



2024 Southfour Fast Pitch Coaches Manual

Dear Coaches,

The Southfour Fast Pitch organization extends a warm and heartfelt thank you to all of you dedicated individuals who have graciously volunteered to coach our softball teams for the 2024 season. Your commitment to the development and success of our young athletes is truly commendable, and we are immensely grateful for your willingness to share your time, expertise, and passion for the game. We want to extend a warm welcome to both returning coaches and those joining us for the first time. Your invaluable contributions are integral to the growth and prosperity of our program, and we look forward to an inspiring season filled with teamwork, sportsmanship, and unforgettable memories. Welcome aboard, coaches!

Coaching Requirements - Calgary Minor Softball Association (CMSA)

Coaches will be reimbursed by Southfour for any costs pertaining to the required courses below. Please email receipt of payment to Southfoursoftballassoc@gmail.com.

Foundations of Coaching Softball

- <https://softball.ca/onlinelearning/foundations>
- All Head Coaches and Assistant Coaches are required to take the Foundations of Coaching Softball course. This must be completed by **April 1, 2024**.

Police Checks

- http://calgaryminorsoftball.com/page.php?page_id=74023
- Please see the attached Police Check policy from CMSA at the end of this manual, this document contains important information regarding the application process.



- If your Police Check has expired or if you are a new coach, you will need to obtain one. As soon as you receive your roster, please request your voucher from CMSA and inform them of your role on the team. You must apply online within 2 weeks of receiving your voucher. Once your application has been completed, please share this information directly with CMSA.
- This must be completed by **April 1, 2024**.

Respect in Sport (RIS):

- http://calgaryminorsoftball.com/page.php?page_id=94107
- RIS Certification is required by ALL coaches and managers listed on the player roster. The course MUST be completed prior to April 1st of the current year.

Making Ethical Decisions Course

- <https://albertasport.ca/coaching/nccp-multi-sport-module-calendar/All>
- CMSA recommends that all coaches take the Making Ethical Decisions course but it is not a requirement.
- This course is a requirement for any coaches whose team is playing in Provincials.

Southfour Coaches Code of Conduct (please review)

- <https://Southfoursoftball.ca/coaches-code-of-conduct/>

CMSA Coach Category Meetings

- http://calgaryminorsoftball.com/page.php?page_id=37060
- There must be a team Representative (Head Coach &/or Assistant Coach) in attendance.
- Location: Crossroad Community Association - 1803 - 14 Avenue NE
- Time: See schedule at the end of this document



2024 Season Key Dates

- Season Start for ALL Teams - Friday, April 26th.
- Division 3 (U13, U15, U17) & U9-U11 - City Championship End Date - Sunday, June 23rd
- Division 2 (U13, U15, U17) - City Championship End Date - Sunday, July 7th
- Division 1 (U13, U15, U17) - City Championship End Date - Sunday, July 21st

CMSSA Opening Tournament

- All teams are automatically registered for the CMSSA Opening Tournament
- Dates: Friday April 26th through Sunday April 28th
- Tournament schedule TBD - The most up-to-date Game Schedule can be found on the [Calgary Minor Softball Website](#).

Regular Season Games

- Regular Season Games start the week of April 29th.
- Your team will play 2 games per week - See schedule at the end of this manual.
- The most up-to-date Game Schedule can be found on the [Calgary Minor Softball Website](#).
 - *Please check the schedule frequently for schedule changes
- We recommend emailing Calgary Minor Softball for their coach contact list for your division you will need this to coordinate make-up games and other logistics with opposing coaches.

Additional Tournaments

- There are numerous tournaments across the province that your team can register in.
- You are not required to register your team in additional tournaments; however they are a great opportunity for your players.
- Softball Alberta Tournament List:
<https://www.softballalberta.ca/tournaments/listings/>
- Tournaments fill up early, we recommend booking tournaments ASAP.
- Southfour does not cover the cost of tournament entry, which is why we suggest fundraising or a parent cash call (see below).

Provincials

- <https://www.softballalberta.ca/championships/provincials/>
- Anyone can register a team for provincials however rosters need to be submitted quite early to Softball Alberta.
- If you plan to take your team to Provincials, aim to submit rosters by June 1st.
- If you are coaching in an age group with more than one Southfour team, you may combine teams to make one provincial roster.

Practice Recommendation

- As soon as you get your rosters, you will want to contact your team and start getting practices going.
- You are responsible for setting your practice schedule but must hold a minimum of 1 practice per week.
- Please contact our diamond coordinator when setting your practice schedule to make sure we have a diamond available for your practices.

