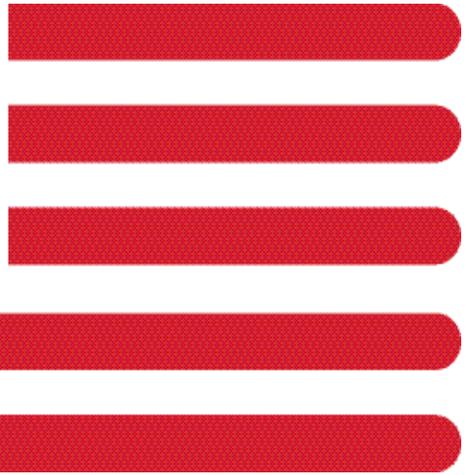


USFA



United States Fastpitch Association

15 Year Anniversary Edition



www.usfastpitch.com

USFA Rulebook

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PLAYER AGE AND TEAM CLASSIFICATION

AGE CLASSIFICATION

A player's age on December 31, of the previous calendar year determines the age classification in which the player is eligible to participate. All teams playing between August 1 and December 31 must play by the following year's playing age eligibility classifications.

USFA AGE AND TEAM DIVISION REGISTRATION

AGE	TEAM CLASSIFICATION				
	A	B	C	REC	Open ¹
6 & Under				X	X
8 & Under	X	X	X	X	X
10 & Under	X	X	X	X	X
12 & Under	X	X	X	X	X
14 & Under	X	X	X	X	X
16 & Under	X	X		X	X
18 & Under	X	X		X	X

1. Open classification refers to multiple Team Classifications combined into one pool or bracket for a particular event. Teams cannot register as an "Open" classification.

USFA SEASONAL YEAR

Team registration will run from August 1 through July 31. Beginning with the 2015 season (Aug 1, 2014 – July 31, 2015), all teams must "age-up", as required to participate in events after August 1st. Tournaments and leagues played after August 1, will qualify teams for the following summer's State and World Series Tournaments. **Exception:** August will be a transition month to allow

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teams to continue playing under the previous year's registration or reregister and begin earning points toward the new season.

Players may participate in a higher age or classification, but cannot play in a lower age or classification.

Player rosters must be entered electronically and submitted prior to July 1 or the date of the USFA State Tournament whichever comes first. All rosters will be locked at that time.

Players may not participate on more than one team, regardless of age or classification during the same event or time period.

USFA Official Rules of Girls' Fastpitch

The following rules are the official United States Fastpitch Association rules that will be in effect at all State, Regional and National tournaments. Local areas may modify these rules to conform to their local high school and recreational league rules only. Optional rules are common in regards to coach pitch versus machine pitch in younger divisions. Using 10 or 11 defensive players in younger divisions is a recreational option designed to get more girls in the game. Some states allow high school pitchers to take a backward step during the pitching delivery. Local options are not necessarily endorsed by USFA, but demonstrate the flexibility and tolerance of the USFA. The USFA will always be about the "can do's" and not the "can't do's". Safety rules are **NOT FLEXIBLE**. We will adhere to all safety rules in their fullest, including safety rules that are mandated by the governing body of softball. In order to keep the USFA Rulebook as streamlined as possible, in the event the rules has not been addressed here, please refer to the National Federation of High Schools (NFHS) rulebook for all rules and case studies that have been established throughout the evolution of the sport.

Official Pitching Rules

1001: A Legal Pitch shall consist of the following:

Prior to starting the delivery of the pitch, the pitcher must take a position with the pivot foot on or partially on the top surface of the pitchers plate and the non-pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate. Both feet must be on the ground within the 24-inch length of the pitcher's plate.

1. Prior to pitching, the pitcher must take a position with shoulders in line with first and third base with the ball in the glove or pitching hand and the hands separated.
2. Pitcher must take or simulate taking signs while on the rubber from the catcher only.
3. After completing "2" above, the pitcher shall bring her hands together in front of the body for not less than one second and not more than 10 seconds before she releases the ball.
4. The pitcher shall not be considered in the pitching position unless the catcher is within the lines of the catcher's box and ready to receive the pitch.
5. The pitcher may not take the pitching position on or near the pitcher's plate without having possession of the ball.
6. The pitcher may remove herself from the pitching position as follows:
 - a. Before the hands come together the pitcher may legally step back from the pitcher's plate with both feet.
 - b. When the hands are together and no part of the windup motion has been made, the pitcher make legally step back from the pitcher's plate with both feet.

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1002: About the Pitch:

1. The pitch begins when one hand is taken off the ball or the pitcher makes any motion that is part of the windup after the hands have been brought together.
2. Once the hands are together and are in the motion, the pitcher must take no more than one step which must be forward, towards the batter and simultaneous with the delivery.
3. The pivot foot may remain in contact with or may push off and drag away from the pitcher's plate prior to the front foot touching the ground, as long as the pivot foot remains in contact with the ground and within the 24-inch length. Pushing off with the pivot foot from a place other than the pitcher's plate is illegal.

