



MVLAGS Play-Up / Play-Down Policy

MVLAGS ('the League') recreational teams are organized into age divisions aligned with the policies of the Amateur Softball Association (ASA), the national organization which governs our league. Each age division spans two years. Players must register for the division that corresponds to their birth year and provide proof of age in the form of a birth certificate or passport copy if registering for the first time.

This two year divisional structure allows girls to learn new skills and stretch themselves in their first year in a new division and then gain confidence and leadership skill during their second year in a division. This is at the heart of the League's philosophy to develop the 'whole girl' as well as good softball players.

Based upon many years of experience, we are confident your daughter (and you as you interact with other parents on the team) will thoroughly enjoy your softball experience in her correct age division. We also offer a variety of skills clinics, including one specifically for first-year softball players ahead of the first team practices to help new players feel comfortable and other specialized clinics for more advanced players. Teams in the lower division are school-based so girls get an opportunity to play with friends or make new friends from their school. Teams in the upper divisions are no longer school-based, but skills-based in order to have balanced teams within each division. Girls have the opportunity to play with new teammates from various schools and shape new friendships. Teams will have some experienced players and some that haven't played much or at all before.

Playing Up: A player may request to play up to a division higher than her birth year warrants, but this will only be allowed in extreme cases of very high skill.

Playing Down: Requests to play down to an age division lower than a player's birth year warrants typically cannot be accommodated with the exception of those few girls who would normally need to move up to a new division, but are an academic grade lower than the standard grade for girls with the same birth year.

If your daughter meets the criteria, and you would like her to play with her 'grade mates' instead of with girls with the same birth year, please email the Player Agents (agents@mvlags.org) to let us know at the time you register. Proof of grade (in the form of a school record showing current grade) will need to be provided to the registrar. **It is the responsibility of the parent to request this exception. If this doesn't happen, then the player will be placed within the division matching her birth year and cannot be moved down retroactively.** Please note, this option DOES NOT APPLY TO NOVA (MVLAGS competitive summer & fall travel teams) because the national ASA rules for travel ball do not allow playing down. For this reason, any player who opts to take this exception during rec ball, will be at a serious disadvantage when trying out alongside girls who played in their correct age division for the spring rec season.

Divisional Balancing at the League's Discretion

In a perfect world, the exact number of girls would register to form an even number of teams each with the desired number of players. Unfortunately this will not always happen. For that reason, it is possible that the League may need to ask a few players to play up or down in order to create an even number of teams with an appropriate number of players in each division. In those cases, which always require Executive Board approval, certain players are given the option to move up or down. Candidates for this are chosen based solely on their relative skill level and age/grade level within their division using the data gained during registration, player evaluations and from the prior year coach evaluations if available. The parents of players identified as candidates to move up or down will be contacted by the League and have the option to accept or decline this invitation.