

**Bridgewater Baseball & Softball
(BBSI)**



Softball Minor League (3rd – 5th Graders)

Rulebook

2024 Season

(v.1)



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Contacts

League	Name	Email / tel #
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VP, BBSI	Mike Brewster	mikebrewster80@gmail.com
President, BBSI	Paul Santiago	santiago25bbsi@gmail.com



Important

- Please remind your parents that the Medical Release forms and Code of Conduct forms were completed during the online registration and they should be updated as necessary
- Managers should also carry a complete contact list of players, parents, all managers, and Softball commissioners.
- Make sure that you have a first aid kit with you at all times. Always make sure you have ice packs.
- Please keep a record of injuries by submitting an accident report to the commissioner of the league.

Please be patient with players and parents.

Please teach the kids how to play correctly.

Please encourage good sportsmanship

THANK YOU for volunteering your time to be a coach!



Welcome

Welcome to 2022 Bridgewater Softball! We are extremely thankful to you for volunteering your time to support the league and the players. It should be a rewarding experience for coaches, players and parents.

The number one goal is to have fun and teach the fundamentals of softball (running, throwing, catching, batting and becoming a teammate).

This season will set the foundation for a fun and exciting future in Bridgewater Softball. With this in mind, we have set some goals for the season.

- Each player will learn to properly throw and catch a softball.
- Each player will be able to hit a ball pitched by the coach in the beginning and hit a ball pitched by an opposing pitcher by the end of the season.
- Each player will understand the basics of base running and know every position.
- Each player will begin to learn the vocabulary of the game.
- Each player will learn the proper conduct both on and off the field. This includes staying on the bench while your team is at bat, being a good sport, and learning about being a teammate.



Managers and Coaches

REQUIREMENTS

Each team will have a Manager, at least one Assistant Coach and all must have the following:

- Rutgers S.A.F.E.T.Y. certification
 - Rutgers certification is good for life
 - Certification requirement also applies to all parents wishing to help out (i.e. inside the dugout, on the field, etc.)
- Background check
 - Must be checked every 2 years
 - Please visit our website at <http://www.bridgewaterbsi.com> and click on the BBSI tab, then "BACKGROUND CHECKS" for more information
 - Please DO NOT submit your background check application until you have been approved to be a manager/coach by your league commissioner

RESPONSIBILITIES

- To request a practice field
 - Send your request to: scheduler@bridgewaterbsi.com
 - Email must contain: Division (i.e. Minors Softball), team name, date, time and field, requestor's name and cell number
- Rescheduling a game
 - Send your request to: scheduler@bridgewaterbsi.com
 - Managers from both teams are responsible for identifying an available field by looking at the calendar
 - Email must contain: Division (i.e. Minors Softball), team name, OLD GAME info (date, time, field #), NEW GAME info (date, time, field #), requestor's name and cell number



Rules Highlights

1. Each game consists of **6 innings**.
 - No new inning is to be started after **1 hour 45 minutes (No hard stop at 2 hours)** assuming **games start promptly at the top of the hour**
2. Scoring will be kept. However, Regular season records will NOT be used for seeding in the playoffs. Seeding will be randomly set by the commissioner.
3. **Maximum of five (5) runs per inning**, including the last inning for regular season games.
4. There is **no mercy rule**
5. A defensive player will pitch to each batter. After four called "balls" or a hit-by-pitch, the offensive Coach will come into to pitch for the remainder of the at-bat.
6. **Stealing is NOT permitted** (includes passed balls).
7. A base runner may NOT lead off a base until the ball leaves the pitchers hand.
8. A base runner **cannot steal any base on an overthrown throwdown from catcher.**
9. 1 base per overthrow, additional overthrows opens additional base, all at runner's risk.
 - For example: the ball is hit into play to SS. SS throws the ball wildly to 1B and the ball passes the first basewoman. The runner may advance to second base at her own risk.
10. A player is allowed to slide. No head first sliding. The MUST slide rule is not in effect, however, players may not intentionally run over a defensive players.
11. A pitcher is not to pitch more than two (2) innings per game unless absolutely necessary. No differentiation between Rec or Travel players.
12. Infield Fly rule is NOT in effect