1003: A legal delivery shall be a pitched ball that is delivered to the batter with an underhand motion.

1. The release of the ball and the follow through of the hand and wrist must be forward past the vertical line of the body.
2. The hand shall be below the hip and wrist not farther from the body than the elbow.
3. The pitch shall be delivered from the throwing side of the body and behind the back or through the legs.
4. The pitch is completed with a step toward the batter.

1004: Pitcher cannot stop her motion before the ball leaves her hand.

1005: If the pitcher stops her wind up (unless the umpire calls time) without releasing the ball, an illegal pitch will be called and a ball will be awarded to the batter and base runners will advance one base.

1006: Pitcher cannot have anything distracting on her pitching arm, hand, or wrist. Any sweatband must be flesh in color on pitching wrist or arm. Pitcher's uniform, equipment and/or

accessories - . A pitcher is prohibited from wearing or using any item that, in the umpire's judgment, distracts the batter.

1007: Pitcher can ask the umpire for a different ball at any given time before the start of her pitch. During wet conditions, a coach may request permission to towel dry the balls for the pitcher.

1008: Intentional Walk: If the pitcher desires to intentionally walk a batter, she must notify the umpire of her intentions prior to the first pitch to that batter and the walk will be granted by the umpire. No pitches need to be thrown to the intentionally walked batter. Intentional Walks are not permitted in Coach Pitch (8U) and below.

Batting and Base Running

The United States Fastpitch Association will use the following basic rules for batting and base running:

2001: The girl is considered the batter when she takes her place in the batter's box.

2002: The batter can call time by lifting her hand and stepping one foot out of the box. The umpire can grant the batter time out if the pitcher has not started her pitch. If time is not granted, she will take the called pitch.

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2003: Batting out of order can be appealed to the umpire by the defense:

- 1. Infraction appealed during illegal batter:** the correct batter takes over and assumes the pitch count.
- 2. Infraction appealed after illegal batter has batted but before next pitch:** the girl that should have batted is out and

any base advances will return to their position prior to the illegal batter's bat. The correct spot in the lineup will be the batter that follows the girl called out. Example: (Batter #5 is the girl called out. The correct spot in the lineup would now be Batter #6.)

- 3. Infraction appealed after illegal batter has batted and after next pitch:** the play stands. All base runners remain where they are.
- 4. Batter positions on the lineup sheet are determined by the player's name and not the jersey number. Improperly recorded position numbers and player numbers are correctable errors.**

2004: The batter is out when the following happens:

- 1.** Batter steps on the plate when hitting the ball in fair or foul territory.
- 2.** Batter steps out of the batter's box when hitting ball in fair territory.
- 3.** Batter fouls off third strike while trying to bunt.
- 4.** Catcher catches third strike foul tip.

2005: The batter can advance to first base when the following happens:

- 1.** Batter is pitched 4 balls.
- 2.** Batter is hit by pitch (unless the ball is in the strike zone or Swung at).
- 3.** Catcher drops third strike with one or less outs with no base Runner occupying first base or with two outs regardless of occupation of first base.

Exception to dropped 3rd strike: If the batter enters the Dead ball area, she will be called out. This takes away a lot Of judging by the umpire if the girl was walking to the Dugout or not.

4. When the catcher interferes with the batter's bat while batter Is swinging at the pitched ball, or anytime during a pitch. If the ball is put in play during the interference, the offensive coach has the option to take the result of the play or the interference.

2006: The base runner must run the bases in order when advancing or retreating.

2007: When a base runner misses a bag, the play is appealable to the umpire by the defensive coach or any player on the field. Appeal must be made before the next pitch (except coach pitch) is delivered.

2008: If a base runner attempts to advance to the next base while the pitcher has possession of the ball in the pitcher's circle, she must continue to the next base. Any attempt to retreat back to the previous base (without pitcher attempting to make a play on the base runner) will result in the base runner being called out. This is called "hesitation" or "look back" rule. (The base runner can turn the corner and immediately look for the ball. This is not an attempt to advance to the next base.)

2009: Base runners may attempt to steal only after the ball leaves the pitcher's hand during her delivery of the pitch.

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2010: Base runner cannot run out of the base path to avoid a tag. This will result in base runner being called out.

Base Path: The path between the bases. 3ft on both sides of the bag that run parallel from the base pad and centerline. Base runner's position also establishes base path.

2011: Base runner should avoid contact with the defensive player at any base if there is a defensive play being made. (This is for the safety of the girls). Any aggressive act will result in

base runner being called out. Neither the catcher nor any other defensive player may block a base or home plate without having possession of the ball.

