

ROYSE CITY DIAMOND SPORTS RULE BOOK

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RCDS uses as its rules basis the Central Region NCS ruleset. Any rules not explicitly covered in this book default to the NCS rules. However, any rule noted in this document is considered the final authority and supersedes any conflicting rules located in NCS or NFHS.

1. SECTION 1 - LEAGUE ORGANIZATION

- 1.1. **INCLUSIVITY POLICY:** Royse City Diamond Sports (RCDS) is a recreational baseball and softball league. As such, all children that register may participate in sports and age groups offered by RCDS that they are eligible for.
 - 1.1.1. Children with disabilities will be accommodated to the maximum possible extent, and on a case by case basis, by the RCDS board.
 - 1.1.1.1. In each case the safety of the player(s) will be paramount, with the additional consideration of avoiding undue detriment to the opportunities and experience of all players.
 - 1.1.2. Male players may only participate in Tee Ball or Baseball
 - 1.1.3. Female players may participate in Tee Ball, Softball, or Baseball
- 1.2. **REGISTRATION POLICY.** Participation will be through registration on the RCDS online portal. Coaches, players, and parents each must register with the league.
 - 1.2.1. Eligibility for each age group offered will be as per NCS official rules, with the following caveats
 - 1.2.1.1. **Effective Aug 1, 2026:** No grade exceptions will be allowed by RCDS.
 - 1.2.2. Teams are capped at 12 players. When all available roster spots (according to the number of coaches registered) are filled, any additional players that register will be placed on a wait list.
 - 1.2.2.1. As additional coaches register, players will be moved from the wait list to the registered list in the order they registered.
 - 1.2.2.2. Players who remain on the wait list after registration has closed, if no other coaches volunteer, will be refunded their registration fees.
 - 1.2.3. Coaches are selected by the league based on the number of teams needed. Registering as a head or assistant coach does not mean someone will be selected to coach.
- 1.3. **BACKGROUND CHECK POLICY:** Registering for a Coach or Assistant Coach position requires a background check.
 - 1.3.1. Background checks are valid for 1 calendar year.

- 1.3.2. If an existing background check will not remain valid through the entirety of the season being registered for, a new background check must be taken (at the same time as the registration for that season).

1.4. TEAM SELECTION POLICY: Recreational division rosters will be selected within the following guidelines.

- 1.4.1. Coaches may carry over players on a team's roster who have played for that team within the prior three seasons.
 - 1.4.1.1. This rule still applies if a new coach is taking over an existing team (e.g. when the head coach has decided not to return as coach)
 - 1.4.1.2. Players returning to a team are exempt from attending Skills Day.
- 1.4.2. After registration has closed, all unassigned players and coaches with unfilled roster spots shall attend a Skills Day hosted by RCDS.
- 1.4.3. At Skills Day, unassigned players will conduct a series of drills to allow coaches to assess their overall skillset.
- 1.4.4. Immediately following the conclusion of this assessment, a board member will convene with the coaches of that age group and conduct a draft.
 - 1.4.4.1. The teams with the fewest players draft first; teams with more returning players join according to their open roster spots
 - 1.4.4.2. Unassigned players who do not attend Skills Day shall be placed randomly among teams with remaining open roster spots after all other eligible players have been assigned teams.

1.5. SELECT DIVISIONS: RCDS may also establish "select" divisions for various age groups.

- 1.5.1. Coaches seeking to establish a select team, register the team as a whole (individual players do not register)
- 1.5.2. Coaches may conduct their own try outs and the team roster size may have up to 3 assistant coaches and between 9-15 players.
- 1.5.3. All coaches must still take and pass a background check through the league portal.

1.6. REMOVAL FROM LEAGUE: Coaches, parents, and/or players may be removed from participation with the league at any time as a consequence of violating the RCDS Terms and Conditions.