Schedule

1. The league commissioner begins to form the teams in March for Spring season; late June for Summer season and late August for Fall season.
2. The Minor Softball League schedule will be posted on the Bridgewater softball website.
3. Each game consists of **6 innings**.
 - a. No new innings are to be started after 1 hours 45 minutes into the game (NO hard stop at 2 hours)
4. There will be no extra innings during the regular season; only in the playoffs will there be extra innings if needed.
5. A manager or coach (preferably both) should be at the field at least 15 minutes prior to game time to greet their players and get organized for the evening.
6. Parents should be instructed to have their children at the field approximately 5-10 minutes before the scheduled time.
7. Players should be instructed **not to leave the field** during the practice/game.
8. **Note:** Please instruct parents that any player who cannot make a practice or game should contact the team manager.
 - a. Team Snap is an app that some Managers use to track player availability. This is not required but could be helpful.



PLAYOFFS

- A. All teams will participate in the playoffs. Teams will be pre-seeded, randomly, by the league (**not** based on season record)
- B. Please start your games on time (see website for the schedule) Lower seed is always Home Team.
- C. During the last inning there will be unlimited scoring.
- D. There will be no new innings after 1 hour 45 minutes into the game; HOWEVER THE LAST INNING MUST BE AGREED UPON BY BOTH TEAM MANAGERS in conjunction with the umpire
- E. Since these are the playoffs we have field priority, so no games may end in a tie. Any extra innings will be unlimited scoring.



General Rules

1. Except as otherwise noted, we will follow the most current **ASA rules** and regulations. All managers and coaches should be familiar with these rules.
2. **Maximum of five (5) runs per inning**, including the last inning during the regular season (for playoffs, unlimited runs in the final inning)
3. Mercy Rule is **NOT** in effect (due to five run rule)
4. Only players registered in the recreation program may play in the games. No substitute players are allowed at any time.
5. All players are to be included at all times. No player can sit two innings before every player sits one inning.
6. Umpires have the final say regarding all field calls. Please respect the umpire and their calls. Junior umpires may at time be used for Minors softball games. Please be extra respectful of our Junior umpires - they are children who have come up through our league and not professionals.
7. All players must remain on the bench at all times unless they are in the field or up to bat. No sitting with parents.
8. No one other than players and coaches should be in the bench area.
9. There is no eating during a practice or game. Drinks are okay. Snacks and drinks can be consumed after the game.



Rules of Conduct

1. All managers, coaches, and other volunteers must read, and abide with the Bridgewater Softball Code of Conduct (form is found at the end of this document)
2. It is the responsibility of the manager to maintain proper decorum and behavior among the parents of the players as well as the players and coaches on his team.
3. Any abuse directed at a player by anyone involved with the team is ultimately the responsibility of the manager.
4. Instances of unacceptable behavior should be addressed by the manager immediately and reported to the commissioner for follow-up.
5. Coaches or any other team assistants not coaching first base or third base must stay in the bench area.
6. The use of alcohol, tobacco, or foul language on or around the playing field is not allowed and will not be tolerated.

***** Manager/Coaches – Important *****

This is a game for the kids. We are volunteers here to support the kids. Let's be patient. Mistakes will be made. Let's set a good example for the kids on how we handle them. Encourage good sportsmanship and be positive.

Report any incidents to your commissioner immediately. They will be recorded and reviewed by the Board to see if necessary action needs to be taken during the season.

Any major incidents will be taken into consideration upon applying to manage or coach for the following season.



Roster Rules

1. If there are more than 10 players, the players should be on the bench or being instructed with coaches on the side/cages.
2. If one team is short on players, players from the competing team can be shared on a rotating basis each inning.
3. The shared players should play the outfield only & will only bat on their own team not on the team short on players. Any exceptions must be approved by both managers.

FAIR PLAYING TIME RULE

No player may sit two innings until every player has sat one complete inning.

- a. The intent of this rule is to prevent players from playing the whole game while other players sit 2-3 innings a game.
- b. Except for injury, no player sits two consecutive innings.
- c. No player may sit more than two innings in any game including ones which go beyond the standard 6 innings.
- d. After eight innings a player may sit a third inning provided every player has sat at least two (2) innings already.
- e. If there is an exception, the manager will be expected to justify it.