2012: Base runner cannot interfere with a defensive player making a play on the ball. This results in the runner being called out and all base runners returning to previous bag before the interference occurred (unless forced to advance). The batter/runner is deemed safe at first base.

2013: If a batted ball hits a base runner prior to passing or being touched by a defensive player (non-pitcher), the base runner is called out. In addition, if the runner interferes with an attempt by the defense to field the ball, the base runner will be called out.

2014: Base runner cannot leave her base during a caught fly ball until the ball is touched by defensive player's glove or body.

Official Lineup of Players and Substitutes

The United States Fastpitch Association has adapted the following rules. The official lineups are for league and tournament play. They will be used for all State, Regional and National play.

A team shall consist of at least nine players, whose positions shall be designated as; (1) Pitcher, (2) Catcher, (3) First Baseman, (4) Second Baseman, (5) Third Baseman, (6) Short Stop, (7) Left Fielder, (8) Center Fielder, (9) Right Fielder.

In addition, a team may optionally include a DP/FLEX or a DEFO/EP. Up to three Designated Players (DP) or Extra Players (EP) may be used. The maximum number of players in the lineup is 13; the maximum number of batters in the lineup is 12.

NOTE: Teams have the option of using EP/DEFO or DP/Flex for the 2014 season. Beginning in 2015 season, the term Designated Player (DP) / Flex will replace Extra Player and Defense Only (EP/DEFO) on the lineup card.

3001: Team must start with nine defensive players.

3002: Another option is using “extra players”. Using nine regular players and up to three “EPs or DPs”. There would be 10, 11 or 12 total players on the lineup sheet. Any nine can be used in the field with 10, 11 or 12 batters. (This lineup is designed to get more players in the game). Three of the players would have EP/DP as their position. Any of the 10, 11 or 12 players can be used for defense. The coach can change the defensive players at any time using the 10, 11 or 12 players from the

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lineup sheet. EP/DP must be used the entire game. If a player gets injured and there are no substitutes on the bench, the injured player's name is scratched through the lineup. There is no out penalty as long as there are at least 9 players left on the lineup.

3003: DP/Flex – A team may use the Designated Player (DP)/Flex option provided it is made known prior to the start of the game.

1. The DP's name(s) is indicated on the lineup as one of the batters in the batting order.
2. The name of the player for whom the DP is batting (FLEX player) will be placed last in the FLEX position (non-batting) following the last batter in the lineup.
3. The DP must remain in the same position in the lineup for the entire game.
4. The DP may be substituted for at any time by a legal substitute or the FLEX player. If the DP is replaced on offense by the FLEX player, the DP will leave the game. This reduces the number of players in the lineup by one. However the number of batters does not change. If replaced by a substitute, both the DP position and FLEX position remain in the lineup.
5. A DP may re-enter one time, as long as the DP returns to the original position in the batting order. If the DP re-enters or a substitute enters as the DP and the FLEX player was batting in the DP's spot, the FLEX player can either return to the FLEX position and play defense only, or leave the game.
6. The DP may play defense at any position. The DP may play defense for a player other than the FLEX player, that Player will continue to bat but not play defense, and is not considered to have left the game. If the DP plays defense for the FLEX player, the FLEX player is considered to have left the game, reducing the number of players by eliminating the FLEX position in the lineup.

7. The FLEX player may be substituted for at any time by a legal substitute. The DP or an EP may play defense for the FLEX player. If replaced by the DP, this eliminates the non-batting FLEX position. Unless the FLEX player has replaced the DP, the FLEX player will leave the game. If replaced by a substitute, the FLEX position remains in the lineup.
8. The FLEX player may re-enter the game one time provided they return to the non-batting position or to the DP's position in the lineup.
 - a. If returning to the FLEX position, the FLEX player will play defense only for any player.
 - b. If returning to the DP position, the FLEX player will play offense and can play defense in any position.

Rule Clarification: USFA rules allow for up to 13 players in the lineup, (12 of which may bat) by using nine regular players, up to three “extra players/designated players” (EP or DPs) and either the Flex or DEFO “defense only players” There may be 9, 10, 11, 12, or 13 total players on the lineup sheet. Any nine can be used on defense, with 9, 10, 11, or 12 batters. For purposes of simplicity, if a coach chooses to use a Flex or DEFO and only 9 batters, one of the 9 batters will be considered a DP or EP.

Exception: If the DEFO or Flex is used, that player must remain on defense throughout the game, unless inserted into the lineup “once” for any of the three EPs or DPs, or replaced on defense, in which case the DEFO position would be eliminated for the remainder of the game.

