

DeKalb County Softball 2026

14U/12U/10U Softball League Rules

(14U) Constituents: Bobcat Youth League, Jackson Township Athletic Association, Riverdale Youth League, Hamilton Summer League, Garrett Youth League, and Auburn Youth League.

(12U/10U) Constituents: Bobcat Youth League, Jackson Township Athletic Association, Riverdale Youth League, Hamilton Summer League, Garrett Youth League, and Auburn Youth League.

Adopted: North East Softball League 3/25/97 & DeKalb County Softball League 2/18/24

Revisions: 1/2001, 2/2001, 4/2005, 1/2006, 1/2007, 4/2007, 2/2014, 1/2018, 1/2019, 1/2020, 1/2022, 1/2023, 2/2024, 2/2025, 1/2026

(12U/10U) Girls: May not be 13**(12U)** & 11**(10U)** or older as of January 1 of current year.

(14U) Girls: May not be 15 or older as of January 1 of current year.

If a league has enough girls for multiple teams at an age group a draft must take place and the commissioner of that league needs to try their best to make the teams even.

The National Federation of State High Schools Associations Rule Book will be the official rule book of the league. Rule changes can only be made with Board (North East Softball League & DeKalb County Softball League) approval, which takes at least a majority of the leagues that played in the previous year or two (2) board members from each league in attendance and a majority vote of board members present. Rule changes, additions, or subtractions may only be implemented prior to April 1.

Below are the exceptions to the NFHS Rules Book the North East Softball League & DeKalb County Softball League will adhere to.

GAMES

1.0 Games shall consist of six (6) innings. In the event of a weather or safety related interruption of the game that will not allow a resumption of the game that day, four (4) innings shall constitute a complete game, except where the home team is winning after three and one-half innings (3 ½). In such an event, three and one-half (3 ½) innings shall constitute a complete game.

2.0 The start of an inning is defined as the final out of the previous inning. The game shall last one (1) hour and forty-five (45) minutes, allowing for an inning that started before the time limit to completely finish. No inning may start after the time limit.

Should the game end in a tie, the game shall be over and the tie is the final score.

3.0 Each half inning lasts for three (3) outs or six (6) runs. No tenth batter rule. An inning will consist of six(6) outs or a maximum of 12 runs.

4.0 The ten (10) run rule applies after 4 innings (3 1/2 innings if the home team is leading).

5.0 All games start as scheduled. There will be a ten (10) minute wait for the opposing team to show-up or forfeiture will be called. A minimum number of eight (8) players are required to start, play or finish a game or forfeiture will be called.

6.0 Protest of game: A ruling body of two (2) Board (League) members from each league will meet and be presented the facts of the protest and will decide the outcome of the game. The home plate umpire should also attend the meeting.

7.0 Official scoring will be that of the home team scorekeeper. It is up to the visiting team to confer with the home team to reconcile discrepancies.

CANCELLED GAMES & RESCHEDULING

9.0 Rain Outs: Games in progress, there will be a maximum 1/2 hour wait for rain to stop before the game is called. Umpire will call the game. **LIGHTNING: GAME IS CALLED IMMEDIATELY-NO DISCRETION. ANY WARNINGS ISSUED BY THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE, ALL GAMES & PRACTICES ARE CALLED IMMEDIATELY, INCLUDING GAMES AND/OR PRACTICES ALREADY IN PROGRESS-NO DISCRETION.** All incomplete games called because of adverse weather will resume with the last completed inning, no automatic out for players absent from the original line up. If it is called after four innings or 3 ½ innings if the home team leads, it is considered a regulation game.

10.0 Rescheduled Games: To be scheduled within 1 week & PLAYED within 2 weeks. Check with the Concession Stand, Umpires & opposing Coach. It is the responsibility of the Home Team to reschedule games, to be played within fourteen days of the regularly scheduled game. In the event, an agreement isn't reached within 1 week, the commissioners may set the date to be played.

11.0 Cancellation of games due to weather or wet grounds prior to game start time will be made by the Home Team, with consideration to provide visiting teams & umpires ample notification.

BATTING

12.0 All players are to be allowed to bat. The batting order shall consist of all players on the roster & be established at the beginning of the game & shall not be altered during the game.

13.0 Batting: All girls must bat per line up. Bat the entire roster.

14.0 In the case of injury or sickness, players may leave the batting order & re-enter at both coaches discretion no automatic out.

15.0 Bunting is allowed. Slashing Is NOT allowed!

16.0 Practice or warm-up swings are prohibited in the batter's box or anywhere on the field when the ball is live.

17.0 Dead Ball: a player that is hit by a ball, whether direct hit or bounce, an award to first base will be granted.

FIELDING

18.0 Defensive team will field ten (10) players, with the tenth as an extra outfielder. The fielding positions will be altered, so that all players have the opportunity to field for at least two innings.

19.0 The fielding positions will be altered so that all players will field at least 1 inning if a team fields 3 or fewer innings in a completed regulation game. If a team fields 6 innings in a completed regulation game, each player will field at least 2 innings during that game. If a player does not play the required innings in a completed regulation game, they will play an additional inning in the next game.

