

2021 Sudbury Girls' Softball Intermediate League (Grades 5-6) Rules

League Philosophy:

The purpose of the Sudbury Girls Softball League (SGSL) is to provide Sudbury and Lincoln girls the opportunity to take part in a skills development-based softball program, progressing to fast pitch softball (USA rules) in the spirit of fun and good sportsmanship. The overall philosophy of the league is that girls should have the opportunity to compete and having fun should be of maximum importance.

Playing Rules

1. Every girl must be allotted equal playing time, including **at least 2 innings in the infield**.
2. Players are **limited to 3 innings maximum at any one position**, except pitcher, catcher, or outfield where they may play up to 4 innings.
3. Teams may have up to **10 players** in the field with **free substitution**. Outfield players must remain on the outfield grass until the pitch leaves the pitcher's hand.
4. **All players in attendance will bat** in a pre-determined batting order.

Pre-Game

1. If a league approved umpire is not present 5 minutes prior to game time, the two coaches must agree on a replacement umpire. Replacement umpire must use appropriate protective equipment.
2. Visiting team takes infield 25 minutes prior to game time for 10 minutes. Home team takes infield 15 minutes prior to game time for 10 minutes.
3. Both head coaches **MUST** attend a pregame conference with the umpire no later than five (5) minutes prior to the start time of the game.
4. Anyone warming up a pitcher **MUST** wear a catcher's mask. A simple face mask is not sufficient. This is a USA Softball safety rule and cannot be deviated from.

Playing Field, Equipment and Safety

1. The distance between the back of home plate and the front of the pitching rubber will be **40 feet**.
2. Catchers are required to wear all protective gear – helmet/facemask, chest protector, and shin pads.
3. Any player warming up a pitcher is required to wear a catcher's mask (see #4 above).
4. All infielders including the pitcher, are required to wear a fielding mask. It is strongly recommended that the entire outfield wear one as well.
5. All batters, on-deck batters, baserunners, and players acting as base coaches must wear a helmet with face guard.
6. No jewelry is allowed. Players must remove all jewelry prior to the game with the exception of medical bracelets.

Conduct Rules

1. Good sportsmanship and behavior are expected from players, coaches, and parents.
2. 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, but it also involves coaches and parents. Negative 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. Games are no longer than **6 innings** long. At 1 hour and 20 minutes, you will finish the inning you are currently playing, and the next inning will be your last inning. No new inning will start after 1 hour and 45 minutes.
2. The umpire has the right to suspend a game due to darkness or inclement weather.
3. Mercy Rule: An inning is considered over when 3 outs are recorded or if the batting team scores 4 runs in the inning, except the last inning of the game where 6 runs are allowed.

Pitching

1. Hit by pitch will be awarded first base. Hit by Pitch (HBP) is determined by the umpire – i.e., at the umpire's discretion, the batter has made a legitimate effort to avoid being hit by the ball. Coaches should review this rule with the umpire before each game.
2. Call-ups/call-overs cannot pitch.

Batting

1. Intentional bunting is *not* allowed.
2. Infield Fly Rule is *not* in effect.
3. Dropped Third Strike rule is *not* in effect.

Base Running

1. Runners may not leave the base until the pitch reaches home plate.
2. Base runners may steal from second to third and third to home, but only two runs per inning may be scored in this fashion. Runners must wait until the pitched ball reaches home plate. No stealing from first to second is allowed.
3. A team may NOT steal once they are up by 6 runs.
4. In all cases, the ball is "live" until it is in the possession of the pitcher within the pitcher's circle and the play is over.
5. In order to avoid contact with a defensive player, a runner must do one of the following: slide, go around, go over (if defensive player is prone), or give themselves up.
6. One base on an over-throw that goes out of play. If the ball remains in play on an overthrow, runners advance at their own risk until ball is in possession of pitcher within the pitcher's circle (see #3 above).
7. Runner hit by a batted ball which has not been touched by a fielder is out unless they are standing on a base or in foul territory.
8. Look Back Rule: Once the pitcher has the ball within the circle, the runner must immediately return to their base or continue to the next base.