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- 3003: Substitute players shall be listed on the lineup sheet. They can be used at any given time during the game. The original player (starter) can re-enter the game at any given time. The starter and the substitute may each re-enter once.
- 3004: **Courtesy runners:** Courtesy runners are allowed for pitchers and catchers. The courtesy runner must be used prior to the next pitch being delivered. Determination for the courtesy runner will be as follows:
1. Any player listed on the lineup sheet that is not currently in the batting order. The DEFO and Flex position cannot be used as courtesy runners.
 2. If all players listed on the lineup sheet are currently in the batting order then the courtesy runner will be the last player with a completed at bat. If the last completed at bat is a pitcher or catcher, the courtesy runner will revert to the batter immediately preceding her in the batting order.
- 3005: All lineup sheets will be turned in at the start of the game. One copy will be given to the plate umpire and one copy will be given to the opposing team.
- 3006: If a player is lost to injury or illness, that space in the lineup will be scratched through unless there are less than 9 players on the lineup sheet. In that case, the affected spot will be an out when that spot comes up in the order (unless there is a substitute player available to go in that spot).
- 3007: Any player ejected from the game will result in an out when that spot in the lineup comes up, unless there is a substitute player available to go in that spot. Minimum requirements for fielding a team are still active. A team must have a minimum of 9 players on the lineup card, but can finish with a minimum of 8 players. The missing player in the batting order would be an out. Less than 8 fieldable players on the team will result in forfeit for that team.

Basics of Playing the Game

These are the basic playing rules adapted by the United States Fastpitch Association. We will not mention the very basics, which are universal. Balls, strikes, outs, foul ball, fair ball, defensive interference, offensive interference, home run, triple, double, single, walk, strike out, etc. These are some of the fundamental parts of the game that have been a part of the game since it was invented. Any organization that changes these rules is changing the foundation of the game.

- 4001: The plate is considered fair territory. A hit ball that hits the plate and remains fair or rests on the plate is considered a fair ball.**
- 4002: The strike zone is when a pitched ball crosses any part of the plate in width and crosses anywhere from the batter's knees to her solar plex.**
- 4003: The game will be seven innings, unless a run rule comes into effect or the game has been established in advance with a time limit.**
- 4004: The run rule will be 12 runs after 3 innings, 10 runs after 4 innings, and 8 runs after 5 innings.**
- 4005: Tie game after 7 innings or expired game time limit:**
- 1. Some leagues will play extra innings until a winner is determined.**
 - 2. Tournaments will use International Tiebreaker. (The last completed at bat in the previous inning becomes a base runner at second base. Play until a winner is determined).**

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3. Some tournament formats will leave games in a tie due to scheduling restraints and maintaining a daily tournament schedule.

4006: Determining home team:

1. Leagues may pre-determine this on a schedule or use coin toss.
2. Tournaments will use coin toss before the start of the game. It is customary to let the team that has come the farthest distance call the coin toss.

4007: When the ball is “dead”:

1. When “no pitch” is called by the umpire.
2. When a fly ball in foul territory is not caught.
3. Offensive interference.
4. When the batter or base runner is hit by the batted ball before the ball is touched by a fielder.
5. When the umpire calls “time”.

4008: When the ball is “live”:

1. Any batted fair ball.
2. Any fair ball that is in the playable field of play.
3. Any and all times before an umpire calls “time”.
4. When an umpire is hit by a thrown ball or batted ball.
5. When a base coach is accidentally hit by a thrown ball.

Equipment

This is the equipment to be used while playing in official United States Fastpitch Association events. As a rule, equipment must be standard approved equipment that is properly marked with “Official Softball” or similar markings that certify the equipment. All official safety equipment must be used and properly marked as certified.

- 5001: All bats must be unaltered official softball bats. The umpire will check all bats prior to the game. Any illegal bats will be removed from the dugout prior to the game. All bats must be

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stamped with BPF 1.20 or less. The governing body of softball maintains a list of illegal bats and USFA will enforce this. Use of illegal bat will result in an automatic out and ejection of player using the bat. Non-compliance will lead to offending player and coach being ejected from the game.

- 5002: A USFA stamped game ball or the equivalent must be used in all USFA sanctioned events. All 12U-18 and over division balls must be 12" in diameter with .47 C.O.R. and .375 compression. 10-under must use 11" diameter with .47 C.O.R. and .375 compression. Color and stitching are optional, as long as all the balls are the same in color for any one game. Check website for updated list of illegal balls.
- 5003: Non-compliance will lead to offending coach being ejected from the game.
- 5004: All batting helmets and catching gear must be approved and in original condition. (Numbers and personalized designs are okay). **PLAYER SAFETY IS THE MAIN CONCERN.**
- 5005: Shoes and socks must be worn and plastic cleats are recommended. (Metal cleats are allowed for 14U, 16-U, 18-U, and High School divisions).
- 5006: Hats and visors are permissible. They are optional between each individual player.
- 5007: Numbers must be worn on uniforms, with no 2 players on a team having the same number.
- 5008: All Helmets must have NOCSAE approved face guards. Defensive face guards are recommended and endorsed by USFA.

