

SOUHEGAN VALLEY GIRLS SOFTBALL

SOUHEGAN

LOCAL LEAGUE RULES



I. LOCAL LEAGUE RULES

These league rules will apply to the Souhegan Valley Girls Softball League. Unless otherwise stated in these local rules, the games will be played according to the latest edition of **The Babe Ruth League, Inc. Softball Rules and Regulations**. Coaches should meet with the umpire(s) before the game begins and agree on any rules for clarification, field conditions, and possible hazards. Local rules will remain in effect for all seasons (including the Spring season playoffs).

A. Eligibility:

1. A player must play within the city or town in which the player resides. This is determined according to the legal residence of the player's parents or legal guardian.
2. Age eligibility is based on a calendar year ending December 31st. A player's age on 12/31 determines their age for the following year. If you end the year at 12 years old and have a Jan 1 birthday and turn 13, you are still league age 12 for that whole year.

B. Playing Time:

1. All teams will bat through their order.
2. Each Head Coach shall make every attempt to play each player throughout the games during the season. Additionally, each Head Coach shall make every attempt to play each player at a variety of positions throughout the season to encourage player development and understanding of the game.
 - a. 8U - Players can play any position and it is encouraged to move them around the diamond
 - b. 10U – It is encouraged that each player will play at least one inning on the infield.
 - c. 12U - Each player will play at least half the game and are encouraged to play at least one inning on the infield.
 - d. 16U - Each player will play at least half the game and are encouraged to play at least one inning on the infield.
3. Free defensive substitution is allowed and no changes are allowed in the batting order. Babe Ruth softball rules governing the removal of the pitcher will apply

C. Free defensive substitution is allowed and no changes are allowed in the batting order. Babe Ruth softball rules governing the removal of the pitcher will apply

D. Run Rules: There is a run rule of 5 per inning for 10U, 12U and 16U divisions. There is a run rule of 4 per inning for 8U

Whenever a team scores the limit of runs in their half inning, that half inning will be over once the play that caused the run limit is completed. Any additional runs scored on that play will not count.

It is the coaches' responsibility to track runs in an inning, and therefore when a run limit has been reached.

The run rules remain in effect for all innings of the game, including the final inning.

E. Bunting is allowed in all divisions of play. Slap hitting is allowed in 12U and 16U.

F. All batters or runners on base must wear a helmet with an approved faceguard per Babe Ruth rules.

G. Pitching rules:

1. 8U
 - **Manual Machine** pitch for a minimum of 3 full innings. With agreement of both coaches, the 4th and subsequent innings are optional player pitch.

- When player pitching, the player may pitch 4 pitches per batter. If after 4 pitches, the batter has not hit or struck out, the hitting team's coach will pitch until they have hit the ball fair or struck out.

. At 8U, **3** strikes = out.

2. 10U, 12U, and 16U Divisions – if a pitcher has 3 HBPs in a game, they must be removed from pitching for a minimum of two innings.

H. Only designated coaches are allowed in the dugouts or bench area (1 head coach and up to 3 assistant coaches).

I. Rain/Reschedule:

1. In the case of inclement weather, the home team coach (or host town's representative) should make a decision on the game after contacting opposing coach at least 90 minutes before game time. If the opposing coach is unreachable, the game must be called at the field. Once the umpire arrives at the field, it is their sole discretion to postpone or play the game.
2. If a game is postponed before the umpire reaches the field, the umpire and/or umpire coordinator **MUST** be contacted by the home team (or host town's representative).
3. If bad weather prohibits game play, coaches must agree to postpone. If umpire is available, game is called by the umpire.
4. Bad weather is when:
 - a. Any sound of thunder or flashes of lightning.
 - b. When there is standing water on the field from rain.
5. Postponed games will be rescheduled by the home team's town representative (or coach) as soon as possible. It is up to the town representative (or coach) to coordinate field availability.

J. Suspended Games:

1. Suspension Rule 4.12 shall **NOT** apply when the game has completed enough innings to be declared official (3 ½ to 4 innings) and where one team is in the lead.

Safety Equipment: All players are required to wear appropriate softball shoes (cleats or sneakers). When hitting, in on deck circle or on the base path players must wear approved helmets with faceguards. Girls playing Majors or Juniors and wearing shorts are also recommended to wear sliding pads or sliding shorts. Athletic support may also be worn but are not required. Pitchers, 1st base, and 3rd base in 8U, 10U, 12U, and 16U are required to wear a mouth guard or fielding face mask.

If a player is not wearing appropriate safety equipment, they will be issued a warning for that game. Players will receive only one warning. If they are not wearing proper safety equipment in any subsequent games they will be suspended for that game. All warnings and suspensions must be reported to the town representative and Souhegan Valley Girls Softball President.

K. Attire –proper attire must be worn. Players dress appropriately for practices and games and also should **not** wear pajama pants, strap tank tops, or half shirts.

