

Tyler High School

Lady Lions Softball Handbook 2026



Tyler High School Softball Handbook

Head Coach: Jackie Jessup Assistants: Morgan Norwood & Shuna Mast-Johnson

Welcome to Tyler High Softball Program! As we kick off this season, we are excited to continue building the culture, standards, and traditions that will define the Lady Lions Softball Program for years to come. Together, we will establish a foundation built on hard work, accountability, pride, and a commitment to excellence—on and off the field. Here’s to a season of growth, teamwork, and unforgettable moments. Go Lady Lions!

Program Goals:

- Grow softball skill set and grow character
- Establish and set in motion a new culture for this program
- Stay committed to setting the foundation of this program
- WIN SOME GAMES!
- HAVE SOME FUN!

Program Motto:

“Even If”

Being a member of the Lady Lion Softball program means committing to the ***“Even If”*** mindset.

Even if we’re having a hard day, we give everything we have for the person next to us.

Even if a practice doesn’t go our way, we show up the next day ready to work.

Even if we don’t get the at-bat we wanted, we cheer louder for the teammate beside us.

“Even If”...keep going!

We are looking forward to new beginnings for the Tyler High softball program. We press toward the goal that is set before us. We will persevere. Being a Lady Lion Softball player means being disciplined, resilient, and willing to get back up every single time we get knocked down.

At the end of the day, life won’t always go the way we want—but we will keep fighting, keep pushing, and keep going, ***“Even If”!***

Vision & Core Values:

- **Leadership-** the ability to guide and influence a group of people, or an organization, to achieve a goal
- **Academics-** our players are student athletes, they will be expected to take their studies seriously
- **Discipline-** the self control that is gained by requiring that rules or orders be obeyed, and the ability to keep working at something that is difficult

- Yearning- deeply desiring to get better every day
- Loyal- committing to the family dynamic of this teams culture, and having the back of your teammate on and off of the field
- Integrity- doing what is expected of you when even when no one is looking
- Optimistic- being positive even when the outcome doesn't go the way that you wanted
- Never give up- being committed to giving your all no matter your feelings or circumstances
- Selfless- putting your teammates needs and feeling before your own

Coaching Philosophy:

After 15+ years of playing softball, including 4 years at the Division 1 level, Coach Jessup has played under and learned from some of the top coaches in the Nation. From each of them, Coach Jessup has taken the lessons, standards, and values that shaped her into the athlete and person that she is today. Those principles are the foundation of how she will act and lead this program.

Lady Lions coaching staff will hold our players accountable to the standards we set as a team. We will always love and support our athletes regardless of performance; however, disrespect and lack of effort will not be accepted. We ask that the girls trust our leadership and coaching, knowing that everything we do is with an “even if” and a champion mindset.

We understand that every athlete comes in at a different skill level, and we will meet each player where they are. Skill development is a process—but attitude and effort are choices. Those are the two things we expect to be consistently excellent.

We commit to show up for these girls every single day—on and off the field. We view a softball team as a family. Families hold each other accountable, communicate honestly, and challenge one another to grow. They support, encourage, and push each other to be their very best.

As a staff, we will give 100% effort, energy, and preparation to make these girls better athletes and better people. We expect the same commitment from them. We will coach with consistency, honesty, and clarity. We will never degrade a player, but will always be truthful about what needs improvement, and will always commit to helping them find a path forward.

More than anything, Coach Jessup's heart is for these girls to leave the Lady Lion Softball Program with growth in character. Softball shaped Coach Jessup into a better daughter, friend, teammate, and follower of Christ. The game taught her discipline, resilience, and responsibility—and she wants to give back to the sport that gave so much to her.

We will work together. We will grow together. We are in this together. We are family.

Expectations of Players:

As members of the Lady Lions Softball Program, athletes play a crucial role in upholding the standards, culture, and expectations of our team. These guidelines are designed to ensure that players, coaches, and teammates work together toward a positive, disciplined, and successful season.

- **Committed to the success of the entire program and season**, which means being aware of their actions and character around campus, showing up to every practice, weight room session, and game, and representing Tyler High with pride.
- **A Lady Lion carries themselves with dignity, respect, and integrity** both on and off the softball field. They uphold high standards—demonstrating kindness, confidence, discipline, and class in everything they do.
- **Being a part of the Lady Lion Softball Program is a privilege** that is earned every single day. Athletes that have been selected to participate on this team, are expected to be fully committed to the success of this team even if they may have to sacrifice something else.
- **Every player is expected to be enrolled in the Lady Lions Softball messaging platform - SportsYou**, and acknowledge (by liking) every message sent to the team regarding practice, weights, and game information.
- **Lady Lions are expected to be on time** by being dressed and ready to play by the given time – If late, there will be consequences
- **Every player is expected to stay** until dismissed by the Coach
- All athletes are **required to follow school rules** at all times.
- **Each athlete represents the Lady Lions Softball Program-** Drinking, drugs, vaping, inappropriate behavior, or disrespecting adults/authority will **NOT** be tolerated. There will be severe consequences for those who violate.
- **Grades and attendance** are expected to be taken care of during each class. Each athlete is expected to be in class, and keep their grades above passing at **ALL** times. Those caught skipping class will have severe consequences. Those failing will be not eligible for play.
- **If missing school & practice for sickness, injury, or family circumstances** it is expected that this information is **reported immediately** to a coach via SportsYou.
- **Players must communicate injuries** with coaches and trainers immediately. Once a player is “injured” they are required to see the trainer daily until the athlete is able to return to play.

