

Spring 2023 PLAYING RULES for League City Girls Softball Association

A. GENERAL

All rules and regulations will be based on USA Softball, Interleague and Local rules. Our policy is to keep USA Softball rule modifications to a minimum.

You can view USA Softball Junior Olympic rules online at: <https://www.usasoftballoftexas.com/page/show/4650072-j-o-rules>

SUMMARY OF PLAYING RULES BY DIVISION				
Division	6U	8U	10U	12U / 14U
Division Description	Coach Pitch	Coach Pitch	Kid Pitch – 35’	Kid Pitch – 40’ / 43’
Duration of Game	55 min Spring: finish inning Fall: finish batter	55 min Spring: finish inning Fall: finish batter	70 min Spring: finish inning Fall: finish batter	70 min Spring: finish inning Fall: finish batter
Run limit per inning	Spring: 5 Fall: 5	Spring: 6 Fall: 5	Spring: 4 Fall: 4	Spring: 5 Fall: 5
Run Ahead Rule	Does not Apply			
Softball Size	11” AD STARR 5	11” .47 COR	11” .47 COR	12” .47 COR
Base Distance	60’	60’	60’	60’
Pitching Distance	35’ (1 foot inside circle)	35’ (1 foot inside circle)	35’	40’ / 43’
Maximum Number of Fielders	11 (no rover; only 6 players allowed on infield – P, C, 1 st , 2 nd , SS, 3 rd ; up to 5 outfielders; outfielders must remain on grass until ball is put in play)	10 (or 11 ^{***}) (no rover; only 6 players allowed on infield – P, C, 1 st , 2 nd , SS, 3 rd ; up to 4 outfielders; outfielders must remain on grass until ball is put in play)	9 (or 10 ^{***}) (no rover; only 6 players allowed on infield – P, C, 1 st , 2 nd , SS, 3 rd ; up to 3 outfielders; outfielders must remain on grass until ball is put in play)	9
Number of Batters	Entire Team			
Player Substitution	Free defensive substitution			
Injury Re-entry	Yes			
Equipment / Uniform	Batters/Baserunners: ASA/USA Softball Approved Bat Helmet w/ NOCSA approved face guards (Chin Strap optional) Fielders: Fielder’s Mask - Strongly recommended for Pitcher position in all divisions Catchers: 6U & 8U: Batting Helmet with throat protector attached, Chest Protector, Shin Guards 10U and up: Catcher’s Helmet, Chest Protector, Shin Guards LCGSA Issued Uniform Only – NO JEWELRY – NO METAL CLEATS – NO EXCEPTIONS			
Coach Pitch	5 pitches to hit a fair ball; all strikes counted.	5 pitches to hit a fair ball; all strikes counted.	Coach-pitch for each ball-four count after 2 walks in an inning; coach assumes count	No
Baserunning	Runners may only advance one base on errant throws to any base or to the pitcher	Runners may advance as many bases at runner’s own risk		
Leadoffs	Leadoff after ball leaves the pitcher’s hand			
Base Stealing	No Stealing	No Stealing	Stealing Allowed	Stealing Allowed
Hit by Pitch	No Base	No Base	Awarded 1 st base if a direct hit or on a roll/bounce (No base when coach pitch)	Awarded 1 st base if a direct hit or on a roll/bounce
Walks	No	No	Yes (2 per inning, no intentional walks)	Yes
Bunting & Slapping	No	No	Yes (No, when coach-pitch)	Yes
Illegal Pitch	No	No	Warning Issued	Will be called
Dropped Third Strike Rule	Not in effect	Not in effect	In effect “2 outs, go! Less than 2, go if 1 st is open.”	In effect “2 outs, go! Less than 2, go if 1 st is open.”
Infield Fly Rule	Not in effect	Not in effect	In effect	In effect
Look Back Rule	Does not apply	Does not apply	Applies	Applies
Tie Breaker Rule	No	Progressive Tie Breaker – 1 inning max (Spring only)		

