

# ***12U Softball League***

*Director: Mitch Riesenberger*

# ***12U Softball League Rules***

## **General Rules**

1. For general rules that apply to all leagues, see General League Rules.
2. The 12U League follows the standard ASA rules with the following exceptions.

## **Pitching**

1. Pitchers may pitch a maximum of seven innings per calendar week and may pitch consecutive days (calendar week is Monday to Sunday). If a team plays three games in a calendar week, nine innings are permitted. For all games, a pitcher can pitch a maximum of three (3) innings per game.
2. One pitch will constitute an inning pitched.
3. If a pitcher hits 3 batters in one inning she must be removed from the position. She can be inserted into the field but cannot return as a pitcher for the remainder of the game.
4. The starting pitcher may re-enter the game, one time, if she has not pitched 3 innings.

## **Batting**

1. **Batting Order:** There will be one contiguous batting order. Late arriving players must be inserted last in batting order.
2. **Complete Inning:** An offensive inning is ended if the batting team scores 5 runs or the defensive team achieves 3 outs. Refer to the general rules for details pertaining to the number of runs that can be scored per inning.
3. **Batted Balls:** Any ball that is hit in fair territory is in play.
4. Bunting is allowed.
5. A batter cannot show bunt, then swing at the pitch.
6. **Batters Hit By Pitch:** If a batter is hit by a pitch, the batter must take first base. An attempt must be made to avoid the pitch.

## **Fielding**

1. All players must play a minimum of two innings per game in the infield, and one in the outfield. No player may play a defensive position for more than 3 innings in a 6-inning game, with the exception of the catcher who may play a maximum of 4 innings defensively in a 6-inning game. An additional defensive inning in any position is allowed in an extra inning.
2. No player can sit more than two innings, defensively, in any one game.
3. Ten (10) players may be played on the field.
4. The infield fly rule is in effect.

## **Base Running**

1. There are no limits to number of steals per inning. A team with a lead of eight or more runs shall NOT steal.
2. There is no leading. You can leave the base to attempt a steal after the pitch crosses the plate.
3. If a baserunner leaves the base before the ball crosses the plate or attempts a steal when their team is leading by 8 or more runs, and is tagged out, that out counts. However, if the runner reaches the next base safely, they will be returned to the base they occupied prior to the pitch being delivered.
4. Stealing of home plate is allowed.
5. All players are required to slide on close plays at the bases. This rule is instituted to minimize injury; therefore, any player not sliding may be called out. There is no head first sliding while advancing to a base, only if returning to the base after rounding or aborting a steal attempt. Head first slides will result in an out.
6. Play must stop when the pitcher has control of the ball in the mound area. Runners must return to their bases if not already in route to the next base.
7. Batters may not advance to first on a dropped third strike.

## **Game Duration**

1. **Starting a Game:** There is no forfeit if a team can field 8 players.
2. **Complete Game:** Regular Season Games will be limited to 2 hours. A game is official once the losing team has completed four at bats. No additional inning will be started after 1 ¾ hours. The field must be cleared 2 hours from the game's start time. The winner will be the team that was ahead after 6 innings or the last complete inning provided the game is official. Ties are permitted.

# ***12U Softball League Rules continued***

3. If the teams are tied after 6 complete innings and the game has not yet reached the 1 ¾ hour mark, the teams may play extra innings until a winner is determined or the above stated time rules require play to halt. Ties are permitted.
4. A fifteen run "mercy rule" is in effect after the losing team has completed four at bats.
5. During the playoffs, games will be played until a winner is determined. Time limits will be followed as described in rule 2 when there are games scheduled immediately after the game in question. If necessary, games will be completed at the next available time and day. Provided all pitching rules listed above are followed, the continuation of the game shall be treated as the same game.

#### **General**

1. Managers will play each game under the "free substitute" rule, which allow players to be removed or inserted into the lineup at will during the course of the game.
  - Exception: Once a pitcher is removed from a game, she may not reenter game as pitcher (except starting pitcher- see rule above). She may be inserted into a different position, and is subject to the free substitution rule.
  - Exception: Pinch runners may not be inserted freely. A pinch runner may only enter the game when an injury prevents a base runner from continuing. The pinch runner will be the player that made the last out.
2. Teams must use two adult base coaches during games. Players coaching bases must wear game helmet.
3. Warm-up pitches will be limited to 8 pitches.
4. Under ASA rules, if a team starts the game with 8 players, when the 9th batter is up, the team incurs an out. This rule DOES NOT APPLY.

