

## Busline League Softball Rules:

- **Games shall be 7 innings, a 12 run mercy rule shall be in effect after 5 innings (4 1/2 for the home team).**
- Umpires and opposing coach(s) will be notified if the 5:45 rule is in effect at the pregame meeting prior to the beginning of the game.
  - Pitching distance shall be 43 feet
- A double first base shall be used in all league games.
- Winning percentage based on the regular season record shall determine the seedings for the playoffs. All teams make the playoffs.
- Restrictions on bat size or weight will be the same as those determined by the MPA.
- **EH Rule: An Extra Hitter May be Used -** Bat ten players, the EH can go into the field for any of the other nine players in the game and that player will then become the EH. The batting order does not change (see EH rule below).

### Softball Extra Hitter Rule

1. The DH is **not** used in softball. The DH is used in baseball only. In softball only the EH will be recognized and the DP/Flex (if your coach is familiar with this rule).
- Administration of the EH in the Busline League for softball will be as follows (These apply if you are using the EH. If a team does not use the EH then regular 9 player fast pitch federation rules apply):
1. A team will list 10 batters on their line-up card to bat (one of those batters to be the EH). 9 of those players will be assigned a field position. **Substitution rules apply as with any other position player.**
  2. If a coach utilizes the EH and lists 10 batters on their line-up card they must bat 10 positions for the game. **The EH cannot be eliminated once the game has begun.**
  3. If a team is unable to maintain 10 batters (due to injury or other circumstances) the vacant batting position will result in an out.
  4. Coaches should determine prior to submitting their line-up card if they will be able to maintain 10 batters.
  5. Once a batting order is established on the line-up card it will remain the same.
  6. A bench player can substitute for the EH using the same substitution rule as for position players.

### NOTES:

- A five-inning game (4 1/2 if home team is ahead) shall be an official game in all post-season play.
- The season may begin for pitchers and catchers prior to regular practices. Teams may have up to 10 sessions for pitchers and catchers. Teams may have 10 full squad, regular practices prior to the first scheduled regular season game.

- **If a coach chooses he/she may elect to use a continuous batting order.** The following rules apply to a continuous batting order:
  - Teams may not bat out of order and all batting order changes must be reported to the home plate umpire.
  - Defensively, teams may choose to freely substitute players from the bench to the field. These changes would not need to be reported to the home plate umpire and the reentry rule would not apply.
  
- **Coaches may still have the option of using only nine batters in their lineup.**

**MPA pitching recommendation for Middle School has been adopted as the BLL pitch count rules and guidelines. They are as follows:**

**MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**Maximum Pitches One Day – 85**

**1-15 Pitches – 0 Days Rest**

**16-30 Pitches – 1 Day Rest**

**31-50 Pitches – 2 Days Rest**

**51-70 Pitches – 3 Days Rest**

**71-85 Pitches – 4 Days Rest**

- **The Pitch Count is based on the number of pitches thrown in a game. This includes balls, strikes, foul balls, and cuts (swing and misses). A pitch thrown and a balk is called shall NOT count as a pitch.**
- **If a pitcher reaches the pitch count limit at any of the 5 thresholds while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until 1) the batter reaches base; 2) the batter is put out; or 3) the third out is made to complete the inning. A pitch to the next batter results in the pitcher moving to the next level.**
- **Each team must maintain a pitch count for their team as well as for the opponent. Pitch counts will be confirmed after each half-inning. If there is a discrepancy it shall be reported to the umpire. The records of the home team shall be used as the official record.**
- **At the conclusion of the game each head coach will sign the MPA Pitching Chart Form. Each school must retain a copy of the Pitch Chart Form and must be available to the MPA upon request. Violation of the Pitch Count Rule shall constitute the use of an ineligible player and will result in the forfeiture of the game.**

**It is recommended that an athlete avoid playing catcher while not pitching.**

**NOTES:**

- **If a game is terminated before becoming an official game, the pitching rule is in effect and will remain until the last full inning. Example: A game is called for rain after one and**

- a half innings of play. The pitching rule is in effect and will revert to the last full inning.
- A five-inning game (4 1/2 if home team is ahead) shall be an official game in all post-season play.
  - It is mandatory that each home baseball team have an "L" shaped screen for both teams to use.
  - Throughout the season, helmets must be worn during warm-up (batting practice) prior to all contests. (This is a major liability issue)
  - Catchers' masks that are not hockey style must have an attached throat protector.
  - Coaches must wear a helmet to be on the field. A hard baseball helmet is required; no-flap, single flap, and double flap helmets are permitted, while "skullies" and cap inserts are not permitted.
  - Restrictions on bat size or weight will be the same as those determined by the MPA, currently a 3 oz. drop.
  - The season may begin for pitchers and catchers prior to regular practices. Teams may have up to 10 sessions for pitchers and catchers. Teams may have 10 full squad, regular practices prior to the first scheduled regular season game.
  - Legal bats must be stamped BBCOR. Wood bats are legal.
  - Winning percentage based on the regular season record shall determine the seedings for the playoffs. All teams make the playoffs.
  - Helmets with tape on them are not legal and may not be used.
  - Players must be in the dugout unless they are on deck or at bat.
  - Jewelry is not to be worn by players.