

2023 Softball AA, Rookie leagues (8U)

The Universal Rules apply to this league. The rules outlined in this document apply only to the Rookie Girls (U8) Softball League and are intended to supplement the Universal Rules for this level of play. If there is a contradiction between the two documents, this document shall take precedence.

General Rules:

1. Maximum Player Age: 8 years as of 1/1/23
2. No metal spikes.
3. Ball: 11 inch low seam softball - Hi-Visibility Softball preferred.
4. Batting Tee: Not used
5. No jewelry may be worn.
6. Helmets must be worn at all times by the batting team when on the field.
7. All teams will adhere to the following playing time requirements. Failure to do so will result in a forfeit.
 - a. All players present at the game must play.
 - b. All players must play equally between the infield and outfield
 - c. No player can play in the infield twice before all other players have played at least once. No player can play the infield three times before all other players have played twice. Catcher IS NOT considered an infield position.
 - d. No player can play the same infield position more than two innings in any one game.
 - e. No player shall sit twice before all other players have sat once.
8. Cheers are allowed but should not be directed at opposing players.
9. Heckling of opposing players is not permitted.
10. Coaches are responsible for good sportsmanship at all times, including players and spectators.

Field:

1. Base Paths: 60 feet.
2. Pitching Rubber: 35 feet from the front of the pitching rubber to the point of Home Plate.

Equipment:

1. Equipment must be in good shape.
2. Uniform: Players will be furnished a uniform based on each league's general policy. Girls must wear this uniform for the games. Uniforms may not be altered as to be different from the rest of the team.
3. Bats: Bats must be official softball bats: wood, metal, graphite, or other material approved by the Little League rules.
4. Catchers Gear: Catchers must wear a protective helmet, catching mask with throat guard, chest protector, and shin guards that will be furnished by the league.

Games:

1. Innings per Game: Standard games consist of 6 innings. Three and one-half (3 ½) innings is considered a full game if the home team is ahead, Four (4) innings if the visiting team is ahead. Score reverts back to the last completed inning for a game called in the middle of the inning. No new inning will begin after 1 hour and 30 minutes.
2. The intent is for all games to complete the number of innings listed in the appropriate league specific rules.
 - a. Coaches are expected to take steps to ensure that the games move quickly (i.e. assist catchers in putting on equipment, limit the amount of gear the catchers remove, and use a pinch runner for the catcher after two outs.
 - b. Organized position changes, etc.
 - c. A coach may stand behind the catcher and help with return of balls to the pitcher.
3. Once an inning is started, it must be completed. Reasons for not completing the prescribed number of innings are limited to:
 - a. Weather – rain, lightning
 - b. Darkness
 - c. Injuries result in either team not having enough players.
4. League Games may finish in a tie. If however, the time has not reached the time limit of 1 hour and 30 minutes, a maximum of two extra innings to determine a winner, may be played. If after the two extra innings the game is still tied, the game is then considered a tie and it is added to the standings as such. Ties are considered a half a win and a half a loss for each team.
5. Injury Substitutions: A player who is injured during the game may be taken out and a substitute put in her place. If, after resting a minimum of one (1) inning, she is able to play again, she may rejoin the game. She must sit out a minimum of one complete inning. For example, a player removed because of injury in the top of the 2nd inning may rejoin the game no sooner than the top of the 3rd inning. A player may not start a game or rejoin a game if she is unable to run the bases or play in the field.

Each team will have 10 players in the game. A team will be allowed to start a game with a minimum of 8 players. In case of injury, a team must have a minimum of 8 players to continue, otherwise game is over. Teams are allowed to substitute as many T-Ball players as needed to field a full team but only one other AA player from the same league per game.

6. Home team will supply the game balls. Umpires are optional.
7. Inning limitations: Three (3) outs or six (6) runs per ½ inning. Exception to the rule is that in the 6th inning or last called inning, there is no run limit.

Batting:

1. Continuous batting order applies. All girls must bat. The batting order cannot be changed after the game starts. Players arriving late may play but must bat at the end of the batting order.
2. A Ball hit over the fence on a fly is a home run. A ball that bounces over the fence, (regardless of being touched by a fielder) is a ground rule double and all runners advance 2 bases.
3. Bunting is NOT allowed
4. Fake bunting (squaring up, and then swinging in full or slashing) is NOT allowed
5. Helmets: Batters and Runners must wear helmets with chin straps while in the field of play.
6. A batter, during her time at bat, may switch to either side of the plate.
7. A batter throwing the bat after striking the ball will first be warned about the situation, as well as warning the coach. Should the same player throw the bat a second time, that player will be called out and all runners will return to their original base.
8. There are no walks. The batter will get 5 (five) pitches from a pitching machine to put the ball in play. A player will not be called out on 3 (three) strikes/swings. The batter is out if they have not put the ball in play after 5 pitches. Bad pitches due to issues with the pitching machine may not be counted if both teams agree that the pitch was outside the normal pitch area
9. A player will not be called out if the fifth pitch or any pitch then after is a foul ball. The batter will continue with the at bat.
10. A hit ball that hits the pitching machine or the ball bucket is considered a single and the play is dead. All runners may advance 1 (one) base and batter gets first base.
11. A hit ball hitting the coach will be considered a dead ball and will not be counted as one of the 5 (five) pitches.

Base Running:

1. Leading Off is **NOT** allowed
2. Base runners will be held to the nearest base once the ball is returned to the infield (inside the base paths). The ball will be considered dead whether under control or not.
3. Overthrows: Runners **ARE NOT** allowed to advance on an overthrow.
4. Players running to first base should use the orange/red safety base.
5. Runners are allowed to deviate no more than 5 (five) feet from the base paths to avoid a tag/force out. Runners have the right of way on the base paths, and will not be called out if having to run around a fielder not involved in the play.
6. If a player is injured while running to a base and is safe, a courtesy runner may be used. That runner will be the player that made the last out or the third out in the previous inning.

Pitching:

1. Pitching machine must be used. The home team is responsible for providing the pitching machine.
2. Pitching machine speed will be set at the slowest speed setting that allows for a flat pitch trajectory. The pitch should not arc higher than the batter's head.
3. The player playing pitcher must stand on either side of the coach within the pitching circle, until the ball is put in play. A player may not play directly behind the coach.

Fielding:

1. Fielders should stay clear of the base paths when not involved in a play. Runners have the right of way and should not be impeded by a fielder not involved in the play.
2. Infield Fly Rule is **NOT USED**
3. All fielders must play their respective positions. Overcrowding of the infield is not allowed. Infielders must play their position within 5 feet of the base path. Outfielders must be within a reasonable position based on the size of the infield. In general, outfielders should be 10 feet behind the infielders or 10 feet behind the base path.
4. Each team will be able to have 1 Offensive coach (Pitching) and 1 Defensive coach on field to assist players (Coaching purpose). Base coaches for the offensive team are needed.
 - a. Coaches will act as umpires as well for calling outs if there is no umpire provided.
 - b. If the home team has supplied 1 or more Umpires, the Defensive coach is allowed on the field, **HOWEVER** Umpires will call all outs.

Interleague Tournament Rules:

1. Rules above apply for Interleague tournament games leading up to the championship game, unless noted differently below:
2. All teams will adhere to the following playing time requirements. Failure to do so will result in a forfeit.
 - a. All players present at the game must play.
 - b. No player shall sit twice before all other players have sat once.
 - c. A player may not sit consecutive innings.
3. Championship tournament games have a time limit of 1 hour and 45 minutes.
 - a. If the game is called due to weather, including sunlight, the score reverts back to the top of the last full inning score when the game is resumed/rescheduled.