



2026 8U C TOURNAMENT RULES CHAMPIONSHIP PLAY

(Effective for the 2026 season and thereafter, until amended)

The current USA Official Rules of Softball and the Northern California Rules & Regulations shall be enforced at this event.

1. **Game Time:** Will be 6 innings or 1 hour, 15 minutes, whichever occurs first.
 - A. The Championship game shall have a time limit of 1 hour, 20 minutes.
 - B. No new inning shall start after the time limit has expired unless the score is tied (*all games must have a winner*).
 - C. The final inning will be completed once started per Rule 5, Section 3.
 - D. The 'run-ahead rule' shall be used in all games at 15 runs after three innings, 12 runs after four innings or 8 runs after five innings.
2. Tie-Breaker rule per Rule 5, section 11 shall be in effect after 6 innings (in lieu of 7 innings) or the top of the next inning after the time limit (as noted in '1' above) has expired. (The offensive player due to bat last in the half inning will be placed on 2nd base.)
3. Five Runs per inning will be in effect through the first three (3) innings.
 - A. The half inning will be declared over when the offensive team scores five (5) runs.
 - B. Additional runs in excess of five (5) during continuous action shall not count.
 - C. All additional innings beginning in the fourth inning will be open.
4. **Offense:** Bat-around "Round Robin" SHALL be used.
 - A. All eligible players, present, can bat and shall be listed on the line-up and bat in the order presented at the plate meeting. Including substitutes. If a player is not listed on the line up card, they cannot enter the game.
 - B. The Designated Player DP/Flex will not be used.
 - C. No courtesy runners shall be used except in case of injury while on offense, the last out may be used for the injured player. If a player cannot bat and run the bases the next time through the line-up, they will be declared ineligible for the remainder of the game for safety reasons. No out will be recorded unless the team has gone short-handed as in Rule 4, Section 1, Paragraph D (Less than nine (9) players)
5. **Stealing:** One base, per pitch, per runner. Runners may only advance one base from where they were at the time of the pitch. Stealing home is not permitted - Cold Home Plate
 - A. Runners are not permitted to advance on an over-throw. Any runner attempting to advance beyond the one base they are permitted is at risk of being put out.
 - B. A runner who makes it safely to the next base beyond the base permitted, including home, will be returned to the correct base. When playing action has been completed, a dead ball will be declared and the runner returned to the proper base.
 - C. A batter who is awarded 1st base on a walk/base-on-balls may not steal second on the ball four pitch. A batter-runner who attempts to advance in this situation will be ruled on the same as paragraph 5.B
6. **Batted Ball:** Batted ball remains live until pitcher has possession within the pitcher's circle.

7. **Defense:** Ten players ONLY on defense. Four outfielders. **Free substitution allowed.** No coach pitch allowed.
8. Outfielders do not have to be on the Grass but must be at least 10' back from baseline.
9. No player may start closer to home plate than the distance of the pitcher's plate but may move closer to home plate after the ball is released by the pitcher. Effect – Illegal Pitch
10. Unlimited defensive substitution is permitted.
11. The Infield Fly or Dropped Third Strike Rules will not be in effect.
12. **Pitching distance:** 30 feet.
13. **Base Distance:** 55 feet between bases will be used when available. 60 feet is acceptable.
14. **Softballs:** The Worth 'RIF' 10" will be used softball used in this tournament for this age group. Should the RIF 10" be unavailable a substitute Approved USA Softball of Northern California Ball will be used.

A. Check-in:

1. Check-in at the tournament desk one hour prior to your team's first game.
2. Line-up forms, Game Cards, will be provided.
3. Required USA Softball official Roster with signed off by parents, team manager & NorCal commissioners, Coaches compliance card (or printout). All coaches in the dugout, on the field including warmups will Check-in with proof of Background Check and SafeSport / ACE with Photo ID. Coaches will be provided a "approved" coach wristband and must be visible at all times while on field.

