

Canton Spring Softball League

Playing Rules

These are the Canton Little League Softball Rules. These were reviewed and agreed on by various members of the CLL board of directors. Our goal is to teach the rules and skills needed to develop our players into strong softball players and ready them for future play. It is not about winning...it is about teaching and developing the skills. Play by the rules!!

Participation, play, equipment and field requirements will all be in accordance with USA Softball Official Rules with the following exceptions or noted points of emphasis:

General Rules Applying to All Divisions (Grades 3-8)

1. Each player present and able to play will bat in continuous, consecutive batting order. (Free defensive substitution).
2. If a player must leave the game for any reason, that spot in the batting order is skipped without an automatic out being charged, unless the reason for leaving is ejection (automatic out recorded for ejection).
3. Teams must field at least eight players to start and finish a game. (Forfeit if less)
4. If a team is playing with less than nine, an automatic out will not be charged for the virtual ninth batter.
5. No slashing (clear intent to fake a bunt, then pulling back to swing for a hit). 1st attempt is an automatic out and 2nd attempt is ejection from the game.
6. Slapping and drag bunting are allowed.
7. Game will start once scheduled time occurs and teams have enough players.
8. 5-run/inning rule is in effect. A team's time at bat will end after that team scores 5 runs in an inning. In the last regulation inning or last inning as determined by the umpire subject to the time limit, a team may score as many runs as possible before their third out is declared.
9. Run-Ahead rule in effect when a team is up by 15 runs after 4 innings
10. Players must slide OR avoid contact; umpire has sole discretion in this area. If by avoiding contact a base runner runs out of base path, then an out is charged.
11. Courtesy runners may be used for pitcher and/or catcher. Courtesy runner will be the player who made the last out. (If courtesy runner is on base and that person's time at bat comes up, then an out will be charged). This rule is in play when there are two outs and the courtesy runner is the person who made the last out.
12. Batters and base runners must wear approved helmets with face guard.
13. Pitcher shall be removed from the game after directly hitting 3 batters in an inning or 4 in the course of a game (bounced pitches do not count).
14. Pitchers can pitch a maximum of 3 innings per game. The innings do not have to be consecutive, however a pitcher can only be put back in once after coming out. Any number of batters faced during an inning will be considered a full inning.
For example, pitcher 1 pitches innings 1 & 2. Pitcher 2 pitches innings 3 & 4. Pitcher 1 comes back in for the 5th inning but only faces 1 batter before being taken out. Pitcher 1 is no longer eligible to come back in to pitch for the remainder of the game. OR Pitcher 1 pitches innings 1 & 2. Pitcher 2 pitches innings 3 & 4 and the start of inning 5. Pitcher 1 comes back in mid-way through the 5th inning and completes the inning. Pitchers 1 and 2 are now done for the game and cannot come back in.
15. All pitchers MUST wear a face mask.
16. No new inning after 1 hour and 30 minutes and games must end after 2 hours of play
 - a. If there is no winner after last inning played, the score reverts to the previous inning. For example, Team A (home team) is up 11-4 on Team B (away team) after 4 innings and you start the 5th inning at the 1 hour and 25 minute mark. Team B bats first and scores 8 runs since it is unlimited. Unfortunately this takes 30 minutes and Team A is not able to bat (or it takes 20 minutes and Team A is up but is unable to finish the inning or get the go-ahead run in time), the score would then be entered based on the 4th inning score of 11-4

Junior League-Specific Rules

1. 35-foot distance from back point of home plate to front edge of the pitching rubber.
2. 11" ball to be used
3. 6-inning game
4. May play with 10 defensive fielders, in which case four must be outfielders, who must play on outfield grass/area.
5. Infield fly rule is not in effect. A girl is allowed to tag up on a fly ball, whether it is in the infield or the outfield
6. Batter may not advance on dropped third strike
7. There is no leading. A base runner may not leave the base until the ball has crossed the plate
8. No continuous walk, batter may only advance one base (to first base) when awarded a base on balls
9. Runner may only advance one base on a steal attempt; no stealing home; no advancing to home on a WP/PB-Must be a batted ball or a walk with bases loaded.
11. Fill out umpire evaluation forms. This really helps us to work with the umpires to improve the game.
12. The umpires are just kids trying to do their best. There is a lot of pressure on them to do a good job. Do not yell at the umpires!! If you feel they missed a call, talk to them in between innings and then fill out the evaluation form after the game
13. The umpires MUST wear the face mask or they don't get paid. Please remind them that they need to have the mask. (umpire equipment is located in the field houses with the bases)

Senior League-Specific Rules

1. 40-foot pitching distance
2. 12" Ball
3. 6-inning game
4. 5 runs per inning
5. Infield Fly rule in effect
6. Batter may advance on a dropped third strike
7. Continuous walk allowed. A player who is awarded first base on balls should move down the first base line and touch first base. After touching first base she can immediately return to the base without liability of being put out if there is no feint or attempt to second base without stopping. A batter-runner who rounds first base toward second may stop, but then immediately return to first or attempt non-stop to second. Play ends when the pitcher has possession of the ball in the pitching circle
8. Leading and stealing upon the pitcher's release of the ball

Additional Rules

1. Coaches should do their best to keep the girls in the dugout area during the game
2. Keep the girls off of the rock/hill behind 3rd base dugout at Walsh Field
3. Keep off the hill behind the 3rd base dugout at Tilden Field
4. Enter scores (winning team) on website within 24 hours

Borrowing Players

There may be a time where you are short a few players and rather than forfeit the game, you should try to contact other coaches to see if they have girls that would like to play. The goal is not to stack your team for that one game but to avoid the forfeit.

1. Players being borrowed can't miss their own team game. You must pick from teams not playing that night.
2. Borrowed player is not allowed to pitch or catch.
3. Borrowed player must bat in the 6th spot or higher in the batting order.
4. You can only borrow the same player twice in a season.
5. No borrowing in the playoffs.

