

2022 10U Division Rules

I. Introduction:

- a. Timbergrove Sports Mission Statement
 - i. It is the mission of the Timbergrove Sports Association to provide a safe, fun, and competitive community sports environment for young athletes while promoting core principles of sportsmanship, respect, hard work, and volunteerism.
- b. Code of Conduct
 - i. Parent Creed
 1. I shall set an example of good sportsmanship and conduct for my child to follow.
 2. I shall not criticize or show displeasure with any umpire or their calls unless I am ready to assume their duties.
 3. I shall remember that only a certain number of children can play at a time.
 4. I shall remember that all managers, coaches, and board members are volunteers.
 5. I shall not complain about anyone unless I have labored as much as they have on TSA projects.
 - ii. We expect all spectators to:
 1. Let the coaches coach.
 2. Let the officials officiate.
 3. Let the children play, compete, perform, and learn.
- c. Positive Coaching Alliance
 - i. Timbergrove Sports Association has partnered with PCA in an effort to provide their great resources to our coaches & parents, and because we share their belief that winning is a goal in youth sports but that there is a second, more important goal of using sports to teach life lessons through positive coaching.
 - ii. Coaches are required to attend and complete the Positive Coaching Alliance workshop once every other year. Division Directors and/or the Director of Softball Operations will have records on coaches with active certificates for the PCA workshop.
 - iii. Additional PCA resources for parents and coaches can be found [here](#).

II. General Rules and Guidelines

- a. Rule Book
 - i. TSA is following the USA/ASA Softball rulebook with some modifications made to fit our playing fields and age groups.
 - ii. Division specific rules are provided in this document and are designed to gradually progress as the athletes age. Any clarification for rules not directly stated herein should be referred to the appropriate Division Directors, Director of Softball Operations, or the current edition of the USA Softball official rulebook.
 - iii. A copy of the Timbergrove Sports Association Softball Rules will be laminated and hung from each dugout for reference during games. If this copy is missing coaches should alert their Division Director, or the Director of Softball Operations, so that it can be replaced.
 - iv. Each Head Coach will receive a hard copy of the USA Softball rule book.
- b. Divisions
 - i. TSA will offer the following divisions for softball:
 1. 6U (Tee Ball)
 2. 8U (Coach Pitch)
 3. 10U (Modified Player Pitch)
 4. 12U (Player Pitch)
 - ii. Player's divisions will be determined by their age on January 1st of the season year. The season runs from August 1 through July 31.
 - iii. Players may request to play up one division per the [TSA Play Up Policy](#). No exceptions will be made to this policy. Any requests made outside of the policy, or the approved timeline, will be denied.

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- c. Uniforms
 - i. In the spring season players will receive a jersey, headband, and socks for the season. Pants, belts, cleats, etc. will be communicated by the coaches and are the responsibility of the player.
 - ii. In the fall season players will receive a jersey and headband for the season. Pants, belts, socks, cleats, etc. will be communicated by the coaches and are the responsibility of the player.
 - iii. Jewelry may not be worn during regulation game play. Each team may receive one warning per game where the player removes the jewelry. Another violation of this in the same game will result in the player being called out.
- d. Umpires
 - i. Umpires should be respected by players, coaches, and spectators alike. Any violation of this is cause for disciplinary action, including removal from the park grounds.
 - ii. Head Coaches may appeal calls on the field directly to the umpire that made the call. After appeal, decisions by the umpire(s) are final and game play shall continue.
 - iii. Each team will submit a lineup to the home plate umpire prior to the start of regulation game play.
- e. Coaches
 - i. Coaches, players, or adult volunteers who engage in unsportsmanlike conduct, such as fighting, abusive language, or similarly derogatory behavior, may be ejected from the game and asked to leave the fields. Additional offenses may result in suspension from future games.
 - ii. Coaches should be in their designated areas (see division specific rules) on the field or in the dugout.
 - iii. Coaches may not try to “rattle” any of the players. If a coach’s behavior is seen as being disruptive to the players by an umpire the coach will receive a warning. Any additional offenses will result in the coach being ejected for the remainder of the game.
- f. Players and Rosters
 - i. Each team shall have a minimum of 9-11 players assigned to their roster.
 - ii. Players are encouraged to try new positions, however the spring season is competitive and positions in the field or batting order are not guaranteed to players.
 - iii. No player will sit the bench twice until all players have sat at least once per game.
- g. Playoffs
 - i. Each team will make the playoffs.
 - ii. Playoff seeding will be determined by season standings.
 - iii. Any ties situations in the season standings will be addressed by the Division Director and Head Coaches will be notified of the terms prior to the end of the scheduled season games.
 - iv. Playoffs will be structured as a single elimination bracket.
 - v. Player pickups are not allowed during playoff games unless pickups are agreed to by the Coaches, Division Director, and approved by the Softball Director prior to the start of the scheduled game.
 - vi. WEATHER: if rainouts and/or weather prevent rescheduling of games to complete the playoffs, the bracket will be determined by coin flips. The coach of the higher seeded team can select a single flip or 2 out of 3 format and may choose to call or defer the call to the other team’s coach. Coin will be flipped by the Director of Softball or an umpire if one is present.

