

MISS VENICE FASTPITCH RECREATIONAL GROUND RULES

THE RULES LISTED BELOW ARE SPECIFIC TO MISS VENICE. ANY RULES NOT PROVIDED IN THE TEXT BELOW, PLEASE REFER TO USSSA FASTPITCH SOFTBALL RULES, WHICH CAN BE FOUND ONLINE HERE: https://usssa.com/docs/Fastpitch/Fastpitch_Rules.pdf

MISS VENICE participants in the T-Ball, Coach Pitch (8U), Mini-Minor (10U), Minor (12U) and Major (16U) divisions during regular season play, will follow USSSA Softball Fast Pitch Rules with our own league specific rules below.

Code of Conduct for inter-league play:

MISS VENICE participates in what we refer to as “inter-league play”. This means that we will host recreational softball leagues for games throughout the season, and possibly some tournaments. In turn, we will be hosted at other recreational softball leagues throughout the season, along with some tournaments.

Teams/players/team staff and parents of guest leagues are expected to abide by the host league code of conduct and overall league rules listed below. The league manual (which includes our code of conduct for all players, team staff and parents), is easily accessible on our website from the home page. If the executive board of directors of the host league feel that a particular team is in violation of the code of conduct (this can be players, parents and/or team staff), they will submit a written warning via email to the president of that league. If the violation happens a second time, they will choose to no longer host that specific team for the remainder of the season.

The host league has final say in these decisions, though they may ask the guest league to weigh in on the decision.

We are in the day and age of social media. If any participant (parent, child, spectator, or team staff) feels the need to video any individual, group of people, or organization with the intent to slander, give misleading information, or edit video footage to portray they/them in a negative light, we will immediately begin the process of removal as a guest or participant in our league. See league manual for due process/details. We do not tolerate the public bashing/belittling of people on camera. This is a child's softball league, not your forum for content on TikTok, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, or any other social media platform.

GENERAL - All divisions

1. All players will be dressed out in full team uniform. This may include head gear (hats or soft visors), socks, jersey, and softball pants. Pick-up players must wear their own full team uniform. Sweatshirts of any solid color (including white) may be worn under the jersey (including the pitcher) and do not have to match. The umpire will rule on exceptions (weather, etc.).
2. Personal helmets must have a face guard, either plastic or metal. This is MANDATORY. Any player without one will be removed from the game.
3. **Any child playing an infield position that is in the division of 8U, 10U, 12U, and 16U will be required to wear a face mask.** Refusal to wear a face mask will result in **PLAYER/PARTICIPANT CORRECTIVE ACTION.**
4. If a player has a bat in their hand, they MUST have a helmet on - whether at bat, on deck, in warm-up, at soft toss or in batting cages.
5. Warm-up catchers MUST wear proper protective gear, at minimum a full catcher's helmet.
6. Shoes with steel spikes are prohibited. No metal spikes for any division in Miss Florida's Mid-Season and All-Star Tournaments.

7. No jewelry will be worn apart from stud earrings.
8. Coaches are required to always place all players in their batting lineup. No player shall sit more than 1 inning at a time unless they are being disciplined or injured/sick (see league manual). All players must have an opportunity to play at least 1 inning in the infield, per game. The general rule of thumb is at minimum 1 inning every 3 innings played. No player will be forced to play infield if they don't want to.
9. In rec league tournament play, teams will not be penalized for only having 8 players in a game during seeding. They will not be required to take the out for the 9th player at bat. After seeding games are complete, the regular USSSA rules come into play and if there are no substitutes, the phantom 9th batter will be considered an out at bat.
10. "Flex" players are only allowed due to injury or health issues.

Innings, Time, and Run Limitations

1. All games will be one hour and 15 minutes (Coach Pitch, Mini Minor, Minor and Major divisions). T-ball time limit is one (1) hour.
 - a. No new inning may start after the time limit.
 - b. IF the time has expired mid-inning, and the Umpire rules that the home team is unable to tie or win the game, they may rule that the game is over. This rule exists mainly to respect the time of the players, parents, coaches, and umpires for the 7:30 time slot games proceeding the 6:00 games. The umpire makes the final call on this decision - **it is not up to the coaches.**
 1. Coach Pitch, Mini-Minor, Minor and Major divisions will play with a straight five runs per team per inning limitation. There will be no limit on runs scored in the seventh (7th) inning. No score is kept in T-ball.
 2. In season playoffs or interleague tournaments, at the expiration of the time limit, the International Tiebreaker rule (a.k.a. Texas Tie-Breaker) shall go into effect. The last batted out in the previous inning shall be put onto second base and the batting order shall proceed normally with NO OUTS. All regular season rec league games will end in and be recorded as a tie if time has expired and the final inning has been completed.
 3. If a game is suspended before two (2) complete innings, due to the weather and/or field conditions, the game is not official and will be made up in its entirety.
 4. If a game is suspended after the completion of the two (2) complete innings, the game will be considered official and complete. The final score will revert to the completion of the prior inning.
 5. A new inning begins immediately after the third out is made or when the final run crosses the plate. No exceptions.