B. Ground rules for the tournament:

1. Practice on infield dirt is NOT permitted. Teams may warm-up between the foul lines and the fence. If a relay player is used, they must stay on the grass. Pitchers may not use the pitcher's plate and circle.
2. The team listed on the top of the bracket shall occupy the 1st base dugout, except in back-to-back games played on the same field when the team playing the consecutive game does not change dugouts.
3. Home team is the official scorekeeper.
4. Home team is determined by a coin toss at the umpire pre-game meeting with coaches – all games.
5. Softballs for the tournament will be provided, and will be the ONLY softballs used.
6. USA NorCal Line-up Forms or approved team substitution card shall be used. Including first & last name, and jersey number
7. Double bases will be used at first base in all Championship Tournaments.
8. Upon conclusion of game, NorCal score card must be fully completed and turned into the umpire or NorCal official. These cards will be available from tournament desk.

C. Protests:

1. Playing rule protests must be made prior to the next pitch and a decision rendered by the Tournament UIC. The game will be stopped and the manager must be prepared to discuss the rule interpretation involved.
2. Eligibility protests shall be ruled upon according to USA Softball Code.

D. Clarifications:

1. When a delay in the schedule occurs, it is the responsibility of the team manager to check the bracket boards and contact the Tournament Director for possible changes to game times and /or fields.
2. Tobacco products of any type are prohibited on school facilities and in all playing facilities. Smoking of any substance including vaping is not allowed. The same is prohibited from ALL dugouts and field of play
3. Alcoholic beverages and illegal drugs are prohibited from the facility.
4. All players are encouraged to wear like-colored uniforms and helmets.
5. All regulations of the tournament site shall be followed.
6. All equipment including but not limited to, batting helmets, bats must carry the USA Softball approval. Any illegal and/or defective equipment will be confiscated and returned at the conclusion of the tournament. NorCal officials will be performing random compression bat testing. Umpires will be checking equipment prior to each game play. **Have bats and helmets outside the dugout along the fence for inspection.**
7. NorCal officials will be randomly checking players that they match their player cards to their team.

E. Sportsmanship:

1. **Team managers are responsible and must have control of their players, coaches, spectators and team followers at all times, including off the field of play.**
2. The USA Code of Conduct shall be enforced throughout the tournament. Any act or behavior considered contrary to the objectives and purpose of USA Softball will not be tolerated.
3. Artificial noisemakers of any type are NOT permitted (i.e. horns or cans filled with rocks).
4. Umpires and USA Softball Representatives have the responsibility and authority to eject (out of sight and sound) any team personnel or spectator for any act or behavior considered unsportsmanlike conduct.
5. An ejected coach, player, or other team personnel is ineligible to participate in the team's next game. Illegal participation in the team's next game by ejected personnel results in team forfeiture. A second ejection in the same tournament makes the participant ineligible for remainder of tournament. Each sanction (ineligible for next game, team forfeiture, and ineligible for remainder of tournament) may be appealed to the Tournament Protest Committee.

FACILITY AND TOURNAMENT GENERAL RULES For All Participants and Spectators

All participants and spectators are expected to follow these rules to ensure the safety, cleanliness, and enjoyment of everyone on the premises. Violations may result in removal from the venue or other actions deemed appropriate by tournament organizers or park staff.

- Alcohol Prohibition — Consumption of any beverage containing alcohol is strictly prohibited at all times on the premises, in the surrounding areas, and all parking lots.
- No Smoking or Vaping — Smoking and vaping are prohibited on the premises and in all parking areas.
- No Animals Allowed — Animals are not permitted on the premises.
- No Sunflower Seeds or Peanuts — Shelled sunflower seeds and peanuts are not allowed anywhere on the premises.
- No Wheeled Devices — Skateboards, scooters, and bicycles may not be ridden on the premises.
- Medical Devices Exception — Medical mobility devices (e.g., wheelchairs, medical scooters) are permitted.
- No Noisemakers — Artificial noisemakers are not allowed.

- Warm-Up Restrictions — Playing catch or warming up with softballs, baseballs, footballs, soccer balls, volleyballs, or similar equipment is not allowed on walkways or paths.
- Parking Restrictions — Parking in unauthorized areas (red, yellow, or blue zones) is prohibited. Violators are subject to ticketing and towing.
- No BBQ or Open Flames — BBQ grills and open-flame cooking are not allowed on the premises or in parking lots.
- Streaming Device Restrictions — Streaming devices are not permitted in areas taped off for safety or reserved for tournament staff.

Have a great tournament!