# **2019 HLL General Rules**

## **HOPKINTON LITTLE LEAGUE'S MISSION STATEMENT:**

The intent of the game is for player involvement and skill development in a healthy competitive environment to foster team spirit and social atmosphere while teaching basic game concepts and rules.

## **SPORTSMANSHIP**

The Player and Parent Codes of Conduct are in force at all times during HLL events. Some general reminders:

1. There will no throwing of helmets or bats.
2. There will be no arguing, yelling or discourteous treatment of umpires. Any issues that occur during a game will be brought to the attention of the umpire after the game by the head coach only.
3. Good sportsmanship between teammates and opposition is required during all games and practices.
4. Good sportsmanship will be enforced at all times.
5. There will be no negative talk or actions tolerated by the players or the coaches. The coaches will deal with any actions of this nature promptly.
6. Head coaches are responsible for the behavior of the players, parents and fans at the game. Any discourteous treatment of players, umpires or coaches is unacceptable. Any such acts will be reported to the HLL Board of Directors and corrective action will be taken.
7. Only **head** coaches are allowed to discuss matters with an umpire during a game. Violation can result in an ejection as well as disciplinary action by the HLL Board of Directors.

## **KEEPING AND RECORDING SCORE**

1. Each team must keep an accurate score book for each game.
2. The home team will maintain the official score book and must report the resulting score of the game on the HLL website at [www.hopkintonlittleleague.com](http://www.hopkintonlittleleague.com) within 24 hours after completion of the game.
3. Double-A, Triple-A, Quad-A, Major League baseball and 10U and 12U softball leagues are the only leagues that must input the data into the website.
4. Pitch counts must be reported on the HLL website by the head coach within 24 hours of completion of game.

## **EQUIPMENT AND ATTIRE**

1. It is recommended that **NO** shorts be worn during practice due to the risk of injury. Sliding may be practiced and performed during baseball and softball practices. Shorts are **NOT** allowed to be worn during games.
2. All players must wear sneakers or plastic cleats. No metal cleats or other types of footwear can be worn for safety reasons.
3. All players must wear uniforms (shirt, pants, socks and hat) as directed by the Head Coach and/or the specific league rules.
4. No jewelry (other than medical alert tags) is to be worn by players during any game.
5. Catchers must wear entire set of catcher's equipment during practice and games (this includes protective cups for all age groups in baseball).
6. No tobacco products or alcohol of any kind are permitted in the parks at any time.

## **TRIPS TO THE MOUND**

1. The coach may visit the pitcher two times in one inning, but on the third visit in that inning, the pitcher must be removed.
2. A coach may come out three times in one game to visit with the pitcher, but on the fourth visit, the player must be removed as pitcher.
3. A conference with the pitcher or any other player will constitute a trip to the mound.
4. A conference with the pitcher or any other player to evaluate the player's condition after an injury shall not be considered a visit for purposes of this rule.

## **PLAYERS ON THE BENCH**

1. No non-team member is permitted on the team bench or dugout during any game.

## **ON DECK BATTERS**

1. No on deck batters are permitted to swing a bat prior to their actual at bat.

## **2019 HLL General Rules continued**

### **SAFETY**

1. It is strongly recommended that each coach maintain a charged cellular telephone for emergency use during each game.
2. Slash bunting is not allowed at any level.
3. Each team is equipped with basic safety supplies. Replacement supplies can be found in the equipment sheds and/or dog houses. Emergency contact numbers can be found on page 1 of this book.
4. If a player has suffered a concussion (confirmed by a medical professional) - from baseball/softball or any other activity - they are not allowed to participate in practices or games until the parent produces a signed note from a doctor clearing them to play. It is not the coach's responsibility to determine if a child has suffered a concussion. This should be determined by a medical professional.
5. Games may be halted by darkness at the discretion of the umpires.
6. Field Conditions Assessments. While the league endeavors to provide timely game/practice cancellation information, at times the weather changes just prior to or during games. In that event, the safety of the field conditions should be considered before proceeding. For 6U, 8U, Co-Ed Tee Ball, Instructional and Single-A, coaches will evaluate field conditions while at the field to determine the necessity for a rain out. For AA-Majors baseball games and 10U and 12U softball games, umpires will determine if conditions warrant (A) a delay of play to remedy a field condition issue, or (B) cancellation. Regardless of level, the safety of the players should be the paramount consideration.