- 1.6.1. Violations will be investigated by the RCDS Appeals and Disciplinary Officer

- 1.6.2. Rulings will be made by the Executive Board and then communicated to the impacted parties.

2. SECTION 2 - TEAM ROSTERS

2.1. TEAM LINEUP AND GUEST PLAYERS

- 2.1.1. A team must have at least 7 players to begin a game (if there are fewer than 7 players the team will have to forfeit)
- 2.1.2. All available players in the dugout must be included in the lineup, bat in their lineup spot, and play a minimum of three (3) outs on defense (or one full inning, if a run rule ends the inning prior to 3 outs being recorded).
- 2.1.3. A coach cannot deem a player unavailable if their parent has them at their field, ready to play, prior to the coaches plate meeting;
 - 2.1.3.1. A child's parent may request they be marked as unavailable for parental disciplinary reasons. When this occurs, the coach must notify one of their commissioners. This request will be verified by a board member.
- 2.1.4. Guest players may be invited to play if a team will have fewer than 10 rostered players available for a game within the following guidelines:
 - 2.1.4.1. A team may only use guest players to bring their in game roster to a maximum of 10 players
 - 2.1.4.2. Guest players must be age eligible and cannot be on a roster of another team in the same age group and division as the inviting team
 - 2.1.4.3. Rec baseball guest players must be registered in the rec baseball league (cannot only be select)
 - 2.1.4.4. Softball players may guest play for baseball if they are otherwise eligible
 - 2.1.4.5. Guest players must bat at the end of the lineup
 - 2.1.4.6. Guest players must play a minimum of 1 inning on defense during a game they are guest playing in

2.2. UNAVAILABLE PLAYERS

- 2.2.1. The following events will result in an automatic out for the lineup spot at their first at-bat after the event occurs, but subsequent at-bats will not be recorded as an out:
 - 2.2.1.1. A player was included in the starting lineup but due to illness or injury cannot perform their at bat.
 - 2.2.1.1.1. If an out is recorded in this fashion, the player is removed from the lineup and may not re-enter the game.
 - 2.2.1.1.2. A coach may opt to take an out without removing the player from the lineup. In this case the player may remain in the

game but for each at bat if the player is unable to come to the plate an out will be recorded.

- 2.2.1.2. Less than nine (9) players listed in the starting lineup (a minimum of seven (7) players is required to start the game). In this case the 8th and 9th batting positions, if unfilled, are outs the first time they would bat during the game (regardless of the inning this occurs in)

- 2.2.1.2.1. NOTE: It is the shorthanded team coach's responsibility to inform the umpire and declare the out at the time of the unfilled at-bat. Failure to do this will be grounds for a protest and may result in forfeiting the game.

- 2.2.2. The following events will result in an automatic out for every at-bat:

- 2.2.2.1. A player is included in the lineup but after the game has started is either disqualified or ejected from the game

2.3. COACHES

- 2.3.1. All coaches on the field for games and practices must be registered through the website and have successfully completed a background check

- 2.3.2. Prior to the game beginning, both teams' head coach (or the acting head coach) and the umpire shall have a home plate meeting

- 2.3.3. The team on offense may place a coach at first base and third base

- 2.3.4. **6U** | The defensive team may place one coach in the outfield and one coach in the infield, but both must remain in foul territory away from the field of play, and away from the first and third base coach areas

- 2.3.5. **8U and under** | In addition to the other offensive coaches, the coach who is pitching may also coach players from the mound

- 2.3.6. **8U and under** | A team may have no more than five (5) coaches within the field of play for games, including warmups (the dugout is considered part of the field of play)

- 2.3.7. **9U and 10U** | A team may have no more than four (4) coaches within the field of play for games, including warmups (the dugout is considered part of the field of play)

- 2.3.8. **12U and above** | A team may have no more than three (3) coaches within the field of play for games, including warmups (the dugout is considered part of the field of play)