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5009: JEWELRY: Players in the game are prohibited from wearing jewelry such as rings, watches, earrings whether covered with tape or not, bracelets, necklaces (including cloth and string type), or other hard decorative items. Unadorned devices with no sharp edges or points, such as bobby pins, barrettes and hair clips, no longer than 2 inches, may be worn to control a player's hair are permitted. Medical alert bracelets or necklaces are not considered jewelry. If worn they must be taped to the body, so as to remain visible. If jewelry is not removed, that player will not be able to play until the jewelry is removed. A player who participates with jewelry is subject to penalties

. Definitions

6001: Altered bat/balls: When the physical structure of a legal softball bat or softball has been changed. Random testing of bats / balls will be done throughout the seasonal year.

Participation with, or Encouraging the use of Altered Bat/Ball: Any player who participates with, or any adult who encourages the use of an altered bat or ball shall be suspended immediately from the event discovery is made. Said player, coach and players parents may also be suspended indefinitely from all USFA activities and could be subject to Child Endangerment criminal and civil charges.

6002: Appeal: A play or rule violation on which the umpire does not make a ruling until requested by a coach or player.

6003: Base Path: The traditional path traveled by a runner who is attempting to advance to the next base. It is defined by a direct line between two bases and three feet on either side of that line, unless a fielder has the ball in her possession and she is within three feet of the runner and prepared to apply a tag.

A base runner who attempts to avoid a tag by running more than three feet to either side of a fielder with the ball in her possession shall be declared out. NOTE: A runner establishes her own base path when she is not being played upon.

6004: Base Runner: The batter-runner is a player who has finished their time at bat and has left the batter's box (both feet touching completely outside the box) but has not yet been put out or reached first base.

6005: Bunt, Attempted Bunt or Drag Bunt: A bunt is a legally batted ball not swung at but intentionally tapped with the bat. **Attempted Bunt;** Any non-swinging movement of the bat intended to tap the ball into play. Holding the bat in the strike zone is considered a bunt attempt. In order to take a pitch, the bat must be withdrawn – pulled backward and away from the ball. **Drag Bunt;** A drag bunt is attempting to bunt the ball by running forward in the batter's box, carrying the bat with her. The movement of the bat is in conjunction with the batter's forward movement

6006: Conference: Anytime a head coach gets permission to suspend play to talk to the players. Only 1 offensive or defensive conference allowed per ½ inning without penalty. On the second defensive conference a pitcher must be replaced. Replaced pitcher must pitch to at least one batter.

6007: Designated Player (DP): The Primary Role of the DP is to play offense (bats/runs) for the FLEX. The DP may play defense at any position. Teams have the option of using EP/DEFO or DP/Flex for the 2014 season. Beginning in 2015 season, the term Designated Player (DP) will replace

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Extra Player (EP) on the lineup card.

- 6008: Flex:** The Primary Role of the FLEX is to play defense only which can be at any defensive position. The FLEX player is placed in the FLEX position, a non-batting position listed last in the lineup. The FLEX may remain in the FLEX position for the entire game, or may assume the position of one of the three possible DP's position in the batting order and play offense (bat/run). Teams have the option of using EP/DEFO or DP/Flex for the 2014 season. Beginning in 2015 season, the term Flex will replace DEFO on the lineup.
- 6009: Five Minute Rule / Stalling:** Umpire has a right to end a conference early if the umpire determines a team is trying to stall a game. This call will not be questioned or appealed by a coach. Also, any stoppage of play within the last 5 minutes of a timed game will result in the game clock being suspended until play resumes.
- 60010: Leap, Crowhop or Replant:** A "Leap" is defined as an act by the pitcher which causes the pitcher to be airborne on the initial move and move from the pitcher's plate. "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." A "Crow Hop" is defined as the act of a pitcher who steps, hops, or drags off the front of the pitcher's plate, replants the pivot foot, establishing a second starting point, pushes off from the newly-established point and completes the delivery.
- 60011: Dead ball:** When the ball is not in play. Umpire will declare, "Dead ball".
- 6012: Fake tag:** An act by a defensive player that simulates an attempt to tag a runner. Faking a tag is always considered obstruction.

