

10U Rules

1. **Age Limit:** Player must NOT be 11 before January 1, 2023.
2. **Ball:** 11- inch optic yellow USA Fast Pitch softball.
3. **Bat:** Only softball bats may be used. USA fast pitch softball bats.
4. **Shoes:** Rubber cleats or turf shoes only. NO metal cleats.
5. **Scoring:** Score is kept during the regular season and tournament play, Report scores after each game to Carrie Trompke by emailing to: southcentralssoftball@gmail.com.
6. **Helmets:** Batters, on-deck batters, runners, and batboys/girls must wear a helmet with a face mask.
7. **Umpire:** Home teams furnish umpires and game balls. Umpires need to know the rules. Give them copies of the rules for each age group prior to umping.
8. **Outs:** 3 outs per inning.
9. **Safety Base:** All towns must have a safety base at 1st base.
10. **Cancellations:** Notify town coordinators of visiting teams for any games you need to cancel by 2:00 p.m. on game day.
11. **Field:** Bases are 60 feet. Pitchers Circle is 16 feet in diameter around pitchers mound.
Pitchers Mound is at 35 feet.
12. **Length of Game:** Games will be 4 innings long. No new inning should start after 1 hour and 15 minutes into the game. The next inning begins at the time of the third out of prior inning. 7 run rule per inning with each unrecorded out counting as extra runs. 10 runs per inning max.
13. **Ties:** The game may end in a tie.
14. **Playing Time:** Each player must play at least 1 inning defensively.
15. **Number of Players:** Each team shall field 10 players. Each team has to have at least 8 players. Fielding less than 8 players constitutes a forfeit unless other arrangements are made with the opposing coach in advance. If playing with 8 players - every time the 9th player should be up to bat - it is an automatic out.
16. **Number of Infielders:** Defense consists of 6 infielders (pitcher, catcher, 1st base, 2nd base, 3rd base, shortstop between 2nd and 3rd). Infielders must play their positions until the ball is hit. Infielders can play in front or behind the baseline so they don't interfere with base runners.
17. **Number of Outfielders:** The 4 outfielders must play their positions & remain 10 feet behind the baseline until the ball is hit. No sneaking them up right behind any of the bases.
18. **Substitution:** Free substitution or reinsertion into the defensive field is legal
19. **Number of Batters:** A continuous batting order must be followed.
20. **Base Runners:** No stealing. Must stay in contact with the base until the ball has been hit. Leaving the base too soon is a judgement call made by the umpire. If this happens the runner will be called out. No pitch - dead ball - is then called. Base runners CANNOT advance on a throwback or overthrow from the catcher to the pitcher - BUT - CAN advance on hit balls and any other overthrow as in USA Fast Pitch softball. Advancement will stop when the ball is returned to any girl playing in the field (not the pitcher coach) within the 16 foot pitching circle. See attached "Look Back" Rule at the end of the rules and watch the video from the link I included for more information on base runner advancement and stopping of play.

- 21. Pitching Rules:** The umpire will call balls & strikes. The batter either hits or strikes out. There are NO walks. After the 4th called ball by the umpire the coach comes in to pitch until the girl either hits OR strikes out. The strike count continues from player to coach pitch. If a batted ball hits the adult coach that is pitching - it is considered a dead ball and a re-pitch will be honored without the pitch counting against the batter.
- (Example: Staci is pitched to by the player and swings 1 time and misses and the umpire calls a strike. The next 4 pitches are called balls by the umpire. The coach then comes in to pitch because there are NO walks. Staci lets the first pitch go by but the umpire calls strike 2. The coach then pitches a ball so Staci didn't swing at it. The coach pitches the next ball and it is a good one so Staci swings and hits a double).
- 22. Throwing the Bat:** Any player excessively throwing the bat will be warned 1 time. The next offense will result in an automatic out!
- 24. Infield Fly Rule:** There is none.
- 25. Catcher:** Must wear full catcher's gear.
- 26. Pitcher:** The pivot foot must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate at all times prior to the forward step. Pitcher must remain inside the pitching circle until after the ball is hit. Coach must pitch from inside the pitching circle. If a pitcher hits 3 batters in any game, they must be removed from pitching the rest of the game.
- 27. Hit by Pitch:** When a pitched ball, not swung at nor called a strike touches any part of the batter or clothing the batter is awarded first base. It does not matter if the ball strikes the ground first. The batter must attempt to avoid being hit. If no attempt is made to avoid being hit, the batter is not awarded first base. If a pitcher hits 3 batters in any game, they must be removed from pitching the rest of the game.
- 28. Bunting:** Not allowed.
- 29. Sliding:** It is the runner's responsibility to avoid contact at any base & home plate. A fielder may not block the base or plate unless in possession of the ball and making a play. **The runner MUST slide on any close play at 2nd or 3rd base & home plate, or the runner is automatically out. Close play is defined as the defensive playing having the ball and attempting to make a play.**
- 30. Unsportsmanlike Conduct:** Will not be tolerated by players/coaches/fans. After a fair warning by the umpire - anyone can be dismissed from the game or asked to leave the field. If ejected from a game - a mandatory 1 game suspension the following game will be served. They may NOT be present at the game at all.
- 31. Coaches:**
- can help a batter adjust their stance then give them room to hit
 - can instruct their players from their 1st or 3rd base coaching positions (box)
 - will NOT touch a player OR interfere with a play
- 32. Make Up Game:** Rain out games will be rescheduled (teams involved will decide a new date). Make a honest effort to make up games. If a team forfeits it will be recorded as a 1-0 win for the opposing team. If a game was called due to rain and was not an official game at the point it was called - start a new game on a re-scheduled date. If for any reason a team cannot play they must make reasonable efforts to reschedule. It will not be an automatic forfeit. Rules committee has final say on any dispute.
- 33. Time Outs:** 2nd trip to visit the pitcher requires a pitching change.
- 34. Speeding up Play:** To speed up play have someone behind the umpire or the umpire can retrieve passed balls. This person can only touch pitched balls. The coach cannot instruct from behind the plate.
- 35. Protests:** Teams must notify the League Coordinator of any protests within 24 hours of the game.
- 36. Player Availability:** A player can only play on 1 team in the South Central Nebraska Summer Softball League per age group for regular season and tournament play. (Example: If Cambridge has 2 14U teams - Team A and Team B. Staci can only play on Team A and never play for Team B.) However she can play up with their 18U team if they are short players.

What is the “look back” rule?

The look-back rule is triggered when the pitcher has control of the ball in the pitcher's circle and is not attempting to make a play on a runner (including a fake or threatened throw); any runner stopped on a base must stay on the base, and any runner not on a base must immediately either advance toward the next base or return to the previous base. Any subsequent change in direction or stop by the runner while off the base will result in the runner being called out, so long as the pitcher does not attempt to make a play.

Why do we have the rule?

In softball, runners must stay on the bases until the ball is released from the pitcher's hand. The look-back rule forces runners onto a base so the next pitch can be thrown, and provides a means to avoid time-consuming "cat and mouse" games on the base paths that detract from regular play.

Does the pitcher have to look at the runner to trigger the rule?

Interestingly enough, no, the name is a bit of a misnomer, as there is no "look back" requirement in the look back rule. So long as the pitcher has control of the ball in the circle and is not trying to make a play, runners have to advance or return, regardless of whether the pitcher is looking at them.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8BM9ySpj5Mk> shows a video demonstrating the “Look Back” Rule