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III. Division Game Play Rules

a. Regulation Game Play

- i. A regulation game will consist of six (6) full innings or 75 minutes of play, whichever comes first. Time duration during weeknight games may be modified to accommodate daylight.
- ii. A new inning will not be started after 75 full minutes of play. If a new inning is started before the game clock is expired the inning will be completed.
- iii. A half inning during the first and second innings consists of three outs or three runs, whichever comes first.
- iv. A half inning during the third and any inning after consists of three outs or five runs, whichever comes first.
- v. If a game is called in the middle of an inning after the 4th inning the game is complete, and the score will be that of the last completed inning of play.
- vi. Games that are called before regulation play shall be resumed from the last fully completed inning.
- vii. A run rule format of ten (10) runs will be used for all games. If after four (4) innings either team is ahead by ten runs or more, the game shall be concluded by the umpire.
- viii. Regular season games that are tied at the end of the 6th inning, or 75 minutes, are complete and the game will be recorded as a tie.
- ix. Playoff games that cannot end in a tie will utilize the International Tiebreaker Rule (ITB). The ITB rule states at the end of regulation play if the game is tied, the next inning will follow ITB to guarantee a winner. The last hitter from the previous inning, on the offensive team, will be placed on second base at the beginning of the new ITB inning. Regular play resumes. The ITB rule will be used in each consecutive inning until an inning is completed with one team emerging as the winner.

b. Field

- i. The distance between the center of the pitcher's rubber and the apex of home plate is 35 feet.
- ii. The distance between bases is 60 feet.
- iii. The double base will be used at first base. This base is 15" x 30" with both sides equal in height. Half of the base is white (over fair territory) and half of the base is of contrasting color (over foul territory).
- iv. The pitcher's circle will be an 8-foot radius drawn from the front edge of the pitcher's rubber.
- v. Chalk lines will be required for foul lines, the pitcher's circle, halfway marks on the first and third baselines, and the batter's box.

c. Equipment

- i. The 10U division will use an official 11" softball. Game balls are provided by the league, one per team per game.
- ii. All infield positions will be required to wear a facemask.
- iii. All outfield positions are HIGHLY encouraged to wear a facemask.
- iv. Catchers are required to wear a full set of catcher's gear while behind the plate. This includes chest pad, shin guards, and helmet. One set will be provided per team. Catchers are not permitted to wear a batting helmet.
- v. Player's bats must meet current USA/ASA standards. It is the responsibility of the player and coaches to ensure bats are legal prior to the start of a game.
- vi. All batters are required to wear a protective batting helmet with a face mask and chin strap while batting and baserunning.

d. Coaches Positions

- i. Offensive Coaches
 1. Offensive team coaches may be positioned at first and third base.

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2. Base coaches are not allowed to physically assist runners at any time (ie stopping runners, assisting runners back on base, or pushing runners toward the next base). In this event the physically assisted runner will be called out.
 3. One coach can stand/sit immediately outside of the dugout if (s)he is not on the field.
 4. Coaches who are pitching cannot provide verbal instructions to base runners before a play.
 5. Coaches who are pitching can only provide general instruction to the batter before (s)he starts their pitching motion. It is at the umpire's discretion to warn a coach if excessive direction is being given and causing a delay of the game.
- ii. Defensive Coaches
1. Defensive team coaches are not allowed on the field.
 2. One coach may sit/stand immediately outside of the dugout.
 3. Between batters the coaches may verbally direct players of field positions if needed.
- e. Rosters and Positions
- i. Each team roster will consist of a minimum of 9-11 players.
 - ii. A team may begin or end a game with 8 players, utilizing 2 outfielders instead of 3. (Playing shorthanded)
 - iii. In the event a team plays with 8 players the vacant position must be listed on the batting lineup and an out will not be recorded when the vacant position is scheduled to bat.
 - iv. In the event a team does not have enough players to play shorthanded, they may pick up a player to avoid forfeiture of the game. Teams may only pick up the number of players required to meet the minimum number to play shorthanded (8).
 - v. Players who are picked up on a team must be registered at TSA, in the same eligible age group or below, in the same draft order position or below for the season, will play the outfield positions only, and will bat at the bottom of the lineup. All player pickups must be agreed upon in advance of the game by both team's head coaches, and approved by the division director. For playoff games the player pickups must meet all of the above and be approved by the director of softball operations prior to the start of the game.
 - vi. If a team has less than 8 players show up for a game the team will forfeit the game.
- f. Fielding
- i. There will be 9 defensive fielding positions:
 1. Pitcher
 2. Catcher
 3. First Base
 4. Second Base
 5. Third Base
 6. Short Stop
 7. Left Field
 8. Center Field
 9. Right Field
 - ii. The first baseman, pitcher, and catcher are permitted to tag a batter out after the batter hits the ball in play and before the batter touches first base. When any other position endeavors to make an out at first base the ball must be thrown overhand to an eligible player, unless close proximity warrants an underhand toss.
 - iii. For all other baserunners, the defensive fielder must throw the ball to get an out, unless she is close to the runner and can easily tag the runner out. The defensive player cannot run around the field to tag a runner out (i.e. shortstop running to tag the runner going from first base to second base).
 - iv. The ball is considered dead once the kid pitcher has control of the ball with both feet inside the pitcher's circle. It is at the umpire's discretion as to whether the pitcher is