- 6013: Foul tip:** A foul tip is a batted ball that goes sharply and directly from the bat to the catcher's mitt or hand and is legally caught by the catcher. It is a strike and remains a live ball.
- 6014: Obstruction (Defense):** Obstruction is the act of the defensive team member that hinders or impedes a batter's attempt to make contact with a pitched ball or that impedes the progress of a runner or batter-runner who is legally running bases, unless the fielder is in possession of the ball or is making the initial play on a batted ball. The act may be intentional or unintentional, physical or verbal.
- 6015: Hit by pitch:** When the pitched ball hits the batter and the batter is not swinging at the ball and a ball or a strike is not called and the pitched ball is entirely within the batter's box and it strikes the batter or her clothing. Dead ball results with the batter advancing to first base. No attempt to avoid being hit by the pitch is required. However, the batter may not obviously try to get hit by the pitch.
- 6016: Illegal bats:** An illegal bat is a bat that does not meet acceptable specifications.
- 6017: Infield fly rule:** Infield fly rule is, when declared by the umpire, a fair fly (not including a line drive or an attempted bunt) that can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort when runners are on first and second or all three bases are occupied and before there are two outs in the inning. Any defensive player positioned in the infield at the time of the pitch shall be considered an infielder for the purposes of this rule. The rule does not preclude outfielders from being permitted to make the catch.
- 6018: Interference:** Interference is an act (physical or verbal) by a member of the team at bat who illegally impedes, hinders or

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confuses any fielder; or when a runner creates malicious contact with any fielder with or without the ball, in or out of the baseline.

6019: Live ball: Any and all times that the ball is in play or until the umpire calls “time” or “dead ball”.

6020: Three-Foot Running Lane: The three-foot running lane is a space defined by a line drawn 3 feet from and parallel to the first-base foul line starting halfway between home and first base and extending to first base in foul territory. In all situations when the batter-runner is entitled to run (i.e., a batted ball, a base on balls or a dropped third strike), she must use the three-foot running lane. An award of first base on a base on balls does not negate the requirement to use the three-foot running lane. The batter-runner is out if she runs outside the three-foot lane and, in the judgment of the umpire interferes with the fielder taking the throw at first base (there must, be a throw); however, the batter-runner may run outside the three-foot lane to avoid a fielder attempting to field a batted ball. A runner is considered outside the running lane if either foot is completely outside the lane and in contact with the ground. Players must understand that once they reach the running lane they should run completely inside it.

Regulations of the “Playing Field”

These are the basic dimensions for the playing field for each individual age group. The United States Fastpitch Association will use these dimensions for all official events. Maximum fence distances can be further if there is no way possible to bring playing field into legal distance. Temporary fences are recommended to bring fields into legal bounds.

Age Group	Pitching Distance	Base Distance	Distance “feet”
6U	Tee Ball	55/60 feet*	120-200 feet
8U	35 feet	60 feet	150-225 feet
10U	35 feet	60 feet	150-225 feet
12U	40 feet	60 feet	180-225 feet
14U	43 feet	60 feet	200-225 feet
16U	43 feet	60 feet	200-225 feet
18U	43 feet	60 feet	200-225 feet
18-Over	43 feet	60 feet	200-225 feet
High School	43 feet	60 feet	200-225 feet

*Distance based upon availability of playing field

- 7001:** There will be a 16-foot diameter circle drawn evenly around the pitching rubber.
- 7002:** The batter’s box will be to the left and to the right of the plate. They will be 3 feet wide and 7 feet long. Four feet toward the pitching rubber from the center of the plate.
- 7003:** Base lines will extend out 3 feet on both sides of the base parallel to the centerline. (Total of 6 feet wide).
- 7004:** Coaching boxes and on-deck batter’s boxes are required.

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Umpires Rights and Responsibilities

These are the standard guidelines adapted by the United States Fastpitch Association that governs the rights and responsibilities of the umpires.

- 8001:** The umpire is responsible to keep control of the game.
- 8002:** The umpire has the right to eject any player, coach, or fan for any unsportsmanlike behavior.
- 8003:** Any judgment call that the umpire makes cannot be protested.
- 8004:** Any call made that may be a misinterpretation of the rules can be protested.
- 8005:** A head coach can appeal to the plate umpire in the case of a batter on whether or not a check swing was checked or not. (The field umpire might have a better view). The plate umpire does not have to grant the appeal.
- 8006:** The umpire can suspend play for any reason: Acts of nature, unruly conduct, etc.
- 8007:** It is everyones responsibility to ensure sportsmanship in all events. An unruly fan may place the entire team in jeopardy of ejection or possible forfeit.

Recreational League Play & Tournament Guidelines

These are the guidelines adapted by the United States Fastpitch Association for running leagues. Local directors may make modifications to accommodate local needs.

9001: League play Guidelines:

1. All teams and umpires must be registered with USFA. Umpires must register individually to receive proper insurance coverage.
2. Teams should be picked in a manner to ensure parity in the league. There is nothing worse than having a stacked team among a group of inexperienced teams. League parity assures better games and a better chance of fair play.
3. At the end of the season, all-star teams can be picked and they should represent the best players that each individual team has to offer.
4. Local all-star tournaments should be rotated between the local area parks on a year-to-year basis.
5. A mid-season tournament is always a good way to raise money for local leagues. The tournament should consist of all league teams within the area.
6. Fundamentals should be taught to the players at all age groups and divisions. Clinics should be arranged for all new coaches.
7. Sportsmanship and fair play should be stressed to all players and coaches.
8. Sponsors should be appropriate for our youth to be associated with.
9. Coaches should try to keep the game fun. Never degrade Or belittle a player. Abusive coaches should be weeded Out of all local leagues.

