KINDERKAMACK SOFTBALL FALL RULES

Updated 8/23/26

Philosophy - To foster the true spirit of the game, where managers, coaches and parents encourage and support the social fabric of the game, the fun and enjoyment in playing the game of softball, teaching the kids sportsmanship, to be team players, to be schooled in the fundamentals and to be enthusiastic and confident.

Player Eligibility
Each team can have a roster consisting of players only from participating towns.

Exceptions
Allowances will be afforded to a player who has a unique circumstance or hardship.
Out of town residents attending an in town private or parochial school.
Towns that cannot field a team(s) without combining with another town(s).
Town administrators must notify the commissioners if any of the above exceptions exist.
All eligibility waivers must be submitted to the commissioners in writing one week before Labor Day and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

General Rules
Team rosters need to be balanced as close as possible with girls from both grades. Towns should make every effort to build balanced teams and not "stack" one team if they have multiple teams in a division. The commissioners will review rosters before the season to ensure compliance.

Weekday games are to start at a time mutually agreed upon by BOTH head coaches. Weekend games are to start at 9am or later.

The regular season will consist of 8 games for 3/4, 5/6, and 7/8. Games begin after Labor Day and end early November (end of DST). The 1/2 season consists of 4 games beginning in October and end early November (end of DST).

Game Rules

The following rules do not apply to the 1/2 division. All 1/2 rules are below in a separate section.

High School rules apply in all aspects unless mentioned specifically in the rules.
(Important: when asked by umpires whether Kinderkamack Softball follows the High School rule, respond by saying "No." Say instead we follow our OWN RULE)

1. **Batting Order**: Cinderella batting order. **All** players must be in the starting lineup and bat.
2. **Guest players** can be used from other teams in the same participating town to fill a roster to 10 players. **Guest players must bat last. See rules below regarding guest pitchers.** Teams should use their best effort to replace missing players with players of equal ability of the missing player(s). Guest players must be declared to the opposing coach prior to the start of the game.
3. **Rosters -** must be submitted one week before Labor Day.
4. **Roster minimum size -** 9
5. **Roster maximum size** – none
6. **Game day minimum field roster** – 7 (to have a game)

7. **Player participation** – every player on each team's roster must play a minimum **of 4 innings per game in the field if the game is at least 6 innings long for a complete game**, No Less!!
8. **Free Substitution** – is allowed for all players excluding pitchers. Only the starting pitcher can return as a pitcher once.
9. **Mercy rule – *Per Inning* –** 5 run maximum. Number of batters per inning doesn't matter. This rule doesn't apply in the last inning of the game or extra innings.
10. **Mercy rule – *Per Game*** – 12 runs after 4, 10 runs after 5, 8 runs after 6
11. **Time limit per game** – is actual game play starting from the first pitch. Game clock stops for any weather delays. *See division rules for actual time limits.*
12. **Makeup games**- Make every effort to promptly schedule makeup games. The home team will offer the visiting team 3 dates to makeup the game within 48 hours of the cancelled game. Your respective Director should also be emailed with these same dates.
13. **Forfeits** – forfeited games are scored 7-0.
14. **Reporting a Score**- The winning team's coach must report the score on kinderkamacksoftball.com within 24 hours of the game.

PITCHING:

1. Windmill pitching is not required. See division rules for inning limits.
2. **Intentional walks are not allowed at any levels.**

Guest Pitcher Rules

During the regular season guest players can serve as pitchers as long as the following criteria are met:

1. Guest pitchers must be rostered on a 3/4 or 5/6 team. There will be no guest pitchers from the 1/2 level.
2. Guest pitchers may only play up ONE age level and they CANNOT play for another team at the same age level.
3. Only one guest pitcher is allowed per game per team. A guest pitcher may expand a team's available game day roster by one player even if that team already has 10 or more players available.
4. Girls are only to serve as guest pitchers for the following reasons: 1) Avoid postponement and or cancellation of a game. 2) If a team absolutely cannot field a pitcher from its available game day roster. 3) The girl is an established pitcher at the level from which she is being called up. Girls "learning" to pitch should not be called up to serve as guest pitchers. 4) Facilitate a quality experience for all girls in terms of pace of play and avoiding "walk-a-thon" game experiences.

The guest pitcher's coaches are responsible to determine a girl's eligibility in accordance with these rules. A violation of this rule, including an accidental violation, will result in disciplinary action as determined by the Kinderkamack Softball Board of Directors.