PITCHING

20.0 Pitching: Circle around pitching mound. When the pitcher is in the circle & has control of the ball, the base runner must decide immediately which base they will occupy. (12' circle for 10U, 16' circle for 12U & 14U).

21.0 Limit pitching to a pitcher pitching only 2 innings within the first 4 innings . Delivery of one (1) pitch constitutes having pitched one inning. After the 4th inning is over then a pitcher can pitch unlimited innings.

22.0 **(10U)** - Pitching will be 35 feet measured from the back of home plate to the front edge of the pitching rubber.

(12U) - Pitching will be from 40 feet. The distance shall be measured from the point of home plate to the front edge of the pitching rubber.

(14U) - Pitching will be from 43 feet. The distance shall be measured from the point of home plate to the front edge of the pitching rubber.

23.0 Pitchers are to have at max 5 pitches in between innings. A new pitcher shall have 10 pitches.

24.0 Re-entry: Since we are batting the entire roster you may re-enter, in order to get girls equal playing time. When a pitcher has been removed from the mound & after a batter has finished her turn at bat, that same pitcher can be returned to the mound.

Any pitcher can only return to the mound one time per regulation game.

25.0 No balks.

26.0 A pitcher may not strike no more than five (5) batters per game. Once the limit of five (5) is reached, the pitcher must be removed from the position, but can still play in the field. A ball that hits the ground before hitting the batter doesn't count against the (5) batters that the pitcher gets.

FIELD & EQUIPMENT

26.1 The baseline will be 60 feet.

27.0 **(10U)** - An 11" optic yellow synthetic or leather softball will be used. **(12U/14U)**- A 12" optic yellow synthetic or leather softball will be used. The home team provides one new game ball and one good used ball.

28.0 Double first bases are requested, as a safety precaution. Whenever a play is being made on the batter/runner, the defense must use the white portion & the batter/runner the colored portion. The batter/runner is out when there is a play being made at first base & she only touches the white portion, providing the defense appeals prior to the runner returning to first.

28.1 When tagging up, the white portion must be used.

28.2 When there is no play being made at first base, the batter/runner may touch the white or colored portion.

28.3 Should the batter/runner return, she must return to the white portion.

28.4 A batted ball hitting the white portion is fair & a batted ball hitting the colored portion is declared foul.

29.0 Glove Specifications: No special gloves are needed.

30.0 No steel cleats may be worn.

31.0 All catchers shall wear complete catching equipment, including mask & chest protector.

32.0 All batters, base runners & on deck batters must wear helmets while on the playing field. Face masks on batter helmets are required.

33.0 All players not playing the field, running the bases, batting or on deck to bat, are to be in the dugout or off the field.

34.0 **(10U)**-All players shall wear face masks. **(12U/14U)**-Pitchers, 1st and 3rd shall wear face masks.

COACHES

35.0 Coaches will be in the coaching boxes when their team is at bat (rather than teammates).

36.0 Coach may deny the right of a player to participate in a game or innings(s) for disciplinary action or

unexcused absences from practice. The coach shall submit a complete roster to the opposing scorekeeper before the game. The coach shall then designate players who are being disciplined-no automatic out.

37.0 The coaching staff will consist of the Head Coach, one Assistant Coach & a Score Keeper per game. The Head Coach is responsible for the actions of the Assistant Coach & Scorekeeper & the team. The Coach & staff are the only persons allowed on the playing field with the team.

CONDUCT

38.0 Throwing Bat/helmet: First infraction-warning given to the team. Second infraction-batter is out. Umpire's Discretion.

39.0 There shall be no smoking on the field or in the dugouts during games or practices. Use of foul language, alcoholic beverages or drugs during games or practices will not be permitted.

RUNNING/SLIDING

40.0 A runner may steal any base. The steal cannot be attempted until after the ball has crossed home plate (**10U**) or left the pitcher's hand (**12U/14U**). The first time a runner leaves early she will be warned & allowed to go back to her base; the second time a runner leaves early, the runner is out. Any girl leaving early after that is out. The team receives the warning.

41.0 Sliding: All runners must avoid contact at all bases. Violation of this rule shall result in an out (umpire discretion) and no warning is necessary. "Avoiding contact" is defined as sliding, going around a defensive player, or giving yourself up. From a Coaching standpoint it is best to instruct players to slide in all situations where contact is possible. An attempt to slide should be made to avoid collision. If the fielder isn't trying to make a tag on the runner then the runner doesn't need to slide. If the runner beats the throw or fielder to the base then they do not have to slide. The league doesn't have a mandatory slide rule where a player can get called for an automatic out if they do not slide.

42.0 If the umpire should see a runner miss a base, the runner should be called out at that time, no appeal needed, automatic out.