3. SECTION 3 - GAME MANAGEMENT

3.1. WARM UPS AND FIELD USAGE

- 3.1.1. Teams may warm up in the following infield areas before a game
 - 3.1.1.1. The dirt area on their side of the field between the outfield grass and the outermost basepaths
 - 3.1.1.2. The dirt area between the foul line and the fence on their side of the field
- 3.1.2. Teams may not utilize a field for practice prior to any game scheduled for that field on that day

3.2. TIME OUTS

- 3.2.1. A coach is allowed up to four (4) timeout instances per full inning.
- 3.2.2. A timeout would be an interruption of play initiated by the coach, such as: a mound visit, challenging an umpire's call, talking to players, etc
- 3.2.3. Equipment or injury timeouts are not included as part of these timeouts.
- 3.2.4. If an umpire deems a coach to be abusing this rule, they may require the coach to be confined within the dugout for the remainder of the game.

3.3. WEATHER-RELATED DISRUPTION

- 3.3.1. When the regulation game has not reached the 50% of game play time and must be discontinued, the game will be made up and started over as a new game.
- 3.3.2. When a regulation game has reached at least 50% of the scheduled play time and must be discontinued due to weather then the game will officially record the final score as the score from the end of the last fully completed inning.
 - 3.3.2.1. In this case no make up game will occur.
- 3.3.3. Any lightning within ten (10) miles of the ballpark will cause all games or practices to be paused. Games and practice cannot resume until thirty (30) minutes after the last lightning strike. The commissioner on duty will determine if the game will be resumed that same day or if it will be cancelled and subject to the above rules.

3.4. MERCY RULE A game will be declared over if the difference in score is:

- 3.4.1. 15 or more runs at the end of 3 completed innings
- 3.4.2. 10 or more runs at the end of 4 completed innings

3.4.3. 8 or more runs at the end of 5 completed innings

3.4.4. NOTE: If the home team is winning by the above margins at the end of a top half of an inning, the ballgame will be called as there is no need to play the bottom half of the inning.

3.5. PLAYOFF TIE BREAKER RULE

3.5.1. If time is expired and the home team has already completed their at bat and the game is tied, the last three (3) batters from the away team will be placed on 3rd base, 2nd base, and 1st base respectively. The away team will start their at bat with one (1) out. When the home team comes up for their at bat, the same rules will apply.

3.5.2. If the score is still tied after that inning, the same process will occur, but the teams will now start with two (2) outs. This two (2) out cycle will continue until a team has a higher score at the end of the inning.

3.6. **PITCH COUNTS** In the interest of protecting the health of the kids as they are learning to pitch, RCDS has instituted the following policies regarding pitch limits. The section applies to all baseball kid pitch ages (9U and above)

3.6.1. Coaches must track pitches (this can be done by a book keeper but the coach is responsible to ensure it is happening)

3.6.2. Coaches must confirm the pitch count with the umpire at the end of each inning and during a change of pitchers

3.6.3. Umpires will maintain a pitch count form for all games

3.6.4. The pitch count cards will be signed by BOTH coaches and the umpire following every game

3.6.5. The maximum pitch count and required rest for a pitcher are both applied in reference to the count prior to starting their last batter (see table below).

3.6.5.1. The coach is not required to inform the umpire "last batter" before pulling his pitcher.

3.6.5.2. While the new pitcher is warming up, the umpire will confirm and record the number of pitches the departing pitcher threw prior to his last batter.

3.6.6. NOTE: The GameChanger application is recommended for use as it tracks pitches automatically.

- 3.6.7. It is the Umpire's responsibility to enforce removal of a pitcher once they have reached their daily maximum (this includes keeping track if the pitcher has pitched in multiple games that day)
- 3.6.8. If a coach believes the other team has violated the required rest for a pitcher, they must file a protest with the board after the game.
- 3.6.8.1. The umpire is not responsible to manage required rest.
- 3.6.8.2. If a team is challenged and is found to have violated the required rest days, that game will be declared a forfeit and the score set to 7-0 in favor of the other team.
- 3.6.9. No pitcher may pitch in games on three consecutive days, regardless of pitch count.