### **DEFINITION OF A WEEK**

A week is defined as Monday to Sunday.

### **GAME START TIMES AND FORFEITS**

1. Coaches are responsible for timeliness of game start times. Official games must start within 15 minutes of the scheduled start time, or the team without sufficient players must forfeit. The score of a forfeit will be 1 to 0. For umpired leagues, the 2 hour time limit begins the moment the pregame coaches-umpires meeting concludes.

### **GAME AND PRACTICE DURATIONS**

2. Coaches are responsible for timeliness of game and practice starts and finishes. Each league has been allotted set time frames for practices and games. The times are as follows:

League	Practice Duration	Game Duration
Co-Ed Tee Ball	1 hour	1 hour
Instructional Baseball	1 hour	1 hour
6U	1 hour	1 hour
Single-A & 8U	1 hour	1 ½ hours
Double-A, Triple-A, Quad-A, Majors, 10U & 12U	1 ½ hours	2 hours

3. All practices prior to a game must be completed and the practicing team has to be off the field at least 10 minutes before game time. Due to the limited number of fields and the large quantity of teams, it is imperative that coaches comply with respective league time limits for games and practices.
4. Regular Season Games will be limited to 2 hours. A game is official once the losing team has completed four at bats. No additional inning will be started after 1 ¾ hours. The field must be cleared 2 hours from the game's start time. The winner will be the team that was ahead after 6 innings or the last complete inning, provided the game is official. Ties are permitted
5. If the teams are tied after 6 complete innings and the game has not yet reached the 1 ¾ hour mark, the teams may play extra innings until a winner is determined or the above stated time rules (see rule 4) require play to halt. Ties are permitted. If extra innings are played, an additional defensive inning in any position (except pitcher) is allowed per player for each extra inning. No player may sit consecutive extra defensive innings.
6. Playoff Games: See Rule 7 of Incomplete and/or Cancelled Games/Practices below.

### **INCOMPLETE AND/OR CANCELLED GAMES/PRACTICES**

1. HLL utilizes the website and electronic communication such as text notification to let parents know of game status. Facebook and Twitter accounts are updated as needed. The messages will indicate the status of games and practices. The website should be checked frequently for updates.
2. For 10U, 12U, Double-A, Triple-A, Quad-A & Major Leagues, if the website or existing conditions dictate, the umpire will evaluate field conditions while at the field to determine if the conditions are viable for safe play. If field conditions necessitate a cancellation due to a rainout or other extreme conditions, contact your League Director to reschedule all make-up games. Cancelled games will be determined based upon the risk of player injury and/or field damage.
3. For 6U, 8U, Co-Ed Tee Ball, Instructional and Single-A, if the website or existing condition dictates, coaches will evaluate field conditions while at the field to determine the necessity for a rain out. For AA-Majors baseball and 10U and 12U softball, once at the field, umpires determine if conditions warrant (A) a delay of play to remedy a field condition issue, or (B) cancellation.
4. If time, darkness, or inclement weather prevents the completion of an inning and/or game, then the score will revert back to the previous fully completed inning.
5. If the umpires have informed both coaches that the fourth or fifth inning will be the final inning of a game due to time, that inning will be played under that league's out and run limit rules for the 6<sup>th</sup> inning. Under those conditions, the home team may achieve a "walk-off" win.
6. If a regular season game is halted by weather or darkness, and cannot be completed prior to the 2 hour time limit, and the losing team has not had 4 at bats, the game must be replayed in its entirety. There are no continuations of regular season games. This rule does not apply to play off games, which must be played to completion.
7. During the playoffs, games will be played until a winner is determined. Time limits will be followed as described in Game and Practice Durations, Rules 4 and 5, when there are games scheduled immediately after the game in question. If no such game is scheduled, the teams shall continue play until a winner is determined. If extra innings are played, an additional defensive inning in any position (except pitcher) is allowed per player for each extra inning. No player may sit consecutive extra defensive innings.
8. If necessary, playoff games will be completed at the next available time and day. Provided all pitching rules listed above are followed, the continuation of the game shall be treated as the same game.

### **FIELD MAINTENANCE AND CLEAN UP**

1. The home team is responsible for raking the batters box and pitchers mound and dragging the infield after each game.
2. All teams are responsible for raking the batters box and pitchers mound and dragging the infield after each practice.
3. The home team is responsible for raking the batters box and pitchers mound and dragging the infield after each game.
4. Each team is responsible for cleaning up the dugout and field area. Any litter or trash should be removed from the field and placed in the trash cans located at each of the fields.