Roster Minimum, Substitutions, and "Pick-up" Players

1. A team must have six (6) players from their own roster to start or to continue a game.
2. If a team has six (6), seven (7) or eight (8) players to begin a game, one (or two) players may be "picked up" from another MVFP team in the same age division or from the next lower division to play (if eight) or to be in reserve (if nine) in case of injury or illness.
 - ii. All pick-up players may play in an outfield position and bat last. If the rostered player appears, the "pick-up" player must leave the game and the rostered player is placed in the line-up in the "pick-up" position.
 - iii. A "pick-up" player for injury only (listed as a sub on the line-up card before the game begins) can only play the outfield and must bat last in the lineup.
 - iv. To avoid forfeiting, if a team has less than nine players AND is unable to find a "pick-up" player as in "B" above, the manager of the opposing team will select one or two players from her team to "lend" to

the other team to play in the outfield. It works best for the team at bat to “loan” their last batted out from the previous inning.

3. “Pick-up” players are allowed to play in unlimited games per season, per team, in their own division in the Fall season. They are allowed to pick up only (2) games either in their own division or “up” a division in the Spring season. However, if no injury or illness occurs and the “pick-up” player(s) does not play, player(s) are not charged as having played one of their two (2) eligible games. A legal at-bat is considered an eligible “game.”

4. All players must play a minimum of two (2) CONSECUTIVE innings (1 extra inning can end in a tie), complete defensive innings every game in which they are present and able to participate. The field position must be reported to the opposing scorekeeper when players enter the game. This rule is subject to Rule 2 Innings, Time, and Run Rule.

5. If a player is removed from a game because of injury, she must submit a written release signed by her doctor (if the injury requires medical attention) to play in the next game.

6. If a base runner is removed from the game for any reason, the last batted out will replace her as a runner. If the removed player cannot continue offense or defense, that player is subject to the “automatic out” rule as in 5(A).

Pitching

1. T-Ball and Coach Pitch see specific division section below for pitching rules

2. Mini Minors, Minors and Majors – a pitcher is allowed to pitch two innings; no pitcher may pitch a third inning until the fifth inning.

3. Coaches must submit pitching changes to Umpire and record all pitchers used in a game.

Batting

1. All teams will bat their complete roster every game. Example – All players who are present for the game. Later arrivals will be added to the bottom of the order. Injured players are an exception; they are not required to bat based on specific injury.
2. Any player who cannot appear at bat because of injury or illness will be considered an “automatic out” and the order will proceed normally.
3. Stealing, Drop Third Strike, and Infield fly rules apply to Mini Minor, Minor and Major Divisions only.

Team Staff

1. Each team shall have one-woman manager (minimum age 21 and MUST be a female), and two or three coaches (male or female). Having a Team Mom on staff is encouraged, but optional. Only staff members are permitted in the dugout. A Team Manager or Team Mom will be in the dugout at all times and will be present at practices and batting cages. All volunteers (anyone that steps in the dugout or on the field) are required to register with the league and complete a background check provided by the league.

2. If you are under the age of 16 and want to assist in coaching Coach Pitch and T-ball, you are welcome. In all other divisions, the coaches must be 16 years of age or older.

3. Any coaches in the infield who are under the age of 16 are strongly encouraged to wear a batting helmet. If they choose not to, they choose to do so at their own risk.

4. Each team will provide a scorekeeper every game. The “home” scorekeeper will keep the “official” scorebook and have the book signed by the plate umpire at the end of the game unless questioned by the plate umpire.

Umpires

1. Umpires will be at least 14 years of age and will not be allowed to umpire in the field without signed written consent from a legal parent or guardian.
2. 16 + years of age may umpire behind the plate; however, they must be in full gear.
3. If MVFP or MSS is unable to secure an umpire, a member of the team's coaching staff is required to take turns umpiring the game. If umpire gear is unavailable, the volunteer umpire will be required to call balls and strikes behind the pitcher in the field.
4. If time has expired mid-inning, and the Umpire rules that the home team is unable to tie or win the game, they may decide to rule that the game is over. This exception exists mainly to respect the time of the players, parents, team staff and umpires for the 7:30 slot games proceeding the 6:00 games. The umpire makes the final call to this decision, and it is not up to the coaches.

