized to teach and develop softball skills, teamwork, and sportsmanship and have fun. This is an important period in every child's development. All players should be encouraged to do their best by managing personnel. The Softball Off the Tee program should be fun. If it isn't fun, it isn't a recreational program.

The key to success is the careful selection of coaches. If the goal is to provide a program with maximum benefits, only the very best people would be selected to serve. The overall concept of the Softball Off the Tee program should be total participation in a congenial environment under the supervision of competent and concerned adults. The leadership must reflect a positive and constructive direction tempered with patience. If this program is worth doing, it should be done well.

1. Returning Players - These players must be placed in the common draft system each year.
2. Roster Limit - There will be a maximum of 13 players on a team. Player distribution will be conducted by blind draw and will be handled by the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism staff. Players will be redistributed each year.
3. Instruction - Several hours should be devoted to teaching the fundamentals of the game before the first game is played.
4. Game Player Limit Defensive Team - Ten players will be on the field. Teams may play with seven players, provided no additional players are present. Players must be placed in standard softball positions on the field, including the pitcher who will stand adjacent to the coach who is pitching. Coaches are permitted on the field with the defensive team.
5. Offensive Team - All team players present will bat each inning. The coach shall announce "This is the last official batter!" When this batter is out or the ball is thrown home, "Time" shall be called and the inning shall be over. Three coaches may be on the field with the offensive team. One in the coaches' box on the 1st baseline, one in the coaches' box on the 3rd baseline, and one at home plate to adjust the tee. Once the tee has been adjusted, the coach must stand against the backstop until the umpire has called time. The batting line-up will remain the same for the entire game.
6. Required Playing Time - Players who do not start the game in the field will play defense in the second inning. Rotation of players will continue after each inning, using players that have not been replaced in the field. After rotation has been completed, the order will start over.

7. Regulation Game Length/Time Limits - Games will last one hour and 15 minutes or five (5) full innings whichever comes first. If time runs out during an inning, the game will be stopped as scores do not count. Three full innings or 40 minutes constitute a complete game in case of rain.
8. Number of Games - Teams will be scheduled to play as close to eight games as possible.
9. Coach Pitch- a coach will pitch 3 pitches from the 40-foot pitching rubber to each batter. If the batter has not hit the ball after the 3 pitches, the batter will be required to hit off the batting tee.
10. Batting and Strike Outs
 - a) T-Ball – Players bat from a batting tee and have 4 swings attempts to hit the ball. Batters will be allowed four swings. If on the fourth strike the softball is not struck, the batter will be called out.
 - b) Training – Players have 3 coach pitch attempts then 3 swing attempts from a batting tee. There will be no strikeouts under the coach pitch format. If the batter fails to hit a fair ball from one of the 3 pitches from the coach, the batter will be allowed three additional swings off the batting tee.
11. Fouls- Fouls in the girls training league are the same as in conventional softball except the softball that travels less than 15 feet from the home plate, in fair territory, will be called foul. A foul on the 3rd coach pitch will result in the ball being placed on the batting tee for the next series of 3 swings.
12. Base Running - Runners must stay in contact with the base until the ball is hit. When players have advanced as far as possible without being put out, or have been retired or the softball has been taken out of play by defensive players, the umpire will call "time" and place the softball on the tee. When all defensive players are in proper position, the umpire will call "play ball" and the next batter will take a turn at bat. When a defensive player overthrows the ball in an attempt to make a play on any base, including a throw to the pitcher's mound, the ball is considered out of play. Base runners may not take additional bases. When last batter is out or ball is thrown home, "Time" shall be called and the inning shall be over.
13. Championships - There will not be a season champion in the T-Ball and in the Girls' Training leagues. The program is designed to teach the basic fundamentals of softball in a fun setting, without the pressures of winning or losing. Game scores and team standing will not be kept in the Training league.
14. Infield Fly Rule will not be enforced.