Required Rest per 3.6.5	9/10U	12U	14U/16U
One (1) Calendar Day	35-45	40-50	45-55
Two (2) Calendar Days	46-60	51-65	56-70
Three (3) Calendar Days	61-75	66-85	71-95
CALENDAR DAILY MAXIMUM	75	85	95

- Example: A 10U pitcher currently has 42 pitches before facing his final batter. They are required only one (1) day of rest, even if their count exceeds 45 pitches at the completion of the last at bat.
- Example: A 14U pitcher currently has 94 pitches combined between his first game and second game of the day. He is allowed to face one more batter for the day and then will be required to have three (3) days of rest.

4. **SECTION 4 - TEE BALL** (age 2-3 "Blastball" rules are also collected in this section - 4.1.6)

4.1. **GAME TIME LIMIT:** 55 minutes

4.1.1. No new inning will be started with less than 5 minutes left in game time.

4.1.2. NOTE: If an inning is in progress, the ballgame will NOT be ended prior to expiration of game time, or until the completion of the full inning if the game score is within the run limit.

4.2. **RUNS ALLOWED PER INNING:** 6

4.3. **BATTING**

4.3.1. A batter is allowed only one (1) practice swing per at bat, if a batter takes an additional swing (or squares up), there will be one (1) warning per team, any additional practice swings (or square ups) will be counted as a strike.

4.3.2. Once a ball is placed on the tee, a batter cannot line up their swing, this will count as a strike.

4.4. **BASERUNNING:**

4.4.1. If the runner is touched by a coach while the ball is live (pushed, pulled, or otherwise contacted in order to affect their baserunning), that runner shall be called out.

4.4.2. Runners cannot leave the base until the ball is put in play off the Tee

4.4.3. The lead runner may not advance beyond the base they are advancing to at the time any fielder is in the infield area (on the dirt) and has possession of the ball.

4.4.3.1. NOTE: Possession means the ball is in their glove or hand securely and not in contact with the ground.

4.4.4. Overthrows do NOT allow runners to continue advancing beyond the limits of rule 4.4.3.

4.5. **PITCHING.**

4.5.1. The pitcher must throw the ball to first base in order to get a batter/runner out.

4.5.2. This throw can be overhand, or underhand (provided the ball stays in the air for at least half the distance of the throw)

4.5.3. "Bowling" the ball to first is not allowed, and the runner will be declared safe if this occurs.

4.5.4. The pitcher cannot tag a batter/runner while they are running to first, and cannot run to first themselves to get the out.

4.6. **EQUIPMENT:** If a player is in the Catcher position, they must wear (at a minimum) a batting helmet with a facemask or a catcher's helmet.

4.7. **BLAST BALL RULES:**

4.7.1. Teams will take turns batting their entire order per half inning

4.7.2. Neither runs nor outs will be recorded

- 4.7.3. Each player will take as many swings as needed to put the ball in play
- 4.7.4. When the last batter puts the ball into play, all players on base will run the bases to home plate
- 4.7.5. Parents are allowed on the field to help guide baserunners in the correct direction and to provide direction to fielders

5. **SECTION 5 - SOFTBALL** (6U, 8U, 10U, 12U, and 15U)

5.1. **GAME TIME LIMITS:**

- 5.1.1. **6U and 8U:** 60 Minutes
- 5.1.2. **10U:** 75 Minutes
- 5.1.3. **12U and 15U:** 90 Minutes
- 5.1.4. No new inning will be started with less than 5 minutes left in game time.
- 5.1.5. NOTE: If an inning is in progress, the ballgame will NOT be ended prior to expiration of game time, or until the completion of the full inning if the game score is within the run limit.