Practice Planning Resources

- o Learn To Play (U7 Timbits) & U9 Manual
 - <https://softball.ca/resources/timbitsmanual>
- o Softball Canada Practice Planning Resources (U13, U15, HS)
 - <https://softball.ca/resources/coachesguides>
 - We recommend U11 coaches follow the U13 resources
- o Other Coaching Resources:
 - http://calgaryminorsoftball.com/page.php?page_id=37061
- o Instagram Accounts with Awesome Softball Drills & Content
 - <https://www.instagram.com/megremsoftball/>
 - <https://www.instagram.com/grindtimesoftball/>
 - <https://www.instagram.com/highlevelthrowinght/>
 - <https://www.instagram.com/mikelcandrea/>
 - <https://www.instagram.com/reagainz1/>

Pitching Practice

- Southfour is emphasizing the development of our pitchers across all age groups. We firmly believe that instilling consistent pitching mechanics, from U9 through to U17, will not only enhance the performance of our pitchers but also streamline coaching efforts and reduce confusion. This approach ensures that our pitchers and coaches alike can progress smoothly and effectively as they advance through the ranks.
- Below is a link to a series of videos taught by Victoria Kehler (U of C Dinos Assistant Coach). Please utilize these 4 exercises weekly with your pitchers:
 - o [Click here to access the Pitching Training Video Series](#)

Batting Practice

- Many of the Southfour Diamonds have a catapult-style pitching machine available for your use, located in the green equipment bins.
- If you need assistance with using the pitching machine, a Southfour board member would be happy to show you how.
- If your practice diamond does not have a pitching machine and you would like to use one for a practice, contact Equipment Coordinator Terry Hamm at terryhamm47@gmail.com to make arrangements.
- There are some excellent batting cage facilities in the city and surrounding area with pitching machines and batting cages:
 - The Cage - Shouldice Athletic Park
 - Hitz Sports Centre - Okotoks
 - Note: Southfour does not cover the cost to use these facilities.

Diamonds:

◦ Home Diamond

- Each team will be designated a home diamond for home games and a practice diamond for practices (usually they are the same field but not always).
- You will be notified of your home diamond at the time that you are given your roster.

◦ Diamond Prep

- You will be responsible for preparing the diamond prior to games (which is why we suggest finding a parent volunteer for this task).
- Field Prep includes raking the infield shale, setting up home plate, pitchers' rubber and bases, chalking baselines, maintaining the batters box and mound.



o Storage Bins

- All necessary field maintenance equipment will be in the large green storage bin located at the diamond.
- Coaches will be provided a key for the storage bins. Please make sure they are locked when you leave the diamond.

o Porta-Potties

- Southfour will coordinate the delivery of porta-potties to each diamond.
- Contact Southfour with any issues pertaining to the porta-potties.

o Diamond Issues

- If you encounter any schedule conflicts with your diamond, or other diamond issues or concerns (such as scheduling a make-up game) contact our Diamond Coordinator.

Team Communications

- Please send a welcome email to your team as soon as you are provided with your team roster.
- Communication with parents is key, so be sure to keep communication channels open throughout the season.
- It is recommended that you use an app such as Team Snap or Ramp to communicate with parents and players.

Parent Volunteer Roles

At the start of the season, please get a parent to volunteer for each of the following roles:

o Score Keepers

- This parent will keep score during the games
- They are also responsible for submitting scores to Calgary Minor Softball the same day of the game.
- We also request scores be submitted to Southfour each game day at: Southfoursoftballassoc@gmail.com

o Bench Coordinator

- Especially with younger age groups, it's helpful to have a parent organize players on the bench, making sure players know who's up to bat next, keeping the kids focussed, etc.
- It is a league requirement to have a female on the bench (either a female coach or female parent acting as the Bench Coordinator or Score Keeper)

o Parent Umpires

- Every team will need one or two parent umpire volunteers as umpires are not provided at all age levels and all divisions as there is a shortage of umps.

o Field preparation

- raking shale, chalking baselines, setting up bases, pitching rubber and plate

o Social Media Parent

- Southfour is focussing on social media content this year to grow the Southfour community.
- We need a parent (or two) from each team to take photos and videos at each game or practice and submit them to our Social Media team.
- We'll be giving the social media parent a few assignments during the season (eg. Interview players, interview coaches etc.)

Online Posting of Photos or Videos

- Parents must complete a permission form indicating their consent (or refusal) for their child to appear in promotional and social media content.
- Should any parents opt out of having their child featured in photos or videos, their decision will be fully respected by the Social Media Parent Volunteer and our Southfour Social Media Team.
- Only players whose parents have granted permission will be showcased in our posts.



- Southfour will be sending out a Social Media Authorization Form to parents of all registered players.

