



12U Softball Rules

1. Playing Field Dimensions

- a. Distance between bases is 60 feet.
- b. Distance from pitching rubber to home plate is 40 feet.
- c. Pitcher's circle of an 8-foot radius from the front middle of the pitching rubber.

2. Game Duration

- a. A complete game is 6 innings.
- b. There will be no new inning started after 1 hour and 15 minutes.
- c. There will be a maximum 2-minute time limit between innings.
- d. Run Rule
 - i. The game shall be declared over if:
 1. The home team is ahead by 15 runs after 3 innings
 2. The visiting team is ahead by 15 runs after 3 innings
 3. The home team is ahead by 12 runs after 4 innings.
 4. The visiting team is ahead by 12 runs after 4 innings.
 5. The home team is ahead by 8 runs after 5 innings.
 6. The visiting team is ahead by 8 runs after 5 innings.
- e. All ties shall stand and shall be recorded in the standings as ties.

3. Team Participation

- a. Each player shall play in the infield at least once in the first 3 innings.
- b. No player shall sit out 2 innings in a row.
- c. No player shall sit out for the second time until all players have sat out 1 inning.
- d. All players will bat in the lineup. The DP will not be used.
 - i. Teams will maintain the same batting order throughout the game.

4. Pitching

- a. Pitchers are permitted to pitch in no more than 3 innings per game.
- b. The league strongly recommends that the coach consider removing a pitcher that has hit numerous batters and/or displays little to no pitch control during the game.
- c. A player may return to the pitching position on time after being removed, provided she has not exceeded the allowed number of innings.
- d. USA softball rules require the pitcher to do the following:
 - i. Start with both feet in contact with the rubber and both hands apart.
 - ii. Bring the hands together and pause before starting the pitching motion. A backward step may be taken before, simultaneous with or after the hands are brought together.
 - iii. In the act of delivering the ball, take one step with the non-pivot foot simultaneous with the release of the ball. The step must be forward and toward the batter within the 24 inch length of the pitcher's plate.
 - iv. Pushing off with the pivot foot from a place other than the pitcher's plate is illegal
 - v. Note – previously, leaping was considered an illegal pitching motion; leaping became legal in 2022
- e. Coaches are to teach the girls proper technique for pitching. However, in the spirit of focusing the girls efforts on throwing strikes, the umpires have been asked to relax their interpretation of the above rules for all games in the 10U Division.
- f. Any pitch declared "illegal" by the umpire shall be declared a ball with no advancement by runners unless the batter swings and makes contact. If contact is made, the ball is live and runners advance accordingly. If the batter swings and fouls or misses the pitch, a strike

shall be registered and runners may not advance.

- i. Home and visitor scorekeepers should check with each other every half inning to collaborate for accurate counts.

5. Defense

- a. The defensive team will play with 9 defensive players
 - i. 6 infielders and 3 outfielders.
- b. All infielders are highly encouraged to wear facemasks.

6. Batting

- a. Inning Run Limit - The offense shall score no more than 6 runs per inning, but a play may finish.
 - i. Example: If the offense has 5 runs scored already in an inning and there are runners at 1st, 2nd, and 3rd base and the batter hits a triple, all runs will count. When the play ceases, the inning shall be over, and the next inning shall start.
- b. Bunting is allowed and should be taught as a skill of the game.
- c. The infield fly rule does apply.
- d. The dropped 3rd strike rule does apply – A batter may advance to first base on an uncaught third strike if first base is not occupied or if there are 2 outs.

7. Baserunning

- a. Runners must maintain contact with the base until the pitched ball has crossed the plate. If a runner leaves the base early, the umpire may place her back to the starting base.
- b. Stealing is allowed on any count
- c. A walked batter may not advance to/steal second prior to a pitch being thrown.
- d. Courtesy Runner – A courtesy runner may be used at any time for the catcher or pitcher on base. The runner used must be the last recorded out.
- e. Look Back Rule – When the ball is live and the pitcher has possession and control of the ball within the pitcher's circle, a runner who is legitimately off a base after a pitch or as a result of a batter completing a turn at bat may stop once, then must immediately return to the base or attempt to advance to the next base. Stopping a second time or changing direction without an attempted play by the defense will result in the runner being called out.