

10U Minors Division Rules

Goal

To teach the fundamentals of softball and to develop a positive attitude towards sports and team play. OUR MOST IMPORTANT GOAL IS TO HAVE FUN!

General Game Preliminaries

1. The home team head coach is responsible for postponing a game due to weather/field conditions and contacting the umpires and the opposing coach.
2. Prior to each game, batting orders should be exchanged and recorded into the respective scorebooks.
3. All players must be in 4th grade or lower.
4. Teams should be ready to play at the scheduled time.
5. No game should be started without a minimum of 7 players on a team. A forfeit could be called, however, we are here to let the kids play, so try your best to work it out. Free substitution of players is allowed. Players arriving late may enter the game immediately upon arriving at a stoppage in play. Late arriving players should be added to the bottom of the batting order. **Forfeits require a full game fee for the umpire.**
6. The home team is responsible for paying the umpire.
7. If there is no umpire present at game time, both coaches must agree on a substitute or the game should be made up.
8. Home team supplies at least two game balls. An 11” traditional (optic yellow) softball will be used.
9. Coaches are not permitted in the playing field. The only time a coach is allowed to be on the field during a game is when the coach has come in to replace a pitcher that has walked more than the allotted batters in that inning or if there is an injury to a player. A coach may speak to the pitcher one time during the inning after first asking the umpire for time out. The batting team may have adult coaches serve as first and third base coaches
10. Catchers must wear full protective equipment, even when warming up.
11. All infielders including the pitcher, are required to wear a fielding mask. It is strongly recommended that the entire outfield wear one as well.
12. All batters and base runners must wear a league-approved helmet at all times. Helmets must contain a face mask.

13. No jewelry, metal cleats, or casts. If a player cannot remove her jewelry, she must cover it with a bandage or athletic tape.
14. All players must remain on the bench or in the dugout when not batting or on deck. The only exception is players warming up with the permission of their coaching staff in designated areas agreed on before the game.

Conduct Rules

1. Coaches are expected to know and abide by all rules.
2. Every coach is responsible for the safety and conduct of his/her team.
3. Good sportsmanship and behavior are expected from all players, coaches and parents.
4. Cheering for your own team is highly encouraged. Teamwork and building an enjoyable experience for all the girls in the league is our desired goal. However, there comes a time when the line can be crossed, and it is up to the coaches and the umpire to be aware of the incidents and to try to maintain a level playing field for both teams. This issue is not only between girls from both teams, it involves coaches and parents. Cheers about the other team should not be tolerated. Sudden noises (shouts, horns, foot-stomping, "swing", or other noise making devices) shall not be tolerated. Players and Coaches should not purposely distract the other team's pitcher. Coaches are responsible for adherence to this etiquette for themselves, their other coaches, their players AND their players' parents.

Game Rules

1. All rules not specifically noted here will follow USA Softball rules.
2. There are 5 innings per game (if time permits). No new inning may begin after 1 hour and 30 minutes have elapsed from the start of the game.
3. Three outs or 4 runs will end **all** innings. The final play of the inning should be allowed to finish even if more than 4 runs are scored. However, only 4 runs should be officially recorded.

Playoff rule modification: In the playoffs only, there will be 5 innings per game with no time constraint. Three outs or four runs will end all innings except in the 5th inning which will be unlimited runs. If the game ends before the 5th inning due to darkness or other circumstances, the **three outs or four runs** rule is still in effect. It is only lifted in the 5th and beyond.

4. The "mercy rule" for the game is invoked when a team is ahead by 15 or more runs after 4 complete innings.
5. Ten players on the field, the short fielder must stay in the outfield. All outfielders **must play** on the outfield grass.

6. All players should play a minimum of 3 innings, should not sit out 2 innings in a row, and should not sit out more than 2 innings in a game. Coaches should rotate players to different positions during each game. No one should be an outfielder only. (You might try making a position roster ahead of time to post in the dugout, so time is not wasted telling the players where to play.)

Note: Coaches should make every attempt to let any girl who wishes to pitch an opportunity to do so, however the first time the girl is on the mound should not be during a game. Please make sure they have a chance to practice pitching prior to a game situation.

7. All players must be in the batting order whether or not they played in the field during the inning. Pinch-hitting is not allowed. No batting out of order.
8. If a team has less than 10 players, only the eighth slot in the batting order must take an automatic out if the team does not have an eighth batter. However, they do not have to take automatic outs for the ninth and tenth slots in the batting order.
9. Free substitution for defensive positions.
10. Bunting is **not** allowed.
11. No infield fly rule
12. We will **not** honor the dropped third strike rule.
13. A batted ball in the playing field is live until returned to and controlled in the pitching circle. A “hit” by a batter can be as many bases as the batter can reach before the ball is returned and controlled in the pitching circle. The ball remains live until it is returned and controlled in the pitching circle.

Clarification: On overthrown balls begun by a batted ball (i.e. balls overthrown in attempt to make a defensive play), runners may attempt to take as many bases as they desire, provided the ball is still within play and not controlled and within the pitching circle. Once the ball is controlled and within the pitching circle, no further advancement can be made other than the base they may be in the process of reaching at the time. If the ball is out of play, it becomes a dead ball and the appropriate out of play advancement is instituted. (One base on an overthrow that goes out of bounds).

14. Runners may not leave the base (lead or steal) until the ball has crossed the plate. If the ball is put in play and a runner has left early a “dead ball” will be called.
15. Runners may steal 3rd base only. If the defense makes an attempt to throw the runner out who is stealing 3rd base and an overthrow occurs, the runner may not advance to home. A base runner on 1st base may not advance on the overthrow attempt of the runner stealing third. Runners may advance from 2nd base to 3rd base on a passed ball. The same rules on an overthrow apply.
16. Stealing of 2nd base or home plate **is not** allowed. A steal is defined as an advancement of a non-batted ball, including but not limited to a passed ball and an attempt by a catcher to pick off a leading base runner.

17. No pitcher will appear in more than 2 innings. A pitcher may leave the game and return in later innings as long as she doesn't appear in more than 2 innings per game. **One pitch thrown in an inning constitutes an inning of pitching.**
18. Pitching distance is 35 feet. If pitchers are struggling early in the season, coaches may agree on allowing the pitcher pitch from 32 feet, but she must start with both feet at or behind that spot and not take extra steps forward before letting go of the ball. In the playoffs, pitchers must pitch from 35 feet, no exceptions.
19. There will be no walks. If a batter receives a fourth ball with a player pitching, the batter will retain the number of strikes and the offensive coach will pitch to the batter for the remainder of the at bat. The umpire will still call strikes when the coach is pitching, but the batter is not allowed to walk. The girl who was pitching will remain near the pitching circle (within 5 feet) and may field any "IN PLAY" balls that come to this location. The coach is not allowed to make any plays on the field.
20. Call-ups/call-overs cannot pitch.