Fundraising Events

- o Southfour Bottle Drive
 - We will be having a Bottle Drive raising funds for Southfour as an organization.
 - All teams will be expected to take part.
 - Date, Time & Location: TBD
- o Southfour Pub Night Fund Raiser
 - The Point Public House - 2515 90 Ave SW #187, Calgary, AB- May 4th 4:00 pm
 - Silent Auction
 - Draw for Southfour 50/50
- o Fundraising for Your Team
 - We ask that you do not schedule a bottle drive fundraiser for your individual team until after the date of the Southfour club-wide bottle drive event.
 - Southfour encourages you to host fundraisers for your individual team to help cover the cost of:
 - Any team swag your team wants (eg. Hoodies, water bottles, etc.)
 - Tournament entry fees and travel expenses
 - Trips to the batting cage or other baseball/softball facilities
 - Year-end team BBQ or other team building events.
 - It is not mandatory for your team to host additional fundraising events.
 - Team Fundraising Ideas:
 - Team Bottle Drive
 - Coco Brooks Pizza Sales
 - Cookie Dough Sales
 - Spolumbos Sales
 - Help hosting a tournament etc.

o Team Cash Calls

- You may wish to consider a team cash call from parents to help with individual team costs mentioned above.
- We suggest recruiting a parent volunteer to organize this for your team.
- It is not mandatory for your team to have a cash call.

Equipment

o Equipment Bag

- Your team will be provided with an equipment bag complete with:
 - Catcher's gear, Bats, Balls (practice balls and game balls), Helmets, First Aid Kits, Practice Pylons, Etc.
- You will be notified of the date and location of equipment bag pick-up.
- If you have any equipment issues or needs, please contact the Southfour Equipment Coordinator, Terry Hamm at: terryhamm47@gmail.com

o Face Masks

- Starting in 2024, Southfour is making it mandatory that All Players playing in the infield must wear a facemask (not a covid mask but a protective face mask). Face masks are optional for players in the outfield.

o Helmets

- All players are required to wear a batting helmet with a chin strap and cage when coming up to bat & running the bases. This is also required for any batting practice involving live pitching or a pitching machine. Each equipment bag will contain some helmets; however, players are encouraged to buy their own batting helmet.

o Bats

- Information on acceptable bats is available here: (please make sure your players are using an approved bat)
http://calgaryminorsoftball.com/page.php?page_id=37583
- Each team will be provided with some bats. Many players (especially at older levels) will want to have their own bat, but this is not required.



o Cleats

- Players are encouraged to wear cleats, or at least athletic running shoes for all games and practices. No sandals or flip flops or non-athletic shoes permitted during games or practices.
- Metal cleats are not permitted at any age level.

o Jerseys

- Southfour will be getting new jerseys this year at all levels. (Learn To Play/ Timbits players will receive a t-shirt).
- Southfour will notify you when and where to pick up your team's jerseys.
- All parents will be required to pay a \$75 uniform deposit at the start of the season. This deposit will be returned to parents once the uniform is returned in tact and fully cleaned. Coaches will be provided with a spreadsheet to track who has which jersey and if/when it was returned.

o Other Gear

- All players will be required to provide their own glove, ball pants, socks, footwear, mask, sliding shorts and jill.
- For safety, all players are required to wear a jill.
- Play It Again Sports offers a discount for Southfour members. There is a location in West Hills and Shawnessy.

Weather: Rain/Snow, Smoke & Heat

- Please Review CMS's Weather Policy.
- Please Review CMS's Air Quality Policy.
- Please Review CMS's Heat Policy.
- Use and encourage common sense when it comes to proper hydration, sun exposure, sunscreen, and cold exposure.

Team Photos

- Dates and location: May 11th, Willow Park Community Association
- We will notify you of your team photo appointment time.



Score Keeping & Submissions

- Your team will be provided with a scorebook and roster sheets. Please assign a parent to keep score during each game (home or away).
- Calgary Minor Softball requires the game scores to be submitted by email within a few hours of each game. You will be provided with more information on this during the CMS Coach Category Meeting (See above). Make sure your score keeper parent volunteers are submitting the scores promptly following the conclusion of each game.
- Please include (CC) Southfour on these emails Southfoursoftballassoc@gmail.com so that we can update our website and social media with weekly scores.

Umpires

- The home team is responsible for providing an umpire.
- Due to a city-wide umpire shortage, Calgary Minor Softball cannot provide all age groups and divisions with an umpire. In previous years, only Div One teams, and some Div Two teams were assigned umpires during regular season with priority given to older teams (U15 and above).
- Plan to always have a parent ump available for every home game. Especially U13 and under.
- How to schedule an umpire: umpirerequest@calgaryminorsoftball.com
- We need more umpires - if anyone you know is interested in becoming an umpire, here is a link to umpire clinics: <https://Southfoursoftball.ca/umpire-clinics/>

Southfour Merch

- Check out the [Southfour Shop](#) for your team's Southfour swag.
- Team merchandise purchases are available but completely optional.