***** Note: due to some 8u teams having 13 players and some 10u teams having 12 players this season, coaches in these divisions may agree during the pre-game meeting with the umpires to play an extra outfielder (5 in 8U, 4 in 10U) if all 13 players (12 in 10U) are in the lineup. Both coaches must agree to this. The **BoD HIGHLY encourages** this as the goal is to never have more than 2 girls sitting per inning. In 8U, if a team with 13 players is playing against a team with 12 or fewer players, the team with 12 or fewer players may also play with 5 outfielders if desired. Likewise, in 10U, if a team with 12 players is playing against a team with 11 or fewer players, the team with 11 or fewer players may also play with 4 outfielders if desired.**

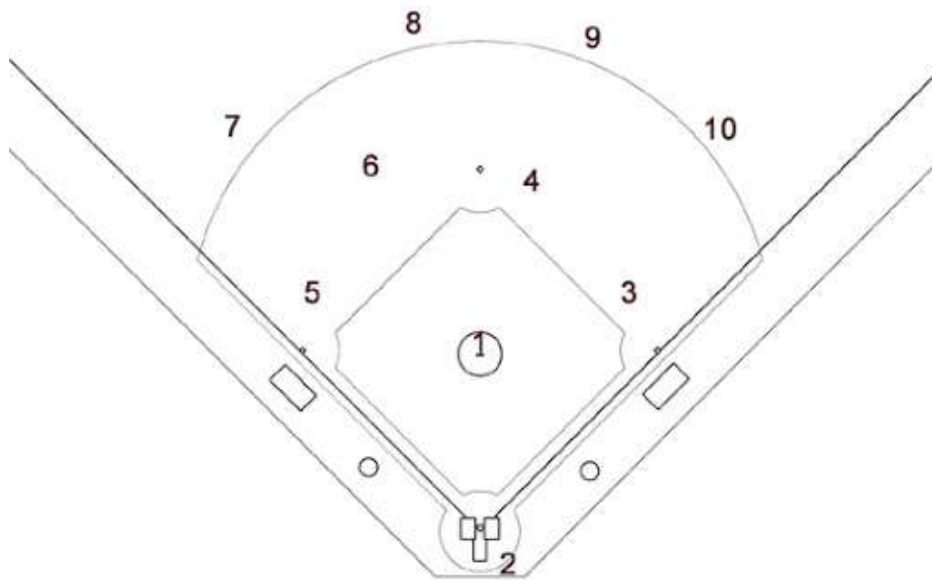
B. INTERLEAGUE PLAY

Each season, the Board of Directors will determine participation of each division in Interleague (co-op) play. When in conflict, Interleague rules will take precedence over Local rules. Interleague rules will be provided to managers, as necessary.

C. LOCAL RULES

1. All Divisions:

- a. Coaches should encourage game play and defensive positioning that would be appropriate for a higher level of play.
- b. Player Positions (when fielding 10 players): Pitcher (F1), Catcher (F2), first baseman (F3), second baseman (F4), third baseman (F5), short stop (F6), left fielder (F7), left center fielder (F8), right center fielder (F9), right fielder (F10)
- c. Every player must play defense at least 2 innings in every game, unless there is an injury. There will be free defensive substitution. Substitutes may enter and re-enter the game defensively without restriction.
- d. All players present will bat throughout the game with defensive substitutions not affecting the batting order.
- e. Player Vacancies: No team shall be required to forfeit a game due to an insufficient number of players.
 - If the number of players is less than nine, there will be no penalty.
 - If a team is short players, they may pick up a current LCGSA registered player from the same or lower division.
 - Pick-up players MUST play the outfield, bat last in the order and wear their own uniform.
 - In the event a player has to leave, the player will be skipped in the lineup with no penalty.
 - If a player shows up late for a game, for just reason, she will replace a pick-up player or will be added to the bottom of the lineup.
 - Pick-up Pitchers and Catchers are only allowed with approval by the Division Commissioner.
 - No pick-up players will be allowed in the End of Season Tournament, unless otherwise approved.
- f. Tie Breaker Rule: When the score is tied after the completion of seven innings or time has expired, the Tie Breaker Rule goes into effect. For league games, only one extra inning will be played, and a progressive tie breaker will be used. At the start of the extra inning, runners are placed on second base and third base with the intent of accelerating opportunities to score. The runners are the last two batters in the previous inning. At least one full inning is played, allowing each team the same chance to score. If the score remains tied, the game will end in a tie.
- g. Game Completion:
 - Games will be Finish the Inning