B. Midget, Junior, Teen, Senior and Super Senior Rules

1. Midget League Only – There will be a 6 run limit per team per inning for the first 3 innings of the game.
2. Required Playing time on both offensive and defensive teams (Midget, Junior, Teen, Senior and Super Senior)
 - a. **All girls' who are present at the start of the game will be placed in the batting line up. If a player shows up after the game has started, she must be added at the bottom of the lineup. However, if a player arrives after both teams have substituted, the coach has the option to play this player or not. If the tardy player is placed in the game, she cannot be replaced unless an injury occurs.**
 - b. Girls who have not played at least four innings must enter the game in the top of the fifth inning or when 35 minutes have passed.
 - c. When girls enter under the 35 minute requirement, they will do so at the completion of the nearest half or whole inning.
 - d. Both teams must make their substitution at the same time.
 - e. The umpire's official time will determine when 35 minutes have expired. All girls entering under these rules must start the next played game (unless they arrive after the start of the game) and will play a minimum of four complete innings or 35 minutes, whichever comes first.
 - f. This rule applies to play-off games.
 - g. Exceptions to the rule may be made in the case of injury, illness, or disciplinary action.
3. Penalties - Any violation of the required playing time rule will result in forfeit of game to be determined by the department at a later date. The game in question will be played in it's entirety except for tournament play decision will be made at the field.
4. Maximum/Minimum Number of Players
 - a. A team will start and finish a game with 10 players, however, a team may start and finish a game with 7 players without forfeit, provided there are no other eligible players available to complete the tenth position. An out will be declared for each offensive position less than 9 players in which there is no batter assigned. No more than two automatic outs will occur if a team starts with 7 players; one out will occur if a team starts with 8 players. If only 9 players are present, no out will be assessed. Coaches will determine where the out(s) will occur by indicating an out in

the line-up where they choose the out to occur. As soon as the eighth, ninth and tenth player is present, she must enter the game. Teams that are playing with ten players may continue with nine, eight, or seven players in case of injury, illness, disciplinary action, or ejection with an out being declared for each offensive position less than 9 players in which there is no batter assigned.

- b. When a team starts a game with less than 10 players, the 12-run rule is in effect from the first complete inning with the team with less than 10 players having an opportunity to bat. The 12-run rule will remain in effect for the entire game even when the remaining players arrive and enter the game. This rule pertains to the team with less than 10 players only.

5. A legal pitch:

- A. When taking the pitching position in contact with the pitcher's plate, the pitcher must have their hands separated and must have the ball in either the glove or pitching hand.
- B. The pitcher shall not be considered in the pitching position unless the catcher is in position to receive the pitch.
- C. Both feet must be on the ground within the 24-inch length of the pitcher's plate. The shoulders shall be in with first and third bases. (The pitcher shall take a position with both feet in contact with pitcher's plate.)
- D. While on the pitcher's plate, the pitcher shall take a signal or appear to take a signal with the hands separated. The ball must remain in either the glove or pitching hand.
- E. The pitcher shall bring the hands together for not less than one second and not more than 10 seconds before releasing the ball, both feet must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate at all times prior to the forward step.

Legal Delivery

- F. The pitcher shall not make any motion to pitch without immediately delivering the ball to the batter.
- G. The pitcher shall not use a pitching motion in which, after bringing the hands together the pitcher removes one hand from the ball and returns the ball to both hands.
- H. The pitcher shall not make a stop or reversal of the forward motion after separating the hands.
- I. The pitcher shall not make two revolutions of the arm on the windmill delivery. A pitcher may drop the arm to the side and to the rear before starting the windmill motion.
- J. The delivery shall be an underhand motion with the hand below the hip

and the wrist not farther from the body of the elbow.