Forfeits

1. You can always play the game, but if you have less than 6 rostered players to play, it's an automatic forfeit, and the score will be recorded 7-0.

Pitching Distances

1. The pitching rubber will be the following:
 - i. Coach Pitch Division: 30 feet
 - ii. Mini-Minor Division: 35 feet
 - iii. Minor Division: 40 feet
 - iv. Major Division: 43 feet

If any of these rules are unclear, please speak to a Board member, or submit your concerns in writing to the Board of Directors at mvfpfastpitch@gmail.com.

T-BALL SPECIFIC LEAGUE RULES

Safety

1. No throwing the bat.
2. No sliding.
3. Throwing the bat by the batter constitutes an out. Speak with the player first, point out the danger that is caused by throwing the bat, but if the problem continues the player will be forced to lose an "at bat turn".
4. The home team is responsible for providing the ball and tee.
5. There are no protests of any kind. All rule disagreements will be settled on the field between coaches. Judgment calls by the coach are not to be protested.

Players and Positions

1. On defense, the players will be positioned at 1B, 2B, SS, 3B, and pitcher. All other players will be positioned evenly in the infield.
2. It is recommended that coaches rotate their players at the different defensive positions. Generally, try to have a player play the same position for no more than one inning. They get bored very easily and it's best to keep them moving.
3. Coaches will ensure that all players play every inning, every game.

Coaches and Assistants

1. Each team is encouraged to provide an adult to be an umpire (which can be a coach) or a parent willing to assist.
2. Coaches or assistants will be at the batting tee instructing the children while their team is at bat.

3. Coaches are not allowed to physically assist base runners, e.g. pushing the runner, or helping the runner off the ground, while the ball is in play.
4. A maximum of 3 coaches from the defensive (fielding) team are allowed on the playing field. These coaches should be situated behind 1st, 2nd, and 3rd bases. These coaches are on the field for instructional purposes only, such as re-positioning the fielders and relaying information.

Play of the Game

1. During the game, all players must remain in the designated team areas and on benches, except the batter at the plate.
2. The next batter will not approach the plate until called by the batting coach or umpire.
3. The batting coach or umpire will place the ball on the tee and verify that the tee is adjusted within the strike zone (between the knees and the armpits of the batter). The batting coach may adjust and reposition the batter at any time if the ball is not in play.
4. The batter hits the ball off the tee after the umpire or batting coach calls "ball in play."
5. The batting coach will remove the tee from the playing field after the ball is hit.
6. An arc (approximately 8 feet) will be drawn from the 1st base foul line to the 3rd base foul line. A hit ball must go past the line to be considered a fair ball. A foul ball is one hit inside the 15-foot arc line. In other words, the ball must travel 15 feet in order to be judged as a fair ball. Official softball rules apply to a ball that stops on the line, i.e., foul ball rule. If a ball leaves the tee as a result of the tee being struck rather than the ball, then the ball shall be declared dead, and another attempt shall be made to hit the ball.
7. In Tee Ball the play is considered 'over' when the ball is returned to a player at the mound or any base.
8. Upon fielding a hit, the pitcher must attempt a play at either 1B, 2B or 3B.
9. At the time the ball is declared dead, the umpire shall award a runner the next base only if the runner is half the distance or more to that base. If the runner is not half the distance to the next base, he shall be returned to the base she had safely reached.
10. When the umpire calls the ball dead, it stays dead until the umpire calls the ball in play again.
11. Runners may advance to the next base on an overthrow out-of-bounds. Runners cannot advance on any foul ball.
12. The runner may not leave the base until the ball is struck by the batter.
13. Leading off is not permitted.
14. Base stealing is not permitted.
15. An inning is not three outs. An inning will end after all of the batters in the batting line-up have batted.
16. In setting up defensive positions, the pitcher shall not play closer to home plate than the pitching rubber in place on the field (either 35 or 40 foot)
17. Runners Overrunning a Base: First base and home plate are the only bases a runner may touch and run past. If a runner should overrun 2nd and 3rd base, and an alert fielder who is in possession of the ball touches the runner while off the base, the runner shall be declared out. A fielder may not push or force a runner off the base that a runner has gained in an attempt to tag him out. First base is treated like second and third bases when a runner makes a turn toward second base after touching 1st base. Should a runner make a turnaround 1st base toward 2nd base and then tagged by the fielder, while in possession of the ball, prior to returning to 1st base, the runner shall be declared out.
18. Tagging-Up: A base runner will be allowed to tag-up after a fly ball out (base runner leaves base after fly ball is caught) only if the ball is caught in the outfield grass. Tagging-Up is not allowed on infield fly outs.
19. A batter-runner or base runner that is put out must return to the dugout.