Guest pitchers must be declared to the opposing coach prior to the start of the game and must bat last. Guest pitchers must be reported to kinderkamacksoftball@gmail.com after the game. These emails will be kept in a folder and reviewed to determine if any coaches and or towns are misusing and or abusing the guest pitcher provision. Misuse and or abuse of the guest pitcher provision will result in disciplinary action as determined by the Kinderkamack Softball Board of Directors.

ADDITIONAL GAME RULES

1. **Sliding** – Head first sliding is not permitted except when returning to a base. All base runners advancing shall slide feet first at all bases. Any other slide is an automatic out. No hurdling over a player on a tag play to avoid tag. This will result in an automatic out. A baserunner should avoid collisions at all time by either sliding or avoiding collision with the defensive player. To clarify a baserunner must slide or avoid. In the judgment of the umpire, any runner is OUT when the runner does not slide OR attempt to get around a fielder who has the ball and is waiting to make the tag. It is the responsibility of the runner to slide in order to reduce potentially injurious contact on all plays at all bases. NOTE: A player is not out if she doesn't slide, she's out only when she creates a collision with a defensive player. No contact, no out. Also, a defensive player cannot block a base unless there is a play at that base and the defensive player is in possession of the ball or is in the process of receiving the ball. IF A DEFENSIVE PLAYER IS NOT IN POSSESSION OF THE BALL OR IS IN THE ACT OF FIELDING or RECEIVING THE BALL AND THERE IS A COLLISION then the umpire shall wait until a dead ball situation and award the runner the base by reason of obstruction.
2. **Regulation game** – if weather, darkness or time limitation interferes with play so that the game is called (ended) by the umpire prior to completion, the following rules apply:

   It's an official regulation game, after (4) four innings, unless the Home Team is leading after 3 1/2 innings. (IMPORTANT – this applies for game shortened by rain or lightning. It is an official game after 4 innings).

   After four innings, you revert back to the previous completed inning to determine a winner if the game is called due to weather or darkness.

   If a game is called before it's a regulation game or it's a tie game, you resume play from the exact point that the play was halted until it becomes a regulation game.

   A tie game will be counted as a tie for both teams
   If there is a tie after the scheduled number of innings, extra innings will be allowed if under time limit otherwise game will end in a tie.

   Games that end due to TIME LIMIT are official regardless of how many innings were completed.

   If "last inning - unlimited runs" IS NOT DECLARED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE **TOP** OF THE INNING AND THE BOTTOM OF THE INNING GOES BEYOND THE TIME LIMIT, then the mercy rule run cap WILL apply to that bottom half of the inning. At this point, the game would end and be considered an official game.
   If the margin of runs by the Visiting Team is greater than 5 then the visiting Team is declared the winner and you finish the bottom half of that inning for "fun" or "practice". As that is considered an official game.
   If the "last inning" is declared before the top of the inning and the inning finishes before getting to the time limit, the game is over and is considered an official game.

3. During the regular season a tie will stand as the final score.
   Continuation Rule – Game will be resumed exactly where it left off. All records including pitching shall be counted.
4. **Players arriving to a game late** – Player will be added at the bottom of the batting order.

5. **Players leaving a game early** - There is no penalty for players leaving the games early. The spot in the lineup will be skipped.
6. **Speed Up Rule** – Teams can choose to use a courtesy runner for pitchers or catchers no matter how many outs. The courtesy runner must be the last batted out.
7. **Infield Fly Rule** – *see division rules.*
8. **Tagging up** – is allowed at all divisions
9. **Warm Up** – Prior to games, the visiting team shall have a 15 minute window to warm up and practice on the opposing team's field.
10. **Game balls -** Home Teams are responsible to supply 2 game balls (11" for 3/4 & 12" for 5th-8th). Balls must be max .47 COR, max 375 lb. compression
11. **Bats** – Composite bats are allowed in all divisions.
12. **Umpires-** Home team will provide and pay for the umpire. If the field location is changed due to field conditions or field availability, the originally scheduled home team is still responsible for providing and paying for the umpire. Only 1 umpire is required for regular season games. Home team may choose to have 2 umpires at their sole expense.