L. A player is ejected from a game at the discretion of the umpire. If a player is ejected from a game, they will also not be allowed to play in the next game. If a player receives two ejections in one season, that player will not be allowed to play for the remainder of the season. All warnings and suspensions must be reported to the town representative and Souhegan Valley Girls Softball President.

M. Coach warnings: If a coach is ejected from a game, they will not be allowed to coach in the next game. If a coach receives two ejections in one season, that coach will not be allowed to participate for the remainder of the season. All warnings and suspensions must be reported to the town representative and Souhegan Valley Girls Softball President.

N. Scoring and Standings (Spring Season): League standings will be kept for 10U, 12U and 16U levels and will be determined based on won/loss record. Any unplayed games are assumed as a loss.

Teams will be seeded in the playoffs based on their Spring season record. Any ties will be decided based on the following played:

- 1). Head-to-head results
- 2). Record based on completed games - if teams have the same number of wins; the team with more completed games will be seeded higher
- 3). Least runs allowed
- 4). If a tie still exists, then a coin flip

Notes

- If teams have completed the same number of games, win percentage will be used as part of the determining factor for seeding. A team that is 5-4-1 will be seeded higher than a team that is 5-5.

Scores for teams will be tracked using an online system.

- O. Extra Innings for a tie game will be allowed provided the game is still within the time limits. If the time limit has been reached, then the game will be declared a tie.
- P. Assignment of umpires is the responsibility of the home team. More experienced umpires should be assigned to the higher level games.
- Q. All coaches for the spring and fall recreation seasons should achieve and maintain coaching certification from Babe Ruth Softball. If a coach is already certified by Cal Ripken baseball, that certification may be used to satisfy this requirement. Certification is effective for the coach's lifetime.
- R. A maximum of 11 players will be allowed on the field in 8U, 6 players in the infield and up to 5 players in the outfield.
- S. A maximum of 10 players will be allowed on the field in 10U, 6 players in the infield and 4 players may play outfield. 12U has the traditional 3 players in the outfield, 6 in the infield.
- T. There are no local rules that require sliding. Below is a summary of how sliding applies in the Babe Ruth rulebook.
 - Babe Ruth does not have any rule that states that a runner must slide.
 - Runners should not be called out simply for not sliding.
 - Runners are required to avoid contact with the fielder in process of making a play. If there is no contact or intentional acts to distract the fielder, then there is no penalty.
 - If the runner interferes with a fielder, then interference is the call.
 - If the fielder does not have the ball, or is not in the process of fielding a ball, then the runner has the right of way to the base or base path. Rule 7.06 discusses obstruction. In other words catchers and fielders should not be standing on top of a bag or home plate unless they have the ball. They cannot block the bag/plate.
- U. Windmill and slingshot pitching motions are legal as long as Babe Ruth pitching rules are met. There is no rule requiring that a windmill motion be used.
- V. Additional local rules for each division are detailed below:

Below is a summary of these rules across divisions and additional rules regarding game play. This does not include all information regarding rules. For full rules, please see Babe Ruth Softball rulebook. If something is not listed in these local rules, follow the Babe Ruth rulebook. Local rules remain in effect for the playoffs.

	8U	10U
Ball Size	11"	11"
# players on field	Min – 6 (Complete infield) Max – 11 (up to 5 in outfield)	Min – 7 Max – 10
Substitution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free substitution • No changes to batting order 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free substitution • No changes to batting order • See rules regarding pitchers
Minimum play time per player	½ the game 1 inning of infield encouraged	½ the game encouraged 1 inning of infield encouraged
Pitching Distance	30'	35'
Game Time	6 innings	6 innings
Min Game Time	4 innings (3 ½ if home team is ahead)	4 innings (3 ½ if home team is ahead)
Leading	Once ball crosses plate	Once pitcher releases ball (Per BR)
Stealing	No	Yes – Can successfully steal home twice per inning. Also can not proceed to next base on overthrow of a steal. One base per pitch
Scoring	No	Yes
Batting	All players bat through order	All players bat through order
Bunting Allowed	Yes	Yes
Pitching	Coach Pitch for the first 3 full innings (player pitch optional starting in the 4 th inning) 3 strikes = out (See* Notes Below)	Kid pitch - 4 balls = walk; 3 strikes = out Pitchers are limited to 3 innings/game and no more than 10 innings/week (Mon-Sun) (includes playoffs)
HBP Limits	N/A	3 HBP; removed from pitching for min 2 inning
Walks allowed	No	Yes
Run Rules	4 runs per half inning (No continuation)	5 runs per half inning (No continuation)
Req'd Game End Time	2 hours or 8:00 pm (inning in progress is allowed to complete); No new inning may begin within 15 minutes of required end time Official start time will be agreed upon by umpires if present. If no umpire is present, start time will be agreed upon by coaches.	
Umpires (Home team provides)	Parent Volunteer	Umpire
Playoffs	No	Yes (Spring Season)