- **Important Contact Information**

- Southfour Board: Southfoursoftballassoc@gmail.com
- Diamond Coordinator: *To Be Determined*
- Equipment Coordinator: Terry Hamm - terryhamm47@gmail.com
- Umpire Inquiries: umpirerequest@calgaryminorsoftball.com
- Calgary Minor Softball: fastpitch@calgaryminorsoftball.com
- Social Media Manager: Simmy Hyshka - lipsman_simmy@hotmail.com

Useful Links & Resources

- Southfour Softball - <https://Southfoursoftball.ca/>
- Softball Canada - <https://softball.ca/>
- Calgary Minor Softball - <http://calgaryminorsoftball.com/>
- Softball Canada - <https://softball.ca/>
- Softball Rules - <https://softball.ca/resources/2022rulebook>
- Alberta Softball Tournaments:
<https://www.softballalberta.ca/tournaments/listings/>
- Team Snap: <https://www.teamsnap.com/>
- Ramp: <https://www.rampinteractive.com/>



2024 COACH CATEGORY MEETINGS

There must be a team Representative (Head Coach and/or Assistant Coach) in attendance.

Crossroad Community Association
1803 – 14 Avenue NE

U9 Coaches

Monday, April 22
6:00 - 7:30 pm

U11 Coaches

Monday, April 22
7:45 pm – 9:00 pm

U13 Coaches

Tuesday, April 23
6:00 pm – 7:30 pm

U15 Coaches

Tuesday, April 23
7:45 pm – 9:00 pm

High School Coaches

Wednesday, April 24
6:30 pm – 8:30 pm



2024 AGE GROUPS

Minor division softball is organized into the following age categories (ages are based on the player's age as of January 1 in the year in which the season is played)

<u>Category</u>	<u>Year of Birth</u>	<u>Game Nights</u>
Timbits U7	2017, 2018, 2019	<i>Determined by District</i>
U9 Modified	2015, 2016	Monday & Wednesday
U11	2013, 2014	Tuesday & Thursday
U13	2011, 2012	Monday & Wednesday
U15	2009, 2010	Tuesday & Thursday
U17 High School	2007, 2008	Monday & Wednesday
U19 High School	2005, 2006	Monday & Wednesday

U7	Timbits		
U9	30' pitching distance	6 player team	11 inch ball
U11	35' pitching distance	9 player team	11 inch ball
U13	38' pitching distance		11 inch ball
U15	40' pitching distance		12 inch ball
U17	43' pitching distance		12 inch ball
U19	43' pitching distance		12 inch ball

Commonly Referenced Rules

9.4 Age categories as of January 1 of the current year, baselines, and pitching distances.

Category	Ball	Pitching Distance		Diamond Layout	
		Male	Female	Base- Lines	Diagonal
U9 Modified	11" Indoor ball	30' (9.1m)	30' (9.1 m)	45' (13.7 m)	25ft passed each base
U11	11"	35' (10.6m)	35' (10 m)	45' (16.7 m)	63'8" (16.76 m)
U13	11"	38' (12.2m)	38' (11.6 m)	55' (18.3 m)	77'9" (18.29.5 m)
U15	12"	42' (12.8m)	40' (12.2 m)	60' (18.3 m)	84'10" (25.5 m)
U17 HS	12"	46' (14.0 m)	43' (12.2 m)	60' (18.3 m)	84'10" (25.5 m)
U19 HS	12"	46' (14.0 m)	43' (12.2 m)	60' (18.3 m)	84'10" (25.5 m)

* Per Softball Alberta Operating Rules

Note: Teams playing up a category will use the pitching distances and baselines of the higher category. Example - U13 teams that move up to U15 will be required to use the 12" ball.

9.7 Pitching Specific Rules

U9, U11, U13 & U15 categories Pitchers may pitch a maximum of:

Category	Innings Pitched / Game
U9	3
U11	3
U13	4
U15	4
High School	N/A

Should a pitcher throw one (1) pitch (excluding warm-up pitches), this is classified as a complete inning pitched. In the event of extra innings, the pitching rule is not in effect. The penalty for pitcher(s) exceeding the limit of innings pitched is that the coach is ejected; player(s) is removed from pitching position.

Run Per Inning / Open Inning

Category	Division	Runs / Inning Limit	Open Inning
U9	All	4	None
U11	All	4	None
U13	Div. 1	4	Final Inning Capped @ 10 runs
U13	Div. 2	4	None
U13	Div. 3	4	None
U15	Div. 1	N/A	All
U15	Div. 2	4	Final Inning – Capped @ 10 runs
U15	Div. 3	4	None
High School	Div. 1	N/A	All
High School	Div. 2	4	Final Inning Capped @ 10 runs
High School	Div. 3	4	None