QUICK REFERENCE: THUNDERBOLTS DIVISION

Softball · 8U · Girls

A summary for game day. The full Thunderbolts rulebook governs if anything differs.

The Game

- **Field:** 50-ft bases. Outfielders at least 10 ft behind the baselines.
- **Length:** 5 innings or 1:45. No new inning after 1:30.
- **5-run limit** every inning. Last inning: a losing home team may only score enough to tie.
- No standings and no forfeits. If a team is short, coaches agree on rosters so the game is played.
- **No** bunting, leading, stealing, dropped third strike or infield fly rule.
- Official ball: 10" yellow safety softball provided by 78.

Pitching & Batting

- A coach from the batting team pitches **underhand** from at least 15 ft, kneeling or standing.
- No balls or strikes. 3 swinging strikes is an out.
- 8 pitches per batter. No hit after 8: batter sits, **no out**. Fouls with 2 strikes and fouls after the 7th pitch don't count.
- Hit by pitch: no-pitch, doesn't count, no base.
- Ball hits the coach-pitcher: dead ball, batter gets a single, runners move up one base.
- Everyone bats in order. Late arrivals go to the bottom. Batting out of turn is an out.
- Thrown bat: one warning, then out.

Defense

- 10 players: 8 positions plus 2 extra outfielders. A coach catches. The fielding pitcher stands next to the coach-pitcher.
- Coach-catcher never blocks the plate and makes a real play at home.
- Every player plays the field at least 1 of the first 2 innings and 2 of the first 4.
- Ball hits the outfield coach: dead ball, batter gets a double.

Dead Ball & Bases

- Play ends once an infielder has control after a play at a base, or a throw from the outfield (not to a base) crosses the baselines.
- Runners past halfway when the throw crosses get that base. Otherwise they go back. Head coaches make the call.
- Out-of-play line 10 ft from third. Overthrow at first is dead, no extra base. Overthrow past the third base line: all runners +1.
- Head-first slides are an out (except diving back). Slide or avoid contact at every base but first.

Officiating & Game Day

- **No umpires.** The two head coaches run and officiate the game together and should be treated with respect at all times.
- **Before the game:** head coaches review the ground rules, check the field for glass and hazards, check uniforms (hat, jersey tucked, shoes tied), and clear spectators from in-play areas.
- **After the game:** Stanley Cup handshake line, clean the dugouts and leave promptly. Store equipment properly.
- Max 4 coaches per team on the field: offense = coach-pitcher, first and third base, bench. Defense = coach-catcher, one outfield coach, bench. Coaches may not touch or carry players.
- Ejections: both head coaches agree, or the Commissioner decides.
- Helmets for batters and runners. AED and an AED-certified coach at every game.