If a manager intends to sit a player for an entire game for disciplinary/behavioral reasons or injury, this must be declared to the umpire and to the opposing manager before the game. This also needs to be communicated to the Commissioner before game start.

- a. If a **behavioral problem occurs during a game**, the player's manager must immediately notify the opposing manager and the umpire of the benching and must notify the Commissioner that day.
- a. If a **behavioral problem occurs during a practice**, the Commissioner must be told before the next game about the intent to have that player sit out the game.
- b. If the **reason is disciplinary**, the player's family and the Commissioner must be notified. Discipline problem is defined as a behavioral problem that occurs during a game or practice, and is unduly disruptive in the opinion of his manager.
- c. If a player **is injured** during the course of a game and the number of players drop below eight (8), then that game shall be suspended unless otherwise agreed by both Managers. If a player has to leave a game for any other reason before it is completed, and the number of players drop below eight (8), then his team shall forfeit the game unless otherwise agreed by both Managers.



Batting

1. All players will bat, regardless if they are playing the field or not.
2. All players in attendance at the game when it starts will be in a continuous batting order.
3. Anyone arriving after the start of the game will be placed at the end of the line-up.
4. A defensive player will pitch to each batter. After four called "balls" or a hit-by-pitch, the offensive Coach will come into to pitch for the remainder of the at-bat.
5. Intentional bunting is NOT permitted
6. The Manager will set the lineup for the game and the players should be encouraged to sit on the bench in the correct batting order to speed the game.
7. All players remain on the bench when their team is up.
8. Only ONE person at a time in the on-deck cage and wearing a helmet.
9. Players cannot swing bats outside of batter's box when warming up.



Base Running

1. A base runner **may NOT lead off a base until the ball** leaves the pitcher's hand.
2. **Stealing is NOT permitted** (includes passed balls).
3. At the end of a play, runners **may not advance** once the pitcher has control of the ball within the pitcher's circle / vicinity of the mound.
4. 1 base per overthrow, additional overthrows opens additional base, all at runner's risk.
 - a. For example: the ball is hit into play to SS. SS throws the ball wildly to 1B and the ball passes the first basewoman. The runner may advance to second base at her own risk.
5. At the end of a play, runners may not advance once the pitcher has control of the ball within the pitcher's circle / vicinity of the mound.
6. A player is allowed to slide. No head first sliding. The MUST slide rule is not in effect.



Pitching

1. **Pitching rubber** should measure **35 feet** from the back of home plate. If a player-pitcher needs a few steps towards home plate - her manager may position her accordingly, safely in accordance with rule 5.
2. A player may pitch a maximum of 2 innings regardless of whether they are a Rec-only or travel player. Please develop your rec pitchers.
3. The pitcher must finish their delivery within the pitching circle.
4. **Girls who are not able to reach the plate from one foot in front of the pitching mound will not be allowed to pitch.** This is a safety issue for pitchers, catcher and batter. **There are no exceptions.**
5. A pitcher change is recommended if there are four (4) consecutive batters "walked" - meaning Coach has to come in to pitch out the at bat - or (2) batters hit during the same inning up to the coach's discretion.
6. If a pitcher hits a batter, the coach will come in to pitch the rest of that at-bat.
7. If a pitcher hits batters three times in a game, they should be rotated to another position.
8. We want to encourage kid hitting off kid pitching. We don't want players looking for a way to be awarded a base without hitting.
9. If the quality of pitching is poor enough to slow the pace of play to a point where it negatively impacts all players, Managers may choose to Coach pitch. Both Managers must agree.
10. A Manager cannot walk their player during Coach Pitch. The batter must be encouraged to swing at anything close and put the ball in play or be struck out per umpires calls.
11. Thrown balls that hit the coach will immediately be called a dead ball, and runners will be awarded one base beyond the last base touched at the time the ball was declared dead.