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- returning to the circle to stop the play or passing through the circle attempting another play.
- v. If the ball is hit into play back to the kid pitcher, the pitcher may hold on to the ball within the circle to stop play.
 - vi. If the ball is juggled by the pitcher in an attempt to throw and there is no longer a play, the ball may be called dead at the discretion of the umpire.
 - vii. Fielders must stand at their intended position location. Major shifts are not allowed.
 - viii. All outfielders must start each play at an invisible line halfway between the outfield fence and the infield dirt. With the exception of ready/creep steps, no significant forward motion(s) should be made by an outfielder until the ball is hit into play.
 - ix. Fielders may not stand on top of the bases and must provide a clear path for the baserunner. It is at the umpire's discretion to call obstruction/interference as they see fit, call the runner safe, and award the base to the runner.
 - x. Fielders may not be in the direct line of the runner (ie positioned on the baseline) unless they are actively attempting to make a play. It is at the umpire's discretion to call interference/obstruction as they see fit, call the runner safe, and award the runner the base.
 - xi. It is recommended that all players be allowed to play at different positions each game but is not required. It is encouraged that players start to master a position at this age.
 - xii. No player will sit the bench twice until all players have sat at least once per game. The first violation during the season of this rule will be a warning. Any additional violations in the same season may warrant a coach's removal from their team.
- g. Pitching
- i. Pitcher's will pitch the windmill technique as described in the USA Softball official rule book.
 - ii. The rules for the pitcher are standard USA Softball rules regarding pitchers. Three strikes is an out and four balls is a walk.
 - iii. The pitcher must start with both feet on the pitching rubber. The step back pitching variation is in effect and legal.
 - iv. The pitcher may not jump or hop off of the rubber.
 - v. The pitcher's foot must drag off of the pitching rubber and she must execute a legal pitch.
 - vi. Umpires may direct the coach on the first offense to avoid an illegal pitch call. After providing direction if the pitcher does not correct her pitch it is at the umpires' discretion to call an illegal pitch and the pitch will be called a ball.
 - vii. If a pitcher hits the batter with her pitch the batter will NOT be awarded a base unless a clear attempt is made to avoid being hit by the pitch. These calls are at the umpires' discretion.
 - viii. The pitcher must wear a face mask.
 - ix. A coach may change a pitcher twice within one game (exception made for brand new innings). A team shall not be allowed to transfer a pitcher back and forth from pitching to fielding in attempts to pair specific pitchers against specific batters. This may be considered unsportsmanlike conduct and subject to disciplinary action
 - x. The first and second innings will be pitched completely by a kid pitcher and will have three run limits.
 - xi. The third and consecutive innings will have five run limits with a modified coach pitch.
 - 1. Coach pitch rule modifications:
 - a. Once a game is past two full innings the coach pitch modification may be activated.
 - b. Once a kid pitcher walks two consecutive batters and has three balls against her in the count the coach pitcher may enter the game. Coaches will pitch to their own team.