### **QUANTITY, APPROVAL and INSTRUCTION OF COACHES**

1. No more than a total of 4 coaches per team are allowed in the field of play and bench area at any given time during a game. One head coach, 2 base coaches, and one score keeper per team.
2. Only coaches approved by HLL are allowed to be on the field during games and practices. Coaches not approved will be prohibited from the playing field during both practices and games.
3. **NO COACH SHALL EVER LEAVE A PLAYER OR UMPIRE BEHIND AFTER A PRACTICE OR GAME.**

### **BATS**

1. Wooden bats are permitted for use in HLL.
2. Bats cannot be more than 33" in length and no more than 2 5/8" in diameter. In addition, if the bat is made of wood, it cannot be less than 15/16" in diameter at its smallest point.
3. In Double A and above, all bats must be between 27" and 33" long, and all non-wood bats must comply with USA Baseball standards and bear the USA Baseball logo. Non-wood bats that do not have the USA Baseball logo may not be used in HLL games, scrimmages, or practices.
4. In Tee Ball through Single A, bats 26" or shorter produced prior to the 2017 bat rule change may be used **ONLY** if the bat has been inspected by a league official and a USA Baseball Tee Ball Sticker has been affixed to it.

5. If an umpire, coach, or board member suspects an illegal bat may be or has been used, they may request that the bat be inspected. Such an inspection shall be performed by the umpires assigned to that game.
6. Illegal bats shall be removed from play immediately upon discovery.
7. Penalties for use of an illegal bat.  
 Definitions: Use under this rule occurs during a game when a ball is put in play by being struck by a bat that does not bear the USA Baseball logo (Double A through Majors) or a USA Baseball Tee Ball Sticker (Tee Ball through Single A)
  - A. No penalty shall be incurred if the ball has not been put in play by an illegal bat, but the bat shall be removed from play immediately.
  - B. First offense – Batter is automatically out. Any other outs recorded on the play stand as called. Runners not called out during the play return to the base they occupied prior to the ball being put in play by the illegal bat.
  - C. Second offense – Same as First Offense and Head Coach is ejected.
  - D. Third offense – Same as First and Second offenses, and Team using the illegal bat forfeits the game and Head Coach suspended for next game. The reported score for the forfeit will be 2-0. The game declared a forfeit may continue as a scrimmage. All pitching regulations remain and pitch counts must be reported.
8. All incidents of illegal bat use shall be reported by umpires to the Umpire Coordinator, League Director, VP of Baseball (who will maintain a list of such incidents), and HLL President. Such reports shall include the name of the player who used the illegal bat and the name of that player's head coach.

#### **NUMBER OF RUNS ALLOWED PER INNING OF EACH GAME**

1. Majors Baseball - Unlimited runs per inning.
2. Quad A and Triple A Baseball and 12U Softball - Five run limit through the **fourth** inning. During the fifth and sixth inning, each team will be allowed to score as many runs as possible until the defensive team achieves 3 outs.
3. Double A Baseball and 10U Softball - Five run limit through the **fifth** inning. During the sixth inning, each team will be allowed to score as many runs as possible until the defensive team achieves 3 outs.
4. All other leagues – refer to specific league rules under the batting section.
5. If the game is called due to darkness, time constraints, safety, etc. then the final score of the game will revert back to the previous completed inning. **There will be no exceptions to this rule.**
6. A regular season game can end in a tie. A playoff game cannot end in a tie. If necessary, the game will be continued at a later date as permitted by field availability and access. The league director should be made aware of any such ties and continuation of games. A tied game shall NOT be continued without the League Director's permission and direction.

#### **CALL UP PROCEDURE**

1. Any team in any league that does not have a sufficient number of players on the roster to play a game may forfeit the game or utilize the HLL call up procedure. The HLL call up procedure is as follows:
  - a. If a coach has an insufficient number of players for a game, they will obtain the "call up players list" from their League Director to secure the additional players for the game.
  - b. Each coach must report the call up player to the League Director after each use along with an evaluation of the call up player's performance.
  - c. Coaches **cannot** utilize the same call up player more than once **until** all other call up players have been used or authorization has been received from the Player Agent.
  - d. Call-up players are NOT allowed to pitch.