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8-Under (Coach Pitch) Rules

10001: 8U Tournament Rules

1. 8 runs or 3 outs per $\frac{1}{2}$ inning. Following the 3rd out or 8th run scored, all play is stopped so as to prevent injury.
2. There will be 10 defensive players allowed on the field. There must be no more than 6 infielders. The outfielders must play at least 10 feet beyond the bases.
3. 5 pitches or 3 swings, 5th and consecutive fouls will not be counted against the 5 pitch count.
4. If Coach-Pitcher is hit by pitch. This will be a dead ball, do over. All runner will revert to their previous base and the batter will assume the previous pitch-count.
5. Player Pitcher must have at least one foot within the pitcher's circle until the ball is pitched. The Coach-Pitcher may pitch at any distance inside the 8 ft pitching circle and within the boundaries of the 24 inch pitching rubber. To clarify, the Coach-Pitcher must be touching or be directly in front of the pitching rubber and use a straight ahead pitching approach. Coach-Pitchers may not pitch from either side of the pitching rubber so as to gain the advantage of a directional hit.

Penalty: If at any time prior to release of the ball, the Coach-Pitcher steps outside of the pitching circle or is outside the imaginary 24 inch pitching rubber boundaries, a strike will be called on the batter.

6. While the ball is in play, all runners are free to advance at their own risk. Play is stopped on defense by stopping the lead runner. Once the lead runner has been stopped, the ball is no longer in play, the ball is thrown to the pitcher's circle and no runner may advance.

Example #1: Runner “A” is at 2nd base when the batter (Runner “B”) hits the ball. Runner “A” then runs and reaches third base safely, while the ball is fielded and is thrown to the 3rd baseman that now possesses the ball and is capable of tagging Runner “A” out if she was to attempt to advance. The Umpire declares play stopped. The ball is then thrown to the pitching circle and Runner “B” is halted at 1st base.

Example #2: Using the same scenario as Example #1, Runner “A” is at 2nd base when the batter (Runner “B”) hits the ball. Runner “A” however is tagged out prior to reaching 3rd base. In this scenario, the ball is not dead, but rather Runner “B” would now become the lead runner and may continue to advance at her own risk until she is declared out or her progress is stopped by the defense, resulting in the umpire stopping play and the ball being thrown to the pitching circle.

7. Balls must be 11”diameter with .47 C.O.R. and .375 compression. Color and stitching are optional, as long as all the balls are the same in color for any one game.
8. Two coaches can stand in the outfield in fouled ball area only, one on each side. (left side and right side)
9. Girls can leave the base when the coach releases the pitch.
10. Run rule is 12 runs after 3rd inning, 10 after 4th inning, and 8 after 5th inning.
11. Unlimited amount of players on roster.

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12. Can bat up to 13 players. Lineup may consist of 10 players with up to 3 EP's.
13. No stealing, Bunting or Slapping.
14. There will be no "Infield Fly Rule" or "Intentional Walk" for 8-Under.

10-Under Special Rules

11001: 10U- Rule additions

1. A USFA stamped 11" diameter game ball or the equivalent must be used in all USFA sanctioned events. Balls must be 11" diameter with .47 C.O.R. and .375 compression. Color and stitching are optional, as long as all the balls are the same in color for any one game.
2. Pitchers will pitch from 35 feet.
3. 10-Under teams will play by the same rules as the older age divisions, with the only exceptions being the ball size and pitching distance.

12001: High School Division

1. High school group is a combined age group of 16u And 18u.

USFA Sportsmanship Guidelines

13001: Sportsmanship and safety

1. If a player gets hurt (especially a head injury), “Dead Ball” will be called by the umpire. Safety is taken very seriously and should be monitored by all coaches and umpires.
2. Unsportsmanlike behavior by a player, coach or fan is an ejectable offense.
3. Umpires should be fair, impartial, use good judgment and never speak rudely or out of turn to a player, coach or fan. An umpire puts a human element into the game. They are subject to making errors the same as coaches and players are subject to making mistakes. In the spirit of fair play and sportsmanship we will not allow anyone to show disrespect towards them because of their decisions. USFA will do their part by pursuing the best decision makers to call USFA events.
4. Coaches will follow the rules of sportsmanship, never stall a game, be a graceful winner and loser, and never speak rudely or out of turn to a player, coach, fan or umpire. Coaches are also responsible for the sportsmanship of their own players and fans. Coaches should not tolerate unsportsmanlike conduct from their own players or fans.
5. Most importantly, our motto is COMPETITIVE FUN. It is everyone’s responsibility to keep the game FUN. It is a game and games are supposed to be fun. Play hard, coach hard, and umpire hard. Spectators should enjoy the game and support their team when they are playing both good and bad.