- K. The pitch shall be delivered on the throwing arm side of the body and not behind the back or through the legs.
 - L. The release of the ball and follow through of the hand and wrist must be forward and past the straight line of the body.
 - M. In the act delivering the ball, the pitcher shall take one step with the non-pivot foot simultaneous with the release of the ball. The step must be forward and toward the batter within the 24-inch length of the pitcher's plate. It is not a step if the pitcher slides the pivot foot across the pitcher's plate, the batter, or if the pivot foot turns or slides in order to push off the pitcher's plate, provided contact is maintained with the plate. Raising the foot off the pitcher's plate and returning it to the plate creates a rocking motion and is an illegal act.
 - N. Pushing off with the pivot foot from a place other than the pitcher's plate is illegal.
 - O. Pushing off and dragging the pivot foot in contact with the ground is required. If a hole has been created, the pivot foot may drag no higher than the level plane of the ground.
 - P. The pitcher shall not make another revolution after releasing the ball.
 - Q. The pitcher shall not deliberately drop, roll or bounce the ball to prevent the batter from hitting it.
 - R. The pitcher has 20 seconds to release the next pitch after receiving the ball or after the umpire indicates "play ball."
6. Base Running
- A. Unlike slow pitch, the play is not automatically over when the pitcher receives the ball. The runner may continue to their destination. They may also stop past the base but the direction in which they then decide to run they must continue UNLESS the pitcher takes the ball out of the circle as to make a play. This can be done in the form of running at the runner herself, or throwing to another defensive player.
 - B. The batter may not run back towards home plate when going to first base. They can STOP to slow down the play but cannot go backwards.
 - C. If two runners end up on the same base, whichever comes off and is tagged is the one that is out. This may occur if a runner gets in a rundown and the person on base behind her continues to that next base to assure the best possible outcome for their team.
 - D. You may steal on past balls.
 - E. If a runner collides with a defensive player when they are going to make a play on the ball, the runner is automatically out. On the other hand, if a defensive player is not making a play and comes in contact with the runner, the runner automatically is awarded the next base. (Even if this collision causes the runner to get "out")

It is recommended that players slide in feet first as to avoid hands and fingers getting stepped on or broken.

Infield Fly Rule will not be enforced in the Midget and Junior Leagues.

3.5 LENGTH OF GAMES

- A. General Time Limit - Midget, Junior, Teen, Senior, and Super Senior League games will last one hour and fifteen minutes, or seven innings whichever comes first. However, if time expires during an incomplete inning, the inning will be completed unless the home team has the lead and visitors completed their turn at bat. If a team is leading its opponent by 12 runs after five innings (four and a half with the home team winning), the game will be terminated and the team with the most runs will be declared the winner.
- B. Grace Periods - There will be no grace period. Teams should be at the game site 15 minutes before game time. The second game will start as soon after the first as possible, as agreed upon by both coaches, but no later than the time printed on the official schedule.
- C. Ties - If the two teams' scores are tied when the game time runs out, the game will continue until a winner is decided in a complete inning. The game does not have to be limited to seven innings in this case. If the next game on the schedule has been delayed by the tied game, it will start within five minutes after the tied game has been completed.
- D. Balls and Strikes – Four balls will constitute a walk. Three strikes will constitute an out. There is no limit on foul balls.
- E. Time Considerations for Injuries - In the event of an injury to a player, the umpire will allow only the time he deems necessary for the safe removal of the player. This amount of time will be added to the time limit of the game and the umpire will immediately inform each manager of the new time limit.
- F. A regulation game will be declared if cancelled after 4-1/2 innings have been completed (with home team ahead) or 5 innings or 40 minutes have expired with the home team receiving the last at bat if necessary.
 - 1. Exception: The above A.S.A. rule will be observed during tournament games however the 40 minute requirement will not be in effect.

- G. Cancellation of Games After Start - After a game has started, the weather and field conditions will be judged by the umpires. If a game is halted due to rain or other adverse conditions, teams must not leave the park for 15 minutes. Umpires will make a definite decision whether the game will be continued or canceled. If the umpires decide to continue the game and either of the teams have left or are not ready to play at the end of the 15 minute period, the team at fault will forfeit. Games will not be permitted during a drizzling rain which, in the opinion of the umpires or Parks and Recreation officials, will be unsafe or could affect the lights.
- H. Infield- no infield pre-game practice will be allowed.

