



U9 Provincial Rules and Regulations

The following minor playing rules will supersede the standard Softball Canada rules for the 2026 season. Softball NB has deemed this game play as the logical continuation of the Learn to Play Softball Program.

Rationale

These rules have been created to ensure young athletes are developing fundamental movement skills, softball specific skills and knowledge while having fun. Goals of these adapted rules include: increasing opportunities to hit, run the bases and make defensive plays, increase activity for each player on the field, increase the retention rate of players, create a suitable environment to learn the basic rules of softball and develop technical abilities and promote the game of softball by making it more engaging and fun for all!

Using the Defensive Pitcher-Coach increases hitting and defensive opportunities. Pitcher-Coaches should throw hittable pitches of appropriate speeds, to support player development, in the best interest of the game.

RULE 1: The Game

1. A complete game will be 5 complete innings OR 1 hour and 15 minutes plus 1 inning, whichever comes first. The new inning starting after 1 hour and 15 minutes will be the last inning and use the "Modified Open Inning" (Rule 1.4.b). The official start time will be at the completion of the plate meeting, official start time will be noted by the official scorekeeper.
2. No provincial championship game will end in a tie
 - a. If after the last inning, the score is tied, extra innings will be played using the tie breaker rule (start the inning with the last available batter on 2nd base, 0 outs) until a winner is declared.
 - i. Extra innings will use the "Modified Open Inning" rule (Rule 1.4.b)
3. Run Ahead Rule: not in effect
4. Inning Run Rule
 - a. Innings 1-4: teams may score a maximum of 3 runs per inning (unless last inning)
 - b. "Modified Open Inning" is inning 5 OR any inning beginning after 1 hour and 15 minutes. At the start of the "modified open inning":
 - i. If the visiting team is behind, they will be limited to a run differential of plus 3.
 - ii. If the visiting team is ahead, they will be allowed to score a maximum of 3 runs.
 - iii. The home team will be allowed to score runs to go ahead by a maximum of 1 run.



RULE 2: Playing Field and Equipment

1. Base Line Distance: 45' ft
2. Pitching Mound Distance: 30' ft
3. Ball: 11" RIF (Reduced Injury Factor) Training Ball / Sof-Dot
4. Batting Helmet
 - a. MANDATORY: Offensive players must wear a batting helmet with a cage while at bat and on base.
5. Face Protection
 - a. MANDATORY: All pitchers are required to wear a protective fielder's face mask. It is strongly recommended that defensive players wear fielder's masks.
6. No metal spikes on cleats are permitted

RULE 3: Participants

1. Playing Time
 - a. The official batting line-up shall consist of **all** players on the official roster.
 - b. Coaches are encouraged to play all players equally as possible over the course of the season.
 - c. No player is to sit more than one (1) consecutive inning. Coaches will ensure that every player sits out one (1) inning before any player sits out two (2) innings.
 - d. A player cannot play the same defensive position more than two (2) innings per game (non-consecutive).
 - e. Each player must play an infield and outfield position in a game unless safety is an issue. (Please indicate any safety concerns on the rotation sheet).
 - f. Coaches will be required to submit a signed, complete player rotation sheet to the official scorekeepers before the beginning of each Provincial Championship game
 - g. Failure to comply with the Playing Time rule will result in the coach being required to move the identified player into a new position. Any indication of coaches not following this rule must be brought to the official scorekeeper's attention. Umpires will **not** be responsible for enforcing this rule.
2. Extra players
 - a. When a team has more than 9 players, coaches may use the outfield for practice and skill development with players sitting on the bench.
3. Line-Up Changes
 - a. If a rostered player arrives late, they may be added to the bottom of the line up at any point.
 - b. If a player gets injured they will have the remainder of the current inning and the following complete inning to return to the line-up. If they are not able to bat, their position in the line-up will be skipped and will not be considered an out. If they cannot return the game after the following complete inning they will be removed for the remainder of the game and will not be considered an out.



- c. If a player must leave the game, their position in the line-up may be skipped and not counted as an out. They will be removed from the line-up and will not be allowed to return for the remainder of the game.
- d. If a team is not able to field the minimum number of players (6) the game will be considered a forfeit.

RULE 4: Pitching

1. Pitching - Player
 - a. Players may pitch a maximum of 3 called balls per batter. If the batter has not either hit the ball or struck out, the defensive coach will then come in to pitch to finish the at bat. The count will not reset when the defensive coach comes into pitch.
2. Illegal Pitches: will not be called.
 - a. Umpires can inform coaches of any pitchers that may be pitching illegally and work with them to correct it
 - b. Pitcher must have 1 or both feet in contact with the slab at the beginning of the pitching motion.
3. Pitching Limitations
 - a. A pitcher is allowed to pitch a maximum of 2 innings per game (non-consecutive).
 - b. A player may pitch a maximum of 4 innings per day
 - i. The Round Robin portion will be considered one (1) day.
 - ii. The Playoff portion will be considered one (1) day.
 - c. 1 pitch equals one inning

RULE 5: The Offensive Team

Note: The offensive team is allowed to have one coach stand in each coaches box.

1. Charged conferences: unlimited
2. Walks: allowed
 - a. On a walk, a batter is granted first base ONLY. Batter cannot take second base on a walk.
 - b. Intentional walks are not allowed
3. Hit by Pitch: not in effect, batter will not be awarded first base (RIF Ball is used at this age)
4. Dropped Third Strike Rule: not in effect
5. Bunting: not allowed
6. Infield Fly Rule: not in effect
7. Stealing: not allowed
8. Advancing of Runners on bases
 - a. No runners may advance additional bases on a throwing error.
 - b. Runners cannot leave their base before the ball is hit. In the event of a violation (i.e. lead off) the ball is dead and all runners must return to their base.
9. Temporary Runner Rule:
 - a. Catcher: With 2 outs, a coach must implement the temporary runner so the catcher can begin getting their equipment on, in order to speed up the game.

2026 updates are highlighted

Updated March 2026



- b. Pitcher: With 2 outs, the Temporary Runner Rule is optional for the pitcher.

RULE 6: The Defensive Team

1. Maximum of 9 players on defense
 - a. Teams may play with 6 players (minimum).
2. Maximum of two defensive coaches may be on the field during play.
 - a. One coach may be positioned behind the catcher to assist in retrieving the balls to maintain the pace of the game. The coach should return the ball to the catcher and allow the player to throw the ball back to the pitcher.
 - b. One coach may be positioned behind the pitcher to help with facilitation of the game and be prepared to step in as the Pitcher-Coach.
3. Any **batted** ball remains live until the ball comes to the pitcher or the umpire declares 'time'

*all additional rules not identified will revert back to the Softball Canada Rulebook

[U9/ U11 Rotation Sheet](#)