8U SPECIFIC LEAGUE RULES

Play will be governed by USSSA Softball Rule Book, unless specified in this section.

Pitching

1. Coach will make a maximum of five (5) pitches for the first 2 innings of the game.
2. After 2 innings, a player pitcher will pitch to the batter. Player pitcher will be allowed four (4) pitches.
3. If batter is not struck out, a coach will enter the circle and have up to three (3) pitches.
4. Pitch counts from player pitcher will carry over to the coach pitcher. If the fifth pitch or 3rd strike is fouled the batter may continue to bat until there is a strike out or the ball is hit into fair territory. There are no walks.
 1. The player pitcher must have at least 1 foot in the pitcher's circle when the batter's coach is pitching. No other defensive players may be positioned inside the pitcher's circle at any time.
 2. The defensive coach may move the pitcher behind 2nd base for safety reasons and must stay a minimum of ten (10) feet outside of the baseline until the ball is hit.

Defense

1. There will be no infield fly rule. The ball remains live and in play until play is stopped. Any/all runner(s) are in jeopardy of being put out or advancing.
2. The coach in the outfield cannot instruct his players after the ball has been pitched.
3. The coach that is pitching cannot instruct players on the field. The base coaches are allowed to coach the base runners only.
4. To stop runners from advancing, the ball must be in front of the lead runner or in possession of the pitcher player inside of the pitching circle before time can be called. If the runner is more than halfway to the next base when time is called, the runner will be awarded the next base. If the ball is overthrown in an attempt to make a play, the runner will be awarded one base on overthrow.
5. If the pitching coach is unintentionally hit with a batted ball, it is an immediate dead ball and a no pitch. If the pitching coach intentionally makes contact with the ball or in the umpire's judgment interferes with a defensive play, the ball is dead, and the batter is out. The coach will be given a warning, and a second infraction will result in the coach being ejected.
6. The base distance will be 60 feet.
7. A team may play with an optional tenth (10th) player on defense. This optional player must be positioned in the outfield and must stay a minimum of ten (10) feet outside of the baseline until the ball is hit.
8. There will be a maximum of 10 defensive players on the field, but no more than 6, including the catcher, can be positioned inside the infield baselines. If a ball is hit in fair territory, there is no minimum distance it must travel to be a fair ball.
9. Upon fielding a hit, the pitcher must attempt a play at either 1B, 2B, 3B or at home plate.
10. At the time the ball is declared dead, the umpire shall award a runner the next base only if the runner is half the distance or more to that base. If the runner is not half the distance to the next base, he shall be returned to the base he had safely reached.
11. When the umpire calls the ball dead, it stays dead until the umpire calls the ball in play again.
12. In setting up defensive positions, the pitcher shall not play closer to home plate than the pitching rubber in place on the field (either 35 or 40 foot).

Offense

1. There will be no designated hitter (DH).
2. There will be no stealing. Any/all runner(s) are liable to be put out if they are off the base. Base runners cannot advance on any passed balls.
3. Runners cannot leave the base in this division before the ball crosses the plate. If the runner leaves the base early, they shall be called out.
4. Runners may advance to the next base on an overthrow out-of-bounds. Runners cannot advance on any foul ball.
5. The runner may not leave the base until the ball is struck by the batter.
6. Leading off is not permitted.
7. Base stealing is not permitted.
8. There will be no base on balls.
9. There will be no hit by pitch.
10. There will be no drop third strike.
11. There will be no bunting.
12. Runners Overrunning a Base:
 - a. First base and home plate are the only bases a runner may touch and run past. If a runner should overrun 2nd and 3rd base, and an alert fielder who is in possession of the ball touches the runner while off the base, the runner shall be declared out.
 - b. A fielder may not push or force a runner off the base that a runner has gained in an attempt to tag him out.
 - c. First base is treated like second and third bases when a runner makes a turn toward second base after touching 1st base.
 - d. Should a runner make a turnaround from 1st base toward 2nd base and then tagged by the fielder, while in possession of the ball, prior to returning to 1st base, the runner shall be declared out.
13. Tagging-Up: A base runner will be allowed to tag-up after a fly ball out (base runner leaves base after fly ball is caught) only if the ball is caught in the outfield grass. Tagging-Up is not allowed on infield fly outs.
14. A batter-runner or base runner that is put out must return to the dugout.