- **“Injuries” can only be labeled by trainers or licensed physician.** *Athletes will not self diagnose injuries or sickness.* If you are injured, treatment is non-negotiable and documentation will be requested for our records.
- **The locker room must be kept clean and tidy at all times.** Your assigned locker is where you will be able to keep your things.
- **Inappropriate behavior in the locker room is unacceptable.**
- **Cell phones are not allowed in the locker room.** If a student needs to make a call, they will be allowed to use a phone in the coach’s office.
- **Headphones/earbuds are not allowed** in the locker room or at practice.
- **Athletes are expected to wear their assigned practice attire** during every practice. Failure to dress out in the appropriate attire will result in consequences.
- **Athletes are expected to keep up with their assigned athletic attire and gear.** Losing any attire or equipment given by Tyler High softball program will result in consequences.
- **Equipment is meant to be handled with care and respect.** Equipment for games and practice will be carried to and from practice by the players. NO coaches will be carrying any equipment.
- **Behavior on social media is expected to follow school guidelines.** Any inappropriate posts will result in consequences.
- If any athlete disrespects a coach/teacher/authority figure, they will be removed from the team immediately.

Parents Guidelines:

As members of the Lady Lions Softball program, parents and guardians play a crucial role in supporting the standards, culture, and expectations of our program. These guidelines are designed to ensure that athletes, coaches, and families work together toward a positive, disciplined, and successful season.

- **Support the program’s standards.** Parents are expected to reinforce the program’s expectations for commitment, character, and conduct. This includes supporting your athlete’s responsibility to attend all practices, weight sessions, games, and team events, and encouraging them to represent Tyler High with pride.
- **Respect the coaches and their decisions.** Coaches make decisions based on what is best for the team and each athlete’s development. Parents should refrain from confronting coaches before, during, or immediately after games or practices. If concerns

arise, please request a meeting at an appropriate time. Playing time, lineups, and team strategy are not negotiable topics.

- **Encourage accountability.** Parents should encourage athletes to communicate directly with coaches through SportsYou regarding absences, injuries, or concerns. Promoting independence and responsibility is a core value of the program.
- **Support attendance and academic expectations.** Reinforce your athlete's responsibility to maintain good grades, attend class, and meet school expectations. Parents should ensure that athletes arrive on time, prepared, and ready for practice, weights, and games.
- **Promote healthy choices and conduct.** Parents are expected to support the program's zero-tolerance policy regarding drugs, alcohol, vaping, disrespectful behavior, and inappropriate conduct. Help reinforce the understanding that participation in Lady Lions Softball is a privilege that must be earned daily.
- **Communicate appropriately.** Parents should use respectful communication when interacting with coaches, staff, other parents, and athletes. Drama, gossip, or negativity—whether in person or on social media—undermines the team's culture and will not be tolerated.
- **Model good sportsmanship.** Parents are expected to demonstrate the same dignity, integrity, and respect that we expect from our athletes. This includes positive support during games, refraining from negative comments, and respecting officials, coaches, and players on both teams.
- **Follow game-day expectations.** Parents should refrain from entering the dugout, locker room, or team areas during practices and games unless asked by a coach. Please avoid coaching your child from the stands, as it can interfere with the coaching staff's instruction.
- **Trust the process.** Athlete development takes time and consistency. Please trust that coaches are training your athlete with purpose, safety, and long-term growth in mind. Encourage patience, perseverance, and commitment from your child.
- **Parents should help reinforce** proper use of cell phones and technology, respect for equipment and facilities, dress code and team standards, cleanliness, organization, and responsibility.
- **Uphold social media expectations.** Parents are encouraged to monitor their athlete's social media use and ensure they align with school and program expectations. Parents should also act responsibly on their own social media platforms when referencing the Tyler High Softball program and team.

- **Support consequences.** If an athlete violates team expectations or school rules, coaches will administer consequences consistently. We ask that parents support the disciplinary plan to maintain the integrity and success of the program.

Coaches Contact:

Head Coach: Jackie Jessup | jackie.jessup@tylerisd.org

Assistant Coach: Morgan Norwood | morgan.norwood@tylerisd.org

Assistant Coach: Shuna Mast-Johnson | shuna.mast@tylerisd.org

“A new direction, a brand-new day, where grit and pride light up our way.

We rise together, strong and true — a tougher team, a spirit renewed.

The field is ours, the future bright; we play with heart, we fight with might.

Lady Lions, bold and driven—a new era starts, and we are risen”.

-Tyler High Softball 2025