### **2019 HLL General Rules continued**

#### **BATTING CAGES**

Refer to the batting cage schedule included at the end of the Green Book for times and assignments.

#### **CATCHING REGULATIONS**

A player that has played the position of catcher in four (4) or more innings in a game is not eligible to pitch on that calendar day.

### **PITCHER REGULATIONS**

The following is the text of the new regular season Pitch Count Regulation for **Majors**, **Quad A**, and **Triple A** Baseball. **Double A** will use specific pitching guidelines referenced in the **Double A** section.

1. Any player on a regular season team may pitch. (NOTE: There is no limit to the number of pitchers a team may use in a game.)
2. Players once removed from the mound may not return as pitchers.
3. The manager must remove the pitcher when said pitcher reaches the limit for his/her age group as noted below, but the pitcher may remain in the game at another position:

League Age:	11 - 12	85 pitches per day
	9 - 10	75 pitches per day
	7 - 8	Two (2) innings maximum per game

Exception: If a pitcher reaches the maximum limit imposed in Regulation VI (c) for his/her league age while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until that batter reaches base or is put out. This exception does NOT apply to lower pitch count-days of rest break points.

Example: A pitcher delivers pitch number 35 in the middle of an at-bat, then delivers two more pitches to complete the at-bat. Having now thrown 37 pitches, he must rest for two calendar days rather than one. (See rest requirement table below).

NOTE: A pitcher who delivers **41** or more pitches in a game **cannot** play the position of catcher for the remainder of the day, but a player may play the position of catcher and **then** pitch without limitation beyond the pitch count rules detailed above and below.

4. Pitchers league age 12 and under must adhere to the following rest requirements:
  - If a player pitches 66 or more pitches in a day, four (4) calendar days of rest must be observed
  - If a player pitches 51 - 65 pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest must be observed
  - If a player pitches 36 - 50 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar day of rest must be observed
  - If a player pitches 21 - 35 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar day of rest must be observed
  - If a player pitches 1 - 20 pitches in a day, no (0) calendar day of rest must be observed
5. Pitches thrown during innings that do not end up being part of an official game due to time limit, weather, or any other factor still count towards the pitch limits and rest requirements above.

Example A: Home team pitcher throws 15 pitches in the top of the sixth inning and a total of 55 in the game, but the sixth inning cannot be completed due to the time limit. The score reverts back to the score at the end of the fifth inning, BUT that home team pitcher's pitch count is STILL 55 pitches and he must observe 3 days of calendar rest.

Example B: After 3 innings, game is cancelled due to rain. Pitchers used in those three innings must observe appropriate days of rest as if the game was official.
6. Each team must designate the scorekeeper or another game official as the official pitch count recorder. Pitch counts will be logged on the HLL website.
7. The pitch count recorder must provide the current pitch count for any pitcher when requested by either manager or any umpire. However, the manager is responsible for knowing when his/her pitcher must be removed.

## **2019 HLL General Rules continued**

8. The official pitch count recorder should inform the umpire-in-chief when a pitcher has delivered his/her maximum limit of pitches for the game, as noted in Regulation VI (c). The umpire-in-chief will inform the pitcher's manager that the pitcher must be removed in accordance with Regulation VI (c). However, the failure by the pitch count recorder to notify the umpire-in-chief, and/or the failure of the umpire-in-chief to notify the manager, does not relieve the manager of his/her responsibility to remove a pitcher when that pitcher is no longer eligible.
9. Violation of any section of this regulation will result in a forfeit.
10. A player may not pitch in more than one game in a day.



11. For Triple-A, Quad-A, and Majors, pitch counts will be logged on the HLL website within 24 hours post game time. It is imperative that managers agree on pitch counts. It is strongly suggested that pitch counts be reconciled after each half inning.
12. Hit-by-Pitch (Triple A, Quad-A and Majors only). A pitcher must be removed from pitching if they either: a) hit three (3) batters in a single inning, b) hit four (4) batters during the game.

**PITCHING NOTES:**

- The withdrawal of an ineligible pitcher after that pitcher is announced, or after a warm-up pitch is delivered, but before that player has pitched a ball to a batter, shall not be considered a violation. Little League officials are urged to take precautions to prevent protests.
- In suspended playoff games resumed on another day, the pitchers of record at the time the game was halted may continue to pitch to the extent of their eligibility for that day, provided said pitcher has observed the required days of rest. Regular season games may not be suspended and resumed at a later date.