

**Moorestown Youth Softball Association, Inc.**  
**Youth League Rules**  
**3rd and 4th Grade**

The rules are geared to the average player, not the most capable player. All coaches must see to it that both teams finish a game having had a positive experience. Every effort must be made by coaches not to win a game by an excessive score. The league will strive to provide an equal number of players on each team. The teams are chosen by school affiliations/neighborhoods, not skill level.

1. The home team sets up the bases and lines the field. There is a designated home and away bench. The bench closest to New Albany Rd. is designated as the home side, and the bench closest to the church parking lot is designated as the visitors' side. The ball is an 11" softball.
2. The bases are set at 60 feet to give the fielders the maximum time to make a play. These rules favor fielding plays so the girls develop fielding skills. Outfielders may not cover bases on any play, except to participate in a run down. Outfielders must be positioned on the grass when playing the field and may not enter the infield to act as an extra infielder. Outfielders may enter the infield after a play begins, such as to back-up an infielder or retrieve a batted ball.
3. Players must wear batting helmets with face masks while in the batter's box, on deck, in the hole, or base-running. Coaches must supervise bat use at all times. All catchers must wear catching equipment on the field. All players must wear plastic spikes or sneakers.
4. Up to 10 players play on the field at the typical spots: pitcher, catcher, 1B, 2B, 3B, SS, RF, LF, right center and left center field. Coaches are not to be on the field, except in a situation where they are pitching.
5. All players bat. The order of batting is not affected by whether or not the player is on the field or sitting for that inning.
6. All April games will be 100% coach pitch. However, beginning in May, games will move to "modified coach pitch" (explained below). So, during April practices, coaches should work with girls to determine interest and capability for pitching in games (starting in May).
7. Starting with games in May, girls will pitch until the 4th ball is thrown to the batter (so there are no walks). At that point, the coach will enter and the number of strikes against batter will remain in effect (i.e., the coach will assume the strike count). Coaches will throw up to 3 additional pitches, depending upon how many strikes have been recorded. For example, if the count is 4 balls and 1 strike, the coach may throw 3 additional pitches, or two strikes (whichever comes first). The batter must hit one of her coach's pitches into fair territory or she is out. However, the batter receives an extra pitched ball from her coach if she hits a foul ball on either the third strike or the coach's 3<sup>rd</sup> pitch. If the batter continues to foul off the 3<sup>rd</sup> strike, she will continue to receive pitches from her coach until she either hits the ball into fair territory or strikes out. **NOTE THAT THE UMPIRE CAN CALL A STRIKE ON A COACH PITCH EVEN IF THE BATTER DOES NOT SWING.**
8. If a pitcher hits a player three times in one inning, she must be removed as pitcher for the rest of that inning, but may be permitted to return to the mound later in the game. If she fails to pitch a strike in an inning, she may not pitch the next inning. The umpire will continue to call balls and strikes. The pitching rubber will be placed at 32 feet.
9. Each inning shall consist of three outs or four runs, whichever comes first, except the final inning, which will have unlimited runs. The coach of the team at bat shall notify the umpire when the fourth run has scored. Once the fourth run has scored, for safety reasons the play should continue until it has ended. Only four runs shall be marked as scored, regardless of how many runners cross home plate on the final play of the inning, except in the last inning when runs are unlimited.
10. Each game will be five innings; however, a new inning cannot be started after 1 hour and 30 minutes of play. Should an inning not be completely finished due to darkness, weather, or elapsed time, the score reverts to the last completed inning unless the home team is winning and the visiting team has completed their at-bats in the top of the inning. The coaches may agree to a 4-inning game, prior to the start of the contest.
11. If it appears a game will not make it to five innings before the time limit, coaches should agree to declare the final inning before it has begun so each side understands unlimited runs will be allowed in that inning.
12. The two coaches are responsible for calling a rain-out before the game begins. Once the first pitch is thrown, it

is then the umpire's decision to halt the game because of weather conditions. No team is permitted on the field if lightning is present. Home team coaches will reschedule the game and the umpire with the league coordinator.

13. Players should be rotated such that no player should sit on the bench during two defensive innings until each other player has sat on the bench at least once during defensive innings. Each player must play in both infield and outfield positions during the game, and every effort should be made that this balance lean toward at least as many innings in infield positions (there are six of them) as outfield positions (there are only four of them). For purposes of this rule, pitcher and catcher will count as an infield positions. If a coach fails to allow a player to play as required, the game may be forfeited. This allows each child to experience both infield and outfield positions and maximizes playing times for all players. Players must be allowed to play all positions during the season, with the exception of pitcher. The objective is instruction. **We are not developing position specialization at this level.**
14. The ball must be hit by the batter to advance runners. An umpire will call balls and strikes. If three strikes are called, the player is out. There is no stealing.
15. No plays are called dead. Each play continues until runners are out or successfully reach a base. Fielders must learn to make plays and cut-offs. Stress that it is not backyard softball. After the play is made, the player should return the ball to the pitcher.
16. Plays can be made at all bases including home plate. A runner may advance one base on an overthrow. No advancements by runners if the ball is hit into foul territory. On a batted ball, runners advance as indicated by the situation. Once the play is attempted / completed and the ball is returned to the pitcher, the runners may not advance any more bases.
17. No balks, infield fly rule, or dropped third strike.
18. Base leading and stealing are not allowed.
19. Runners may not run into the fielders. Sliding is to be taught.
20. Each team will designate parents to assist as needed. Parents/coaches are NOT permitted on the field. Parents MAY NOT coach from the bleachers. Encourage parents to cheer in a positive manner to the team.
21. **Umpires shall make all calls and their calls are final. No appeals, arguing, or derisive language will be tolerated from any parent, fan, coach or player. Any offending party will be required to leave the field. If a problem persists call the League Coordinator or the President.**
22. During the season, the league may offer pitching classes/clinics. If such clinics are offered, each team should designate at least two players to attend the pitching classes to encourage pitcher development.
23. Coaches must commit to the instructive nature of the game and the objective of giving the players a positive experience. Teams and parents are to cheer their team not jeer the opposing team. All girls should be congratulated on a job well done. Individual improvement and success is our objective. Each team must leave the field and dugout clean.