5.2. **RUNS ALLOWED PER INNING:** 5

5.3. **BATTING**

- 5.3.1. **6U:** A batter is allowed only one (1) practice swing per at bat, if a batter takes an additional swing (or squares up), it will be counted as a strike.
- 5.3.2. **6U:** Once a ball is placed on the tee, a batter cannot line up their swing, this will count as a strike.

5.4. **BASERUNNING:**

- 5.4.1. If the runner is touched by a coach while the ball is live (pushed, pulled, or otherwise contacted in order to affect their baserunning), that runner shall be called out.
- 5.4.2. **6U and 8U:** Runners cannot leave the base until the ball is put in play
- 5.4.3. **10U and up:** Runners cannot leave until the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
 - 5.4.3.1. **10U:** First offense (per team) will be a warning and the runner sent back. After that the runner is out.
 - 5.4.3.2. **12U and 15U:** Runner is out

5.4.4. **6U and 8U:** Time will be called when the lead runner has stopped attempting to advance.

5.4.5. **10U and Up:** Runners may advance while the ball is live, time will not be called for baserunning.

5.4.6. **Overthrows**

5.4.6.1. **6U thru 10U:** Runner may attempt to advance ONE base on an overthrow (may still be tagged out on the attempt)

5.4.6.2. **12U and 15U:** Ball is live, no baserunning restrictions

5.5. **PITCHING.**

5.5.1. **6U and 8U:**

5.5.1.1. The coach pitching may coach from the circle.

5.5.1.2. The coach pitching cannot interfere with a play

5.5.1.2.1. If the interference was unintentional AND unavoidable (e.g. a line drive directly back at the coach), the play is called dead, the runners and batter return to their positions before the pitch, and the pitch is not counted

5.5.1.2.2. If the interference was intentional OR avoidable, the batter will be called out and the runners will return to the bases they started at.

5.5.2. **10U and up:**

5.5.2.1. A second mound visit to the same pitcher in the same inning must result in a pitching change.

5.5.2.2. The pitcher must wear a face mask

5.6. **EQUIPMENT:**

5.6.1. Bats must be softball bats stamped with USA or USSSA and must be good working condition (no cracks, dents, or other damage)

5.6.2. **10U and up:** Catchers must use a Catcher's mitt

5.6.3. No equipment that can be construed to provide a mechanical advantage may be used in games.

5.6.3.1. If this determination is made on the field, the offending equipment must be immediately removed, but otherwise no penalty is assessed and play continues.

6. **SECTION 6 - BASEBALL (6U, 7U, 8U, 9U, 10U, 12U, 14U, 16U - includes Rec and Select)**

6.1. **GAME TIME LIMITS:**

6.1.1. **6U, 7U, 8U:** 75 Minutes

- 6.1.2. **9U and Up:** 90 Minutes
- 6.1.3. No new inning will be started with less than 5 minutes left in game time.
- 6.1.4. NOTE: If an inning is in progress, the ballgame will NOT be ended prior to expiration of game time, or until the completion of the full inning if the game score is within the run limit.
- 6.2. **RUNS ALLOWED PER INNING:** 7
 - 6.2.1. Select Divisions - During playoffs there is no run limit per inning
- 6.3. **BATTING**
 - 6.3.1. **6U:** A batter is allowed only one (1) practice swing per at bat, if a batter takes an additional swing (or squares up), it will be counted as a strike.
 - 6.3.2. **6U:** Once a ball is placed on the tee, a batter cannot line up their swing, this will count as a strike.
 - 6.3.3. **7U and 8U:** Batters will receive 6 pitches or 3 swings, if the ball is not put into play the batter is out.
 - 6.3.3.1. A batter cannot strike out on a foul ball, an additional pitch/swing will be given if a ball is fouled on what would have otherwise been the final pitch or swing.
 - 6.3.4. **9U:** Batters are automatically out on a dropped third strike and cannot attempt to take first base
 - 6.3.5. **10U and up:** Dropped third strikes are in play
- 6.4. **BASERUNNING:**
 - 6.4.1. If the runner is touched by a coach while the ball is live (pushed, pulled, or otherwise contacted in order to affect their baserunning), that runner shall be called out.
 - 6.4.2. **6U, 7U, 8U:** Runners cannot leave the base until the ball is put in play
 - 6.4.2.1. First offense (per team) will be a warning and the runner sent back. After that the runner is out.
 - 6.4.3. **9U:** Runners cannot leave until the ball crosses the plate.
 - 6.4.3.1. First offense (per team) will be a warning and the runner sent back. After that the runner is out.
 - 6.4.3.2. Time is not called for this infraction until after the play is resolved (catcher has the ball or runners have stopped advancing).