Players Code of Conduct:

1. Umpires have the sole authority and discretion to warn, discharge and suspend a player whose conduct on the field is contrary to the spirit of "fair play" and to our philosophy.
2. These infractions involve but are not limited to:
3. Profanity or abusive language
4. Throwing of equipment in the dugout or on the field
5. Act of violence or intent to injure a player
6. Arguing with umpires or players
7. Willful acts or behavior in delaying a game
8. Childish behaviors in the dugout or on the field so as to taunt, bait, discredit and make fun of a player (race, religion and origin)
9. Purposely obstruct or hinder a player from making a play, running bases or any routine play
10. Personal actions to incite spectators or demonstrations
11. Entering the area behind the catcher while the pitcher and catcher are in their respective position
12. Be outside the designated dugout or bullpen area if not a batter.
13. Any player ejected in a game is subject to their town's ejection rules for the following game.

Players Dress Code:

1. All players should be in the same color matching uniforms.
2. All player's uniform shirts should be tucked in their pants at all times during the game.
3. Shoes with rubber cleats are the only acceptable footwear to be worn by the players in the game.
4. No player is allowed to wear jewelry, earrings or any ornamental body piece during the game.

Managers and Coaches Rules:

"Special Code of Conduct"

1. No smoking, tobacco chewing, spitting are allowed in the dugout or on the field.
2. Profanity, abusive language or continuous yelling and harassment should not be directed toward any player on either team in the dugout or on the field.
3. A manager or coach who deems winning the game the only reason for his or her involvement, should stay out of our program and watch the game outside the field boundaries along with the rest of the spectators.

4. Arguing with umpires is prohibited; accept the umpire's call and play. The umpire is incidental to the game, not a major symbol for debate.
5. No coach shall physically assist a runner during play.
6. Coaches shall stay within the boundaries of the coaching boxes.
7. Ejections from any game will be that game plus the next. This rule applies to all coaches. A second ejection in the season of any coach will be handled on an individual basis by the administrators from each participating town.

Safety Code:

1. Responsibility for safety procedures should be that of an adult member of your program.
2. Arrangements should be made in advance of all games and practices for emergency medical services.
3. Managers, coaches and umpires should have some training in first aid. First aid kits should be available at the field.
4. No games or practice should be held when weather or field conditions are not playable, particularly when lighting is inadequate.
5. Play area should be inspected frequently for holes, damage, stones, glass and other foreign objects.
6. Dugouts on-deck circles and bat racks should be positioned behind the screens and/or fences.
7. Only players, managers, coaches and umpires are permitted on the playing field during play and practice sessions.
8. Responsibility for keeping bats and loose equipment off the field of play should be that of a regular player assigned for this purpose.
9. Procedure should be established for retrieving foul balls hit out of the playing area.
10. During practice games all players should be alert and watch the batter on every pitch.
11. During warm up drills players should be spaced so that no one is endangered by wild throws or missed catches.
12. Equipment should be inspected regularly.
13. Batters must wear protective helmets with facemasks during practice, as well as during games.
14. Catchers must wear catcher helmet, facemask, chest protector, and shin guards at all times during the game and while warming up pitchers.
15. At no time should "horse play" be permitted on the field.
16. Safety glasses – per New Jersey law as follows: Any child who wears corrective eyeglasses while participating in racquetball, squash, tennis, women's lacrosse, basketball, women's field hockey, badminton, paddleball, soccer, volleyball, baseball or softball, sponsored by a school, community or government agency, shall be required to wear protective eyewear that meets the frames standards of the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) F803 and lens standards of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Z87.1.

Playoffs

THERE WILL BE NO PLAYOFFS AT THIS TIME

1st & 2nd Grade Rules

1. Scores are not kept at this level. This level is strictly an instructional program.
2. Teams will use 11" safety balls, (i.e. "RIF", or "Incrediballs").
3. Games will be 3 innings long, time permitting. Time limit of 1 hour and 15 minutes.
4. Bases are at 60 feet.
5. Batters and runners must wear helmets with face masks
6. There is no infield fly rule.
7. There is no tagging up.
8. There is no leading or stealing.
9. There is no bunting.
10. Coaches pitch to the players.
11. There are no umpires.
12. Defensive facemasks **MUST** be worn by **ALL** players on the field

Every girl plays the field. Infield positions consist of: Two pitcher's helpers, 1B, 2B, SS, and 3B. All other players are to stand **behind the baseline and on the grass of the outfield.** Pitcher's helpers are to stand no closer than 32 feet.