	12U	16U
Ball Size	12"	12"
# players on field	Min – 7 Max – 9	Min – 7 Max - 9
Substitution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free substitution • No changes to batting order • Rules regarding pitcher removal apply 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free substitution • No changes to batting order • Rules regarding pitcher removal apply
Minimum play time per player	½ the game 1 inning of infield encouraged	½ the game Encourage infield
Pitching Distance	40'	43'
Game Time	6 innings	7 innings
Min Game Time	4 innings (3 ½ if home team is ahead)	4 innings (3 ½ if home team is ahead)
Leading	Once pitcher releases ball (per BR Rules)	
Stealing	Yes – including steal of home	
Scoring	Yes	Yes
Batting	All players bat through order	All players bat through order
Bunting Allowed	Yes	Yes
Pitching	Kid pitch – 4 balls = walk; 3 strikes = out Pitchers are limited to no more than 10 innings per calendar week (Mon-Sun)	Kid pitch – 4 balls = walk; 3 strikes = out
HBP Limits	3 HBP; removed from pitching for min 2 inning	3 HBP; removed from pitching for min 2 inning
Walks allowed	Yes	Yes
Run Rules	5 runs per half inning (No continuation)	5 runs per half inning (No continuation)
Req'd Game End Time	2 hours or 8:00 pm (inning in progress is allowed to complete); No new inning may begin within 15 minutes of required end time Official start time will be agreed upon by umpires if present. If no umpire is present, start time will be agreed upon by coaches.	
Umpires (Home team provides)	Umpire	Umpire
Playoffs	Yes (Spring Season)	Yes (Spring Season)

**** Notes:**

8U – Pitching

Manual Machine Pitch

- Machine should be set at 25-30mph and it is recommended to be 30ft from Homeplate
- After 3 pitches, let the player hit off the Tee
- It is suggested that coaches take a bucket of balls onto the field with them.
- When a pitched ball reaches or passes the catcher, the ball is not chased down, except to ensure it is at least 10 feet outside the immediate playing area.
- When a pitched ball is caught by the catcher, the catcher will toss the ball aside towards one dugout or the other and at least 10 feet from the immediate playing area.
- When a pitched ball is hit into the field of play, the ball is played by the players in the field. Once the play in the field comes to a conclusion, the ball is tossed outside the field of play or back to the coach for pitching.
- When the batted ball is returned to the player or coach positioned as the pitcher in the field, will also result in the end of play in the field.
- Once a machine pitched pitch is clear of the immediate playing area, and any play in the field has concluded, the coach will resume pitching with another ball from the bucket or container.
- When a machine pitched ball is swung on or not and it's cleared of the catcher, the coach resumes pitching with another ball.

Reasoning:

During 8U games, a significant amount of time is spent tracking down and returning balls to the pitchers. Either the catcher needs to chase the ball down, or the fielders and pitcher need to chase down a ball returned by the catcher. Games rarely complete 3 innings and most commonly conclude after 2 innings. During which time most girls do not get an opportunity to field or play a hit ball or attempt to make a play on the diamond. Hits are generally short range and involve the pitcher, catcher and first basemen. Players in other positions get little opportunity to be involved in the activity. Giving coaches the opportunity to pitch with the machine for the majority of the innings, improves the likelihood that the hitters will see pitches within the strike zone. This increases the likelihood that the ball will be hit into the field of play within a fewer number of pitches. Batters have less time between pitches and are required to remain focused and engaged while at the plate. Increasing the number of balls hit by players, increases the number of "touches" fielders have the opportunity to get. These opportunities translate into increased repetitions and greater learning and experience the girls will have. The more pitches hit, means more balls in the field, more players involved in the plays, more base runners and more involvement by all the players on both teams. The idea is to increase the number of opportunities the girls have to be involved in the game.

Spring Season and Playoffs

- W. The SV Softball President, town representative or designated individual will establish a schedule of games for the season. Each team should be scheduled for a minimum of 10 games.
- X. Coaches of the home team are responsible for reporting the results of their games to a designated SV representative and should copy the opposing coach – 10U, 12U and 16U only.
- Y. Playoffs will be scheduled for the 10U, 12U and 16U Divisions. Playoffs will follow the local league rules.
- Z. Attempts will be made to ensure each town receives a proportionate number of games for the playoffs based on the number of teams registered within SV.
- AA. Trophies - For the 10U, 12U and 16U Divisions, trophies will be awarded to the Winner and Runner-Up team in each set of playoffs. All other trophies, including awards at the 10U and younger levels are the responsibility of each town.
- BB. Umpires should be assigned so that they are always at least one age group above the game they will be umpiring.