- 6.4.3.3. If a runner leaves early and the ball is put in play, the umpire may set the offending runner back a base if they determine that leaving early contributed to the extra base(s) gained.
- 6.4.4. **10U and Up:** Open bases, no restrictions
- 6.4.5. **6U, 7U, 8U:** Time will be called when the lead runner has stopped attempting to advance.
- 6.4.6. **9U and Up:** Runners may advance while the ball is live, time will not be called for baserunning.
- 6.4.7. **Overthrows**
 - 6.4.7.1. **6U thru 10U (REC):** Runner may attempt to advance ONE base on an overthrow (may still be tagged out on the attempt)
 - 6.4.7.2. **10U (Select) and all 12U and Up:** Ball is live, no baserunning restrictions
- 6.5. **PITCHING.**
 - 6.5.1. **6U, 7U, 8U::**
 - 6.5.1.1. The coach must pitch from the rubber
 - 6.5.1.2. The coach pitching may coach from the circle.
 - 6.5.1.3. The coach pitching cannot interfere with a play
 - 6.5.1.3.1. If the interference was unintentional AND unavoidable (e.g. a line drive directly back at the coach), the play is called dead, the runners and batter return to their positions before the pitch, and the pitch is not counted
 - 6.5.1.3.2. If the interference was intentional OR avoidable, the batter will be called out and the runners will return to the bases they started at.
 - 6.5.2. **9U and Up:**
 - 6.5.2.1. A second mound visit to the same pitcher in the same inning must result in a pitching change.
 - 6.5.3. **Balks**
 - 6.5.3.1. **9U:** Balks are instructional, the umpire will call time and explain to the pitcher what the error was.
 - 6.5.3.1.1. If the pitch was already thrown before time was called it will count (ump will call time after catcher has the ball or after play resolves).
 - 6.5.3.2. **10U (Rec and Select) and 12U (REC):** One balk warning will be issued (per pitcher), after that the standard balk penalty applies.

6.5.3.3. **12U Select Divisions and up along with 14U and Up (REC):** No balk warnings will be issued. Penalty applies for every offense.

6.6. **EQUIPMENT:**

6.6.1. Bats must be baseball bats stamped with USA or USSSA and must be good working condition (no cracks, dents, or other damage)

6.6.2. **Bat Weight Restrictions:**

6.6.2.1. **12U and under** | No bat weight restrictions

6.6.2.2. **14U** | Bats must be drop -5 (or heavier), or BBCOR.

6.6.2.3. **16U** | Bats must be drop -3 (or heavier), or BBCOR

6.6.3. Players wearing a cast may not participate during games or practice. Players must remain in the dugout during play or drills.

6.6.4. Catchers must wear a cup

6.6.5. **09U and up** | Catchers must use a Catcher's mitt

6.6.6. No equipment that can be construed to provide a mechanical advantage may be used in games.

6.6.6.1. If this determination is made on the field, the offending equipment must be immediately removed, but otherwise no penalty is assessed and play continues.

VERSION HISTORY

1.0 - Approved on Dec 10, 2025 by the RCDS Board and in collaboration with Caddo Mills and Community board members. This is the initial rules document for RCDS.