There will be a maximum of 3 coaches on the field. One pitching, one catching, and one in the field.

There will be a running batting order, every player hits. The batting order may change inning to inning and is encouraged.

After Six (6) swinging strikes, the batter will hit from a tee to complete the at-bat. There are no strike outs. The Home Team will provide the tee.

The runners advance 1 base at a time unless the ball is hit past the outfielders, then they may advance 2 bases.

If a runner is out on a play, the player returns to the dugout but the inning is not over until all of the batters on the team get an at bat.

On an overthrow, the ball is dead and the play is over.

The team batting will continue until the lineup has batted, even after having made three (3) outs. The last batter in each inning may run around all the bases.

Coaches are encouraged to teach their players to throw to the catcher on a force play at home plate, not run to home to make the out. We want to try to avoid collisions at home plate.

3rd & 4th Grade Rules

Game & Field

1. Games are scheduled for 6 innings. An official game is 4 innings (3 ½ if the home team is winning). No new inning will begin after 1 hour and 30 minutes of play.
2. All players on the roster will bat and 10 play on the field.
3. The 10th player in the field must be 10 feet behind 2nd base as a starting point and can move in on the release of the pitch.
4. The "*Dropped Third Strike Rule*" and the "*Infield Fly Rule*" are **NOT** in effect.
5. The pitching rubber shall be 35 feet from the back of home plate.
6. Bunting is **NOT** allowed.
7. Composite bats are allowed.
8. Defensive facemasks **MUST** be worn by **ALL** players on the field

Pitching

1. A pitcher may pitch a maximum of 3 innings (2 consecutive innings max.) One pitch constitutes an inning. Only the starting pitcher may return to pitch once. Extra innings constitute a new game for the purpose of pitchers.
2. Hit by pitch rules - The batter must make an attempt to avoid the pitch if possible. The definition of "attempt" is an umpire's discretion call. Batters that are hit by "slow" pitches that are rolling or bounce multiple times should not be awarded 1st base. If a pitcher hits 3 batters in a game, both coaches and the umpire should discuss if the pitcher is a safety concern. If so, then the pitcher should be removed from the game. There must be a unanimous agreement amongst the 3 parties (2 coaches plus the umpire) agreeing the pitcher is not a safety concern in order for the pitcher to remain in the game. If an agreement cannot be reached and at least one party believes a safety concern exists, then the pitcher should be removed after the third hit batter. We don't want to punish struggling pitchers but we also don't want players getting hurt.
3. The coach/manager is allowed 2 trips to the pitcher's mound per inning. Upon the 3rd trip, the pitcher must be removed. This does not include the "coach pitch rule".
4. There will be a maximum of one walk per inning per team.
5. Coach Pitch Rule - The coach will pitch when 4 balls have been thrown **AFTER** the one walk per inning have been observed. The coach must pitch from inside the pitcher's circle. If the batter has 2 strikes when the coach enters the game, the strike count will go down to 1. The coach will have the pitcher step aside, remain inside the circle, either even or behind the pitching rubber and pitch to the batter until the batter either hits the ball or strikes out. Umpires will call strikes on the batter. The batter can strike out swinging or looking. The pitcher will then pitch to the next batter. **If the coach needs to enter to pitch a 3rd time in the same inning, the coach will remain in to pitch the remainder of the inning.**

Baserunning

1. Baserunners will be allowed to lead upon the release by the pitcher. If a baserunner leaves early, there will be 1 warning per team per game. Next infraction constitutes dead ball and runner is out.
2. The ball is dead once in control by any player in the pitcher's circle. Baserunners will be sent back to previous base if less than halfway to next base as determined by the umpire.
3. Only one base is allowed per overthrow at all bases.
4. There will be no advancement on overthrows by the catcher on throws back to the pitcher after a pitch, on pick off plays at any base (unless a steal is remaining), or on steals.
5. Maximum of 2 successful steals per inning. 2nd to 3rd base only.
6. Pick offs- 1st and 3rd base are force plays.

