



Team Formation Policy — 6U and 8U

OVERVIEW

The method of forming teams is always one which generates many different opinions. There are many different methods to choose from, which each optimize different parameters. Mountain View – Los Altos Girls Softball strives to create teams in a fashion that supports our core principles and objectives for developing girls as strong, confident members of the community through the sport of fast pitch softball.

Our divisions are age-based with a cut-off date of January 1, as defined by our national governing organization, the Amateur Softball Association. We believe this model gives players an opportunity for development through stretching in both years in a given age division — the first year, stretching to learn the new rules and skills of that division; the second year, stretching to develop leadership skills on the team by helping younger players on the team. In both years, we encourage the development of teamwork skills and adapting to the diversity of their teammates, who may come from different schools and backgrounds.

PRINCIPLES

At the divisions of 6U and 8U players, our goal is to provide a fun, safe, and comfortable environment for the players. While this is our main goal, it is not our exclusive goal and we do consider these factors to be important:

- Players should play with their schoolmates. If a school has more than one team's worth of players, we will split the group onto two teams, so that a couple of girls are not left out of their school's team.
- Players should play with their buddies, unless that buddy situation will disadvantage other players. For example, a buddy situation may not be honored if it would bump another player from their school-based team. And we will look out for unintended consequences, such as if two players from different schools buddy and both expect to be on their school's team.
- All teams deserve to have willing and capable staff. We may split up a school to ensure that all teams in the division have coaches and managers.
- Teams should have some measure of age-balance. Divisions encompass only a 2-year range of ages, and we will try to balance the number of older girls vs. the number of younger girls on a team to the extent possible. Note that this does not correlate to grades, since the lowest grade players on a team are the oldest of their grade and the highest grade are the youngest of their grade.

PROCESS

- For 6U, the ideal team size is 9 players although teams of other sizes may be formed if necessary.
- For 8U the ideal team size is 13 players although teams of other sizes may be formed if necessary.
- Keep together buddies from the same school who submit a properly-executed Buddy Form by the deadline.



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- Keep all girls in the division from the same school on their school team(s), provided that the parents of the girls on the team include key Team Staffers like a Manager, Head Coach and an Assistant Coach. If no such volunteers can be found, then the team may need to be split up onto other teams that have Team Staff volunteers. MVLAGE tries to avoid this by recruiting Team Staff volunteers from among the parents on the team, which is usually, but not always, possible.
- If there is still room on the team after all girls from that school are added to it, any non-school buddies are added to the team. In no event will a girl who goes to a school and registered during the guaranteed registration period; be bumped from her school team(s) in order to allow a buddy from a different school to play on that team. In such cases, the buddy pair will be placed on the school team that has room without bumping anyone. If there isn't room on either buddies' school team, then the pair may be placed on a different school's team but this isn't done without checking with the two families to ensure that this really is their preference.
- In cases where a school has too many players in a single division to form just one team, then the players are divided up on to two or more teams. When this happens, team staff volunteers are divided up, as are the older and younger girls, with the goal of having two relatively equal teams. Buddy pairs from the same school are of course still kept together and if possible, girls from the same grade will be kept together with at least some of their other 'grade mates'.
- In cases where a school does not have enough players to make up a full team, then those players are combined with other schools in the same situation, to form a mixed school team. In choosing which schools to combine, creating a viable Team Staff and proximity of the schools are two factors that are taken into consideration.
- After the teams are finalized in mid-February, the Managers receive their rosters and are able to notify their players and coaching staff about their team placement. The team then gets together for the first time at Team Meeting Night in mid-February to name their team, allocate the other parent volunteer roles and get to know each other ahead of the first practice.