3.6 EQUIPMENT

- A. Shoes - Metal spike shoes may not be worn in any league. Girls must wear tennis shoes or hard rubber molded cleats. Players will not be allowed to play barefoot.
- B. Protective Equipment - Catchers in all girls' leagues must wear face masks, chest protectors and catchers helmets during all games and practices. Offensive helmets are required and chin straps are to be fastened.
 1. All department issued helmets will be a solid color with no decals, tape or other foreign substances allowed to be placed on them.
 2. All department issued helmets may not be painted.
- C. Balls – Eleven-inch restricted flight balls will be used in the Junior, Teen, Senior and Super Senior leagues. Eleven-inch soft softballs will be used in the T-Ball, Training and Midget Leagues.
- D. Double First Base- a safety double first base will be used during all league games.
- E. Shirts- Players shall wear the game shirt supplied by the city. If a player does not have the issued shirt, a temporary substitute shirt may be worn without numbers that does not conflict with the color of the opposing team's shirts. The umpire shall be informed of the temporary shirt prior to the game.
 1. Players may wear long sleeve or short sleeve undergarments that are not required to be the same color of the game shirt.
- F. Shorts- Shorts or long pants are approved in any color that has no belt loops or buckles. Shorts or pants with pockets are acceptable.

3.8 PLAYING FIELDS

- A. Rain - The Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department cannot assume the responsibility of notifying all managers about the condition of playing fields. Managers of the teams involved may call the department for any available information. Players are requested to call their managers and not the department. Games will not be canceled because of threatening weather.

- B. Pitching Distance

Girls T-Ball & Training	35'
Midget	35'
Junior	40'
Teen	43'
Senior	43'
Super Senior	43'

- C. Base Distance

Girls T-Ball & Training	60'
Midget	60'
Junior	60'
Teen	60'
Senior	60'
Super Senior	60'

3.9 SCOREKEEPING

- A. Scores - Umpires will be required to record the official score of runs on provided game card after each inning.
- B. Scorebook - The home team in the Midget, Junior, Teen, Senior, and Super Senior League will be required to keep the official scorebook. No official score book will be kept in the T-Ball or Training League. The official scorekeeper is instructed to ask the umpire for the starting time and notify the visiting scorekeeper and write the time in the scorebook. It is the visiting scorekeeper's responsibility to check with the official scorekeeper after each half inning, notifying umpire immediately of any discrepancies.

3.10 PROTESTS AND PENALTIES

- A. Documentation - Protests, applications, agreements, suggestions, and any other matters brought to the attention of the Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department, must be presented in writing with the signature of the writer.
- B. Protests – Only coaches must submit protests. Any coach who protests an umpire's interpretation of a rule must notify the umpire immediately at the time of the

incident. The umpire will then announce to both managers that the game is being played under protest. All statistics will be recorded by the umpire in the home team scorebook and on the official game scorecard. No protest will be accepted at the conclusion of the game after both teams leave the field. (Exception: Eligibility Protest/Playing Time Protest.)

The protesting coach must notify the Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department, in writing, within two working days after the protested game. The complete facts and the rules to cover the protest must be stated at this time. A fee of **\$50.00** must accompany each protest. If the protest is upheld, the fee will be returned. If the protest is overruled, the fee will be deposited into the general fund of the City of Chesapeake.

A PROTEST CONCERNING AN UMPIRE'S JUDGEMENT WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.

- C. Protest Decisions – Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department staff will make the final decision on all protests.
- D. Tournament Protest- Rule interpretation protests for softball will be decided before the next pitch by the protest committee consisting of athletic staff and the umpire for the game under protest. The protest must be submitted in writing to staff with the \$50.00 protest fee before leaving the site. Written ineligible player protests will be addressed the next working day.

4.1 TOURNAMENTS

The Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department will not support unauthorized games or tournaments.