

9U/10U Softball

General Softball Rules

- This league plays on a field with a base distance of 60 feet, and distance from pitching rubber to home plate of 35 feet. An 11-inch regulation hard ball is used in this league.
- No player should play the same position for more than two innings at a time; however, players may be placed back at a position previously played.
- No player shall sit more than one inning at a time unless that player is sick or injured.
- Players are required to wear a helmet while batting in the cages, at practice, and during games. Helmets must be worn while in the on-deck circle and on base.
- Softball pants in white, gray, or black are required.

Borrowing Players

- Borrowed players must be OSAA-registered softball players, the appropriate age for the age group they are playing in, and must wear their own team shirt when playing for another team.
- Borrowed players must be placed in the last open positions of the batting order, and are only allowed to play outfield positions on defense.
- Should regular team players arrive before the end of the game they must replace the borrowed players in the game. Violation of these rules will result in a forfeit.

Team

- Each team will field 10 players (4 outfielders that must play off the dirt in the outfield grass).
- A team must have a minimum of 7 of their own players or the game will be declared a forfeit.
- A team may borrow up to two players to field a 9-player roster. There is no batting penalty for playing with less than 10 players. NOTE: For the post-season tournament, no borrowing of players is allowed.

Game

- A game will consist of six (6) innings or 1 hour and 20 minutes and finish the inning. No new inning may be started after 75 minutes.
- The only time a game is called at 80 minutes drop-dead is if there is a game behind it and one of the teams is ahead by more than five (5) runs (which is the maximum runs you can score in one inning in this league), OR the home team is batting and they are ahead at the 80-minute time limit. Scores and standings will be kept.
- An inning will consist of 3 outs or 5 runs maximum, whichever comes first. The inning is over when 5th run crosses the plate. A new inning begins as soon as the third out is made, or the 5th run is scored in an inning. Games may end in a tie, extra innings will not be allowed, except for tournament play, or if the game is the final game on that field for the day and there is enough daylight for safe play.

- The 15-run rule after three innings and 10-run rule after four innings will be in effect. Teams may continue playing if the 80-minute limit has not been reached, but the game will end drop-dead at the 80-minute time limit.

Tiebreaker

- In tournament play, there needs to be a winner so International Tie-Breaker Rule will be played until there is a winner.

Pitching/Catching

- ASA pitching rules apply - pitchers are allowed to choose:
 - (1) to start with their stride foot behind (not touching) the pitching rubber;
 - (2) to step back off of the rubber with their stride foot before striding forward; or
 - (3) start with both feet touching the rubber before striding forward.
- Pitchers and catchers will be allowed to make appearances in no more than (2) consecutive innings in any game. For purposes of enforcing this rule, an inning of pitching is defined as throwing one pitch during a team's inning on defense. Unintentional violations of this may be corrected by substituting a player without penalty.
- If a pitcher hits the 5th batter of the game regardless of innings, they will be removed for the remainder of the game.
- A **maximum of five (5) warm up pitches** may be taken to start the game, between innings, and when a pitching substitution is made. (When a substitution is made, the previous pitcher may play any other position on defense.)

Batting

- A combination of player/coach pitching system will be used with **NO WALKS**. If the batter reaches ball four, then the batter's coach will assume the count and pitch until the batter either hits or strikes out. While a coach is pitching, the defensive player-pitcher must play the pitching position inside the 16-foot pitcher's circle. A rolled or bounced ball that hits the batter will be called a ball, but no base awarded. Batters hit with a ball above the knee may take a base, or opt to continue batting.
- Batter is out on dropped third strike. The umpire may call a batter out on a called third strike. Bunting is allowed in this league, but only when the player is pitching. A batter may not bunt off coaches.
- All fair balls are played (no infield fly rule). Batters hit by the pitch will take first base, even if the ball hits the ground first. Only 5 runs count towards the total score per inning no matter if more runs score in the inning on the last hit.
- **BOTH TEAMS WILL BAT EVERY PLAYER**

Base Running

- A base runner may only steal 3rd base. Stealing of second base and home plate is not allowed. A runner may not leave 2nd base until the ball leaves the pitcher's hand. If the umpire sees the offending runner leave early, she will be called out for leaving the base early.
- Stealing will only be allowed when a player is pitching - no stealing when the coach is pitching. In the event of an overthrow, the runners may not advance past base they are stealing (3rd).
- On a batted ball, there is a one-base advance on an overthrow that leaves the field of play (in a dugout or over a fence). On any overthrow back to the pitcher in the circle, runners may not advance.
- A runner may not steal a base during the return throw to the pitcher by the catcher. A base runner may only advance one base on an infield hit that does not leave the dirt area unless a play is made on any runner and an overthrow occurs at a base other than 1st base.
 - Example #1: A runner on 2nd base with no outs. The batter hits the ball to the pitcher who overthrows the ball to 1st base, but the ball does not leave the dirt area. Result: Batter must stay at 1st base, runner on second base may only advance to third base.
 - Example #2: A runner on 2nd base with no outs. Batter hits ball to shortstop who overthrows to 1st base and the ball goes into foul territory in the grass down the first base foul fence. Result: Batter must stay at first base, runner on 2nd may proceed home at her own risk.
 - Example #3: A base runner is on 1st base. Batter hits a ball to the fence in right field. Result: Runner and Batter may advance as many bases as they can at their own risk UNTIL the ball is HELD by a defensive player on the infield dirt. The purpose of this rule is to encourage coaches to teach outfielders to get the ball into the infield as soon as possible. Again, the ball must be HELD by an infielder. If the ball is rolling around on the infield dirt and it is not the result of an overthrow back to the pitcher, runners may still advance at their own risk.
 - Example #4: Base runner on 1st base with no outs. Ground ball hit to shortstop who throws wildly to second base for a force out and the ball goes into the outfield grass. Result: The runner from first may proceed to third and even home unless the ball is thrown into and held by an infielder on the dirt prior to the runner rounding third base. An infielder may also pick up a ball and run it onto the dirt from the grass. The batter may not advance to 2nd base on an infield hit like this.

Courtesy Runners

- Coaches have the option to put in a courtesy runner for their catcher *only* so they are ready for the start of the next inning.
- The courtesy runner will be the batter who made the previous out.
- The only other time a courtesy runner may be used is when a player is injured while batting or running the bases.

Miscellaneous

- Three coaches are allowed in/around the dugout during the game. While batting, two coaches are allowed on the field, one in the 3rd base coaching box and one in the 1st base coaching box. A defensive coach may stand outside the dugout next to the fence to provide instruction to defensive players.
- Coach-pitchers should try to move out of the way of a batted ball and keep from being in the way of the pitcher or other players making a play. If a coach-pitcher is hit by a batted ball, the ball is dead, runners must return to their base, and the batter's count will be what it was prior to batting the ball that struck the coach-pitcher.
- There will be a post-season, single-elimination tournament beginning mid- to late-June. The softball season can be expected to run through the month of June. Coaches are encouraged to let parents know this early in the season.