43.0 (**10U**)- No infield fly rule. (**12U/14U**)- Infield Fly Rule: With players on 1st & 2nd or 1st, 2nd & 3rd, with less than 2 outs, if a fair batted ball (not including an attempted bunt) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort, the umpire shall immediately declare "Infield Fly" the batter is out. Runners can tag up & advance once the batted ball is touched (prior to catching) the same as any fly ball.

44.0 Playing Up: If a shortage of players occurs, a replacement player may be called up from the division immediately below the division being called up to. Called up players must be a registered regular season player within their respective community league. The called-up player shall play only if no other player from the team is able to play. Any called up players are ineligible to pitch for that team when called up for that age bracket.

45.0 (**10U**)- No dropped third strike. (**12U/14U**) - Dropped Third Strike: When the catcher fails to catch

the third strike, with less than 2 outs & 1st base is unoccupied or anytime there are 2 outs, the ball is in play & the batter becomes a batter/runner with liability to be put out. If the batter takes 2 steps toward the dugout w/no intention to go to 1st - batter is out.

46.0 Charged Conference: One conference per inning to mound – the second conference to mound in the same inning- pitcher must be pulled. No more than three infielders & the coach can congregate at the mound during a time out. Two (2) offensive conferences per inning.

47.1 Players may not play laterally within their original age division. If a team does not have enough players, they must call up players from a level below. If no players are available at the level below, the team must forfeit the game.

47.2 High school varsity and JV softball players must play at senior level. (1/10/2018)

47.3 Team rosters must be submitted before the first game of the season. This roster submission must include name, date of birth, coach contact, team, and uniform number (optional). (1/10/2018)

48.0 If catcher/pitcher does NOT have possession of the ball, catcher/pitcher must remain behind home plate and out of path for runners. If catcher/pitcher HAS possession of the ball, catcher/pitcher must straddle home plate leaving a path open for runners. If the catcher/pitcher blocks home plate NOT leaving an open path, the runner will be awarded the base.

A PATH MUST BE LEFT OPEN FOR RUNNER

SCHEDULING

48.0 Regular season (April 27th – June 14th)

49.0 An attempt will be made for all teams to play each other twice. When 2 teams will face each other twice, each team shall be home once, on its home field. If 2 teams will face each other only once, the game shall be scheduled on the field that is most readily available. Attempts will be made for each team to have equal home and away games.

50.0 No more than 3 regular scheduled games per week per team.

51.0 Final regular season schedule shall be completed for player distribution no later than April 20th.

52.0 Each league shall submit teams & field availability by a mandatory April 1st deadline to the scheduler. Each league will accommodate scheduling a minimum of one home game per week for each softball team in its league, in addition to a mandatory 1 game per week, per division, to allow for re-scheduled & senior games. If a league cannot accommodate appropriate field space, their teams may forfeit home field advantage. For leagues that would like their teams home on a specific opening day, they must notify the scheduler by April 1 & provide field space for all their teams to play at home on said date. Conflicts occurring post-schedule or teams/fields not submitted to scheduler by April 1 deadline will be remedied by the affected teams/leagues.

53.0 ½ hour between games for field preparation & team warm-ups. No regular season games will be initially scheduled after June 14th. No regular season games will be scheduled on Sundays. All regular season games must be concluded prior to the end of the 2nd week of June. For games not played, the

offending team responsible for the rescheduling will record a forfeit.

54.0 Tournament dates, host, & elimination will be printed on the regular season schedule. Tournaments will be single elimination.

Brackets will be seeded according to their regular season record.

Awards will be presented to the top two teams. Tournament hosts will provide awards. The tournament shall conclude no later than June 30th.

Additional “10U” Coach Pitch Rules Only

- 1.5 Hour time limit regular season

- Pitchers are only allowed to pitch 2 innings in the first 4 innings. After the 4th inning they can pitch as many as they want.

- Only allowed to steal 1 base at a time.

- Can only steal home on a passed ball behind the home plate.

- When a runner is on third base they can advance home if the catcher throws the ball down to third base to make a play. This can only happen if the runner was already on third and the pitcher has made a pitch to a batter.

- If a runner is on third base and a runner is on first base and the runner on first decides to steal second base, the runner on third CANNOT advance home if the catcher throws the ball to second base.

- If a runner is on third base and a runner is on second base the catcher can not try and pick the runner off at second base.

- No stealing or bunting when the coach is pitching.

- Coaches need to remove themselves from the field as quickly as possible on any base hits.

- The ball needs to cross the plate before runners can move.

- Masks are to be worn at every position for 10u.

- No intentional walks if a player does not make an attempt to move on a slow roll pitch.

- The coach gets 2 bad pitches per player that doesn't get considered a strike. The coach has to have a foot on the rubber when pitching.

- A pitcher can re-enter the game as a pitcher 1 time.

- Max 6 runs an inning

- Pitchers are only allowed to walk 2 players an inning, the next batter that gets a ball 4, the coach will come out and pitch with the current count as is. The batter then will strike out or

have to hit the ball.

- End of season tournament will be player pitch only and the time limit will be 1 hour 45 Minutes.