



CHICS/DEBS DIVISION RULES – UGSA

2024

CHICS: (Ages 12-14, depending on grade) Pitching mound: 40 Feet - Base Distance: 60 Feet -

DEBS: (Ages 14-18) Pitching mound: 43 Feet - Base Distance: 60 Feet - Ball: 12" Hard

No new inning to start after 90 Minutes

1. GENERAL RULES

- A. **HEAT RULE** – No new inning is to start after 90 minutes. However, if heat rules are in effect, a **HARD STOP** time may be issued. If a **HARD STOP** time is issued, the game will end at a certain time (at the discretion of the umpire) and the score will revert back to the previous inning unless the home team is batting and has the lead.
- B. All games will be played at the fields designated by UGSA Board
- C. Players and coaches must wear athletic or tennis shoes. No flip flops, open toe or open back shoes are allowed. Players are not allowed to wear jewelry. Metal cleats are allowed in the Chics and Debs divisions since other towns allow metal cleats.
- D. All players must wear protective headgear with chin strap and face guard while batting and running the bases. If a girl takes off her helmet while on the field, she will first be warned and any player on the team shall be called out thereafter.
- E. Catchers must wear a catcher's helmet, mask, and a chest protector in all games/practices.
- F. **Rainouts** – After 3 completed innings, the game will be ended. If not, the game will be rescheduled and resume exactly where the original game stopped. The same batting order will be used with any new players added to the bottom of the original lineup. Teams will not be required to take an out for any missing players from the original game. The batting order is condensed, omitting missing players. Managers and umpires must reconcile the starting point prior to leaving the field. Weather conditions will stop a game a minimum of 15 minutes before the game is called.
- G. Games can end in a tie. If standings are affected, head-to-head, runs head-to-head, and season runs will apply in that order.
- H. Each team may play 10 players, but can start and play a game with 7 players, 6 of which **MUST** be from your own team. If at any time a team has less than 7 players for any reason other than an injury or illness which occurred during the game, a forfeit will be awarded.
- I. A team will not have to take an out if a girl leaves the game due to injury or illness and the team is left with less than 7 players.
- J. Managers may use up to 4 substitute players from the same division or from the immediate lower division to make a 10 player team. Subs **MUST** be current players of UGSA – No exceptions. **Subs can play any position other than pitcher and can bat anywhere in order. There are no pitcher inning limits, but it is highly recommended to let other girls pitch so pitchers are developed.**
- K. If a player arrives late for whom a substitute is being used, the substitute will complete the inning in progress, after which the late player will assume her position in the batting order. Any player arriving after the first pitch of the 3rd inning will not be allowed to play in the game.
- L. To speed up the pace of the games, there will be a 2 minute time limit between innings for the girls to take the field. The umpires will be aware of this time limit and will enforce it within reason. Umpire will give a warning to speed things up. After warning, umpire may begin issuing called balls/strikes to the batter.
- M. Pitchers brought in once an inning has started will get 5 warmup pitches.

2. PITCHING

- A. Pitcher must wear a pitchers/fielders mask while pitching.
- B. **CHICS** will pitch from a distance of 40 feet. **DEBS** will pitch from a distance of 43 feet.
- C. Pitching rules will reflect current **USSSA** regulations. Currently, pitchers must start with at least one foot on the pitching rubber and backward movement is allowed. Illegal pitches according to MSHSAA, such as crow-hopping and quick pitching will be called a ball and the rule enforced.
- D. **At the home plate umpire's discretion**, if a pitcher hits 2 batters, she **MAY** be pulled out of the pitchers position for the remainder of the inning and the entire next inning. She may return later in the game. The batter must make an attempt to avoid being hit by the ball. If the ball hits the ground first and hits the batter, it is still considered a hit batter.
- E. The **USSSA** third strike rule is in effect: *If the batter strikes out (swinging or looking) and the catcher does not catch the pitch before it hits the ground, the batter can run to first base. This only applies if first base is open at the beginning of the pitch or if there are two outs. If the bases are loaded and there are 2 outs, the catcher can simply touch home plate for a force out. If the batter fails to run, she can be called out when she leaves the batting area.*