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Umpires are human and bad calls can happen. This is a part of the game now and forever. Accept it and have fun.

USFA World Series Qualification Procedures

14001: Qualification Guidelines:

1. Teams must be USFA Sanctioned.
2. Must do at least one of the following:
 - a. Receive a direct berth via placement at a National Invitational Tournament (NIT).
 - b. Attend at least 1 State Qualifier or NIT (any state) and attend the USFA State Tournament * (ST) in your home state.
 - c. Attend at least 1 State Qualifier or NIT (any state) and attend a Regional Qualifier (RQ) Tournament
 - d. Receive an at-large berth if no USFA events are available within 200 miles of your team's home.
 - e. 16U/18U only - Be granted a qualification waiver in writing by a USFA State/Area Director. 16U or 18U teams who can provide documentation that the High School season and/or college recruiting activities have prevented them from meeting the above requirements may submit a request for a qualification waiver. A qualification waiver must be submitted in writing (by mail or electronic mail) to the USFA State/Area Director who will review it, make recommendations and forward to the National Office for final approval.

* Note: State Tournaments are strictly for the teams within a given state. Out of state teams may not attend.

3. All teams must submit rosters online prior to the USFA State Tournament / National Qualifier / NIT / World Series.

Penalty: Teams without a submitted electronic roster are subject to disqualification and/or qualification berth revocation.

4. Teams who receive a berth via NIT placement must have submitted their electronic roster prior to the event. **Penalty:** Forfeiture of the World Series berth for that event. Team is still eligible to receive a berth at a future event.

5. Roster: Up to two pick-up players may be added to a team's roster after qualification berth has been awarded. If a projected pick-up player is on another USFA roster the following applies:
 - a. If the projected pick-up player's current team will not be attending the USFA World Series – No action is required other than adding the player via roster add-on form.
 - b. If the projected pick-up player's current team will be attending the USFA World Series, the player must be released in writing (email notification is sufficient) and deleted from the current roster. If the current team elects not to release the player, consult your USFA State/Area Director about additional options.

6. Pick-up player(s) may not come from a team in a higher age or classification. Example: An (A) player may not pick-up on a (B) team at a NIT, State Tournament or National Level event. **Penalty:** Forfeiture of the current game in which the offense was discovered. Head Coach and player of the offending team are disqualified for the remainder of the event. Incident will be elevated to the USFA Review Board to determine if additional actions are warranted. Additional actions may be up to and including disqualification for the Coach, Player and Team in all USFA State and National level events.

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7. Any player who has competed at the Division I or II collegiate level must play at the (A) Classification.

NOTE: Teams that have received a berth to an “A” classification National event in USFA or another organization must play in the USFA “A” World Series. Furthermore, any team that has been classified as an “A” team or participates in an “A” State Tournament hosted by USFA or another organization may be required to play in the USFA “A” World Series.

USFA National Tournament Play Guidelines:

1. Time Limit is 1 hour 15 minutes (finish the inning) for pool games. Pool games can end in a tie. All elimination games will be no new inning after 1 hour 15 minutes. International Tie Breaker is in effect after time has expired or number of innings has been played. Championship games will be 7 innings for 12-U, 14-U, 16-U and 18-U. Championship games will be 6 innings for 6-U, 8-U and 10-U. International Tie Breaker will be used at expiration of time limit for bracket games that are at a tie. International Tie Breaker will be used for Championship games after the official number of innings has been played.
2. Run rules will be in effect for all Pool, Bracket and Championship Games. Run rules are: 12 runs after 3, 10 runs after 4, and 8 runs after 5. Run rules are in effect for all games, including championship games.
3. There will be no warm-ups on the field prior to game.
4. The USFA stamped game ball will be the only ball used in USFA National events.

5. Home team will be decided by coin toss. Home team will be official scorekeeper.
6. Game schedule may be altered for inclement weather. Games may be cancelled or rescheduled accordingly. It is up to the individual team to check current posted schedules.
7. Pool games cancelled due to inclement weather may not be made up.
8. Coaches must check their team in at the Team Managers/Coaches meeting (time and location to be announced).
9. Hydration, Hydration, Hydration!! Keep an eye on your girls. If there is any question about a girl's health on the field, please tell the umpire to stop the game so we can assure the well being of the girls. Also, coaches need to keep an eye on the umpires. Players need to keep an eye on the coaches. Keep your coaches hydrated. We want everyone to stay healthy and have FUN!! Wear your SUNSCREEN; you will be glad that you did!

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