5th & 6th Grade Rules

Game & Field

1. Games are scheduled for 6 innings. An official game is 4 innings (3 ½ if the home team is winning). No new inning will begin after 1 hour and 45 minutes of play.
2. All players on the roster will bat and 10 play on the field.
3. The 10th player in the field must be 10 feet behind 2nd base as a starting point and can move in on the release of the pitch.
4. The "*Dropped Third Strike Rule*" and the "*Infield Fly Rule*" are **NOT** in effect.
5. The pitching rubber shall be 40 feet from the back of home plate.
6. Bunting is allowed. No Fake Bunting then swinging away. No slashing or slapping.
7. Composite Bats are allowed.
8. Defensive facemasks **MUST** be worn by **ALL** players on the field

Pitching

1. A pitcher may pitch a maximum of 4 innings (3 consecutive innings max). One pitch constitutes an inning. Only the starting pitcher may return to pitch once. Extra innings constitute a new game for the purpose of pitchers.
2. Hit by pitch rules - The batter must make an attempt to avoid the pitch if possible. The definition of "attempt" is an umpire's discretion call. Batters that are hit by "slow" pitches that are rolling or bounce multiple times should not be awarded 1st base. If a pitcher hits 3 batters in a game, both coaches and the umpire should discuss if the pitcher is a safety concern. If so, then the pitcher should be removed from the game. There must be a unanimous agreement amongst the 3 parties (2 coaches plus the umpire) agreeing the pitcher is not a safety concern in order for the pitcher to remain in the game. If an agreement cannot be reached and at least one party believes a safety concern exists, then the pitcher should be removed after the third hit batter. We do not want to punish struggling pitchers but we also do not want players getting hurt.
3. The coach/manager is allowed 2 trips to the pitcher's mound per inning. Upon the 3rd trip, the pitcher must be removed.

Baserunning

1. Baserunners will be allowed to lead upon the release by the pitcher. If a baserunner leaves early, there will be 1 warning per team per game. Next infraction constitutes dead ball and runner is out.
2. The ball is dead once in control by any player in the pitcher's circle. Baserunners will be sent back to previous base if less than halfway to next base as determined by the umpire
3. Maximum of 4 successful steals per inning. Any advancement of a runner after a pitch is considered a steal. Even on overthrows to 2nd base. If the runner advances to 3rd base, it is considered a steal. No Stealing Home (Runner must be batted in or walked in or forced in)
4. Pick offs- If team has already taken their 4 steals, pickoff is a force play. If the team has steals left, the pick off plays are tag plays. 3rd base is always a force play.
5. Runners may advance on overthrows to any base or balls overthrown to the pitcher. Runners advance at their own risk. Any advance on a ball thrown back to the pitcher by the catcher counts as a steal.
6. Continuous walk is NOT permitted.

7th & 8th Grade Rules

Game & Field

1. Games are scheduled for 7 innings. An official game is 4 innings (3 ½ if the home team is winning). No new inning will begin after 1 hour and 45 minutes of play.
2. All players on the roster will bat and 10 play on the field.
3. The 10th player will not be a shortfielder. Outfield will play 4 across.
4. The "*Dropped Third Strike Rule*" and the "*Infield Fly Rule*" are in effect.
5. The pitching rubber shall be 43 feet from the back of home plate.
6. Bunting is allowed. No Fake Bunting then swinging away. Slapping is allowed.
7. Composite Bats are allowed.
8. Defensive facemasks **MUST** be worn by **ALL** players in the infield. Optional for outfielders

Pitching

1. A pitcher may pitch a maximum of 4 innings (3 consecutive innings max). One pitch constitutes an inning. Only the starting pitcher may return to pitch once. Extra innings constitute a new game for the purpose of pitchers.
2. The coach/manager is allowed 2 trips to the pitcher's mound per inning. Upon the 3rd trip, the pitcher must be removed.

Baserunning

1. Baserunners will be allowed to lead upon the release by the pitcher. If a baserunner leaves early, there will be 1 warning per team per game. Next infraction constitutes dead ball and runner is out.
2. Unlimited stealing of 2nd and 3rd. **No stealing home.** (Runner must be batted in or walked in or forced in). Runners may not score on overthrows while stealing 3rd or on pickoff attempts at 3rd. Runners may not score on balls thrown to 1st base after a dropped third strike unless there are bases loaded and 2 outs.
3. Pick offs - Tag plays at all bases.
4. Runners may advance on overthrows to any base or balls overthrown to the pitcher. Runners advance at their own risk. Runners on 3rd may not score on overthrown balls back to the pitcher after a pitch.
5. Continuous walk is NOT permitted.