3. BATTING/RUNNING

- A. All players must bat in order according to the managers batting line-up. **Managers must bat entire roster.** Managers must exchange batting lineups before the game starts. Lineups must match the names and numbers on the player's shirt. Batting out of order will result in an out for the batter that was skipped. The current batter will continue with the play and current count followed by the next batter in line. One pitch constitutes an at bat.
- B. **RUN AND LIMIT:**
 - CHICS:** There will be a **5 Run Limit** per half inning. **No new inning to start after 90 Minutes.** If a team mathematically cannot come back and win, the game will still continue so the trailing team still has the opportunity to bat and practice.
 - DEBS:** There will be a **7 Run Limit** per half inning. **No new inning to start after 90 Minutes.** If a team mathematically cannot come back and win, the game will still continue so the trailing team still has the opportunity to bat and practice.
- C. **MERCY RULE:** If after 4 completed innings one team is ahead by 15 runs or more, or after 5 completed innings one team is ahead by 10 runs or more, the game can be called **with the trailing team's discretion.**
- D. If the catcher is on base and there are 2 outs, a courtesy runner may be put on base for the catcher. The courtesy runner will be the player that made the last out.
- E. At the umpire's discretion, girls throwing the bat or helmet will be called out.
- F. Runners must make an attempt to slide if a close play is being made on them. Also, fielders may not block the base if a runner is forced to slide on a close play, including home plate. It is the umpire's discretion to make this call if the runner is out.
- G. The Infield Fly Rule is in effect and called by the umpire.

*An **Infield Fly** is a fair fly ball (not a line drive or bunt) that, in the judgment of the umpire, can be caught by an infielder, pitcher, or catcher with ordinary effort and when there are runners on **first and second** or **first, second, and third** and less than two outs. Batter is automatically out and runners advance at own risk.*
- H. A safety first base will be used. To avoid accidental contact, runners should generally use the base in foul territory and fielders should generally use the base in fair territory. However, either base will constitute safe or out. Runners should be coached to avoid interference by using the open base.
- I. A player may lead off after the ball leaves the pitcher's hand. If the runner is called out for leaving the base too soon, the ball that had been pitched will be declared a dead ball.
- J. Base runners may steal on a live ball. Runners may attempt to advance unless the pitcher is in the pitching circle with the ball.
- K. A ball that hits an umpire is still in play.

4. FIELDING/DEFENSE

- A. **CHICS ONLY:** It is **recommended** each girl play at least one half inning as an infielder and one half inning as an outfielder by the end of the 4th inning. The catcher is considered an infield position.
- B. A maximum of 6 players will be allowed on the infield. Each player must play their own position in that inning. All outfielders must be a minimum of 10 feet behind the base line when the ball is pitched.
- C. General defensive chatter to distract batters is not allowed, and the catcher cannot distract the batter with specific conversation.
- D. If a player misses over half the practices, it is the manager's discretion as to how much the girl will play.
- E. MSHSAA Official Softball rule book shall be used for all items not specifically addressed in this document.

OUT OF TOWN TEAM GAMES (home and away) – UGSA is playing teams from surrounding communities for the CHICS and DEBS divisions. Please note each community may have slight rules variations.

- 1. Please be aware players from outside teams may be wearing metal cleats.
- 2. UGSA teams are only allowed TWO SUBS when we play outside teams, and UGSA teams must have 8 girls to start these games. Subs can play any position except pitcher.
- 3. **If a visiting team has a player who is signed up through the baseball league, UGSA teams are to protest the game.**
- 4. **These rules are considered exceptions to the rules. Our main rules followed will be USSSA softball rules found [here](#).**