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- c. The batter will receive the remaining number of pitches to complete the count. (ie full count gets one pitch)
 - d. A batter may not be walked by a coach pitch. Every pitch thrown by a coach pitcher that is not hit into play will be counted as a strike, either swinging or looking.
 - e. Coach pitches that are hit foul will be played per regular game play rules. A batter will not be called out on a foul ball unless it is properly fielded for the out by an eligible player.
 - f. A coach pitcher must start with both feet inside the pitcher's circle.
 - g. During a coach pitch the player pitcher must be positioned to the side and behind the coach pitcher with at least one foot inside the pitching circle until the ball is in play.
 - h. Once the ball is hit into play the coach pitcher must make every attempt to rapidly exit the field and avoid interfering with game play.
 - i. If a coach pitch is hit back at and strikes the coach pitcher the ball is called dead, no ball or strike is called, the batter receives another pitch, and the runners may not advance. The exception to this is if the players touch the ball and attempt a play before the dead ball is called the play is live. This is at the umpire's discretion.
 - j. Players must return the ball to the kid pitcher and the kid pitcher will hand the ball to the coach pitcher. (ie catcher may not throw the ball directly to the coach pitcher).
 - k. Once the modified coach pitch rules are in effect the coach pitch will reset with every new pitcher or new inning.
- h. Catcher
- i. Catchers are required to wear full protective catcher's gear at all times during the game. The only exception is removing the helmet in an attempt to field a pop up or foul ball for an out.
 - ii. Catchers must position behind the batter's box in the proper regulation catching area.
 - iii. Catchers may not stand on home plate. It is at the umpire's discretion to call obstruction/interference as they see fit and award the run to the runner.
 - iv. Catchers may not be in the direct line of the baserunner unless there is an active play at home. These calls are at the home plate umpire's discretion.
- i. Batting
- i. The entire roster of players present for a game will bat in rotation.
 - ii. All players on each team will bat in a fixed batting order, per the lineups provided at the beginning of regulation game play. The batting order may not be changed after the start of regulation game play.
 - iii. The batting order for each team will be presented to the umpires and official scorekeeper before each game begins. Any player that arrives after the game has started shall bat in their original batting order position if that position has not batted in the game yet. Otherwise the position is skipped in the order without penalty, and the late arriving player is placed at the bottom of the batting order. The umpires and official scorekeeper shall be informed of any late player additions or changes proactively before the start of the game.
 - iv. If a player refuses to bat at their official order in the lineup the player will be called out.
 - v. If a player is ejected from a game for any reason that players position in the batting order will remain and any scheduled at bat will be recorded as an out.
 - vi. If a player leaves a game willingly for any reason that player's position in the batting order will be skipped without recording an out. The only exception to this is if the player's absence drops the roster to eight (8) players or less, in which case the above-mentioned short play rule will be effective and an out will be recorded.

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- vii. Batters are permitted and encouraged to bunt. If a player has two strikes against her and bunts the ball into foul territory the call will be a strike and the batter will be declared out.
- viii. Players should be coached to play as competitively and safe as possible (ie no “turn and take it”) and should be encouraged to avoid being hit by a pitch. A batter that is hit by a pitch will be awarded first base only.
- ix. A pitch that hits the ground before hitting the batter is not an automatically awarded base. Players should be coached and encouraged to move out of the way of the ball. It is at the home plate umpires discretion to award a base or not on a pitch that hits the ground before hitting the batter.
- x. Coaches should train batters to be aware of base runners and their efforts to steal home. If a batter does not move from the batter’s box it is at the discretion of the home plate umpire to make a call and the batter can be called out.
- j. Lead offs and Base Stealing
 - i. Base runners are only permitted to steal one base per pitch.
 - ii. Base runners are permitted to steal home.
 - iii. Base runners must remain in contact with the base until the ball leaves the pitcher’s hand. If a runner leaves the base early the runner will be called out and no strike or ball will be called on the batter (no pitch).
 - iv. Any time a runner is stealing a base they are encouraged to slide to avoid injuries and encourage defensive players to still attempt to make a play.
 - v. Any runner stealing home is highly encouraged to slide. It is at the home plate umpires discretion to call a runner out for not sliding to avoid collision/injury risk.
- k. Base Runners, Advancing, and Scoring
 - i. Base runners are encouraged to slide into bases (with the exception of first base) when there is a play at that base. If there is a play at home plate the runner is strongly encouraged to slide to avoid injury.
 - ii. Base runners may advance or score in the following ways:
 1. When a pitched ball is hit into play by a batter.
 2. When forced to advance as the result of a walk.
 3. If the batter is hit by a pitch and awarded first base, any existing base runners may not attempt to steal or advance (unless required to do so by occupied bases).
 4. When any defensive position player overthrows in an attempt to make a play, the runner can advance. For example, if the catcher receives a pitch and is returning the ball to the pitcher and overthrows, runners can advance at the risk of being thrown out.
 5. If there is an overthrow to first base the batter/runner may only advance to second base. All other runners may advance at the risk of being thrown out.
 6. When otherwise directed to advance by the umpire.
 7. When a batter is walked they may only advance to first base. All other runners advance as necessary. A walk is not a live ball.
 - iii. Courtesy runners are encouraged for the pitcher/catcher position(s) when there are two recorded outs in that half inning. The last player called out will serve as the courtesy runner. Courtesy runners only apply for the player that is catching/pitching in the next inning.
 - iv. Once a play is dead any runner who has not advanced halfway or more must return to the previous base. This is at the umpire’s discretion.
 - v. A ground rule double will be called for any ball that has contact inside fair territory before bouncing/rolling outside of the outfield fence boundaries. All runners may advance only two bases.
 - vi. Dropped third strike rule is not in effect.
 - vii. Infield fly rule is not in effect.