Fielding

- **Field Size:** Base paths should measure **60 feet**.
- **There is a three (3) out or maximum of five (5) runs per inning**
- Maximum of 10 players on the field for defense
 - **Infield Positions:** 1B, 2B, 3B, SS, C & P
 - **Outfield Positions:** LF, LC, RC, RF. (Outfielders are to be placed on or beyond 15 feet from the bases or be on the grass area of the outfield. Don't position players to appear to have 2 sets of infielders. Standing behind a 2nd base is not a position.
- **Important:** Unless there is a true safety issue, players should be rotated to different positions in the field so they can learn all positions and should be rotated between outfield and infield every inning as much as possible.
- A player should not play the same position for more than two innings. Playing different positions will broaden the players understanding and enjoyment of the game. Use your best judgment.
- **Infield Fly Rule is NOT in effect.**
- Coaches shall not be placed on the field during play.
- Players should be permitted to make all fielding plays. Coaches should not interfere with any ball that is in play.



Equipment

1. Only equipment approved for use by the Bridgewater Softball Leagues shall be used in practices, clinics or games.
2. All batting helmets should have cages. A helmet without a cage should not be used.
3. Pitchers mask (a.k.a. fielding mask) must be worn by the player at the pitcher position, even if they are not live pitching but are playing the position.
4. Position players are required to wear fielding masks.
5. Players must wear their full uniforms (pants, shirt, socks) during games. Shorts are not acceptable.
6. Players **must bring their own glove** and are welcomed to bring a bat.
7. We strongly urge parents to write the players name and phone number on all equipment.
8. Only ASA approved bats may be used.
9. Players should wear plastic spikes. Sneakers and soccer spikes are fine. Opened-toed foot apparel is not permitted. **No metal cleats.**
10. An 11 inch “hard” ball will be used for all practices & games.
11. Players should dress appropriately based on weather conditions, cold, heat, rain, etc.
12. Players should bring their own water on hot days.



Minor League Skills Training

Keep it Simple and Make it Fun! - Skills should be taught all season long. Be creative, have contests, goals, etc.

Running

1. Run to each base & make proper turns for extra bases.
2. Touch each base.
3. Run through first base. Don't slide into first base.

Drill: Run through First Base. Run from first to second. Run from second to Home.

Fielding

1. Good stance – wide stance and knees bent.
2. Glove and hand out in front.
3. Use both hands to catch the ball.

Drill: Have the players field gently rolled ground balls without a glove and throw back. Repeat with glove.

Hitting

1. Good stance – shoulder width and feet square to the plate.
2. Hands back and stay balanced.
3. Push the hands back and small step straight towards the pitcher.
4. Keep the head steady and watch the ball as you swing.

Drill: Soft toss hitting practice with wiffle balls into the fence.



Throwing

1. Eyes on target.
2. Get the ball back up high and behind the head.
3. Point your glove and step towards the target.

Drill: Soft toss back forth with one knee on the ground.

Pitching

1. Pair pitchers and catchers together
2. Have catchers in full gear and start at half distance
3. Increase distance every 10 pitches until full distance is achieved
4. Rotate in catchers and pitchers

Outfield

1. Glove up for fly balls. First step is always back.
2. In front of the ball for grounders.
3. Throw to second base.
4. Do not hold or run with the ball.

Drill: Have a coach toss short fly balls (6 feet away) to catch. Throw to second. Repeat with grounders.



Rain Outs & Lightning Policy

1. In order to determine if a game is canceled due to weather, please check www.bridgewaterbsi.com under the Field Status tab or call the recreation department hotline at 908-526-7107, after 4:00pm. The town makes the call by 3pm normally.
2. The web site will say “Open” or “Closed”. If closed, please contact the other manager to confirm the cancellation and then contact your parents. Email communication is the recommended way and probably the most efficient way to communicate
 - a. If games have not been canceled, the two managers should show up at the field or contact each other to make a determination as to whether the game could be played.
3. It is highly encourage to make-up rain out games and is the responsibility of both coaches to find a suitable time and reschedule with the league scheduler.
4. In case of **LIGHTNING**, a thirty (30) minute postponement applies to all current games at a specific location. All people must seek shelter (in vehicles). If after thirty (30) minutes, lightning is still sighted, a Board Member, Commissioner, or a Senior Umpire can decide to cancel the game(s).
5. If lightning returns after play has resumed, the thirty (30) minute postponement starts over. The time limit for the game will remain in force during the lightning delay - no extra time will be granted for the delay for recreation games.
6. The cancellation of an earlier game, due to lightning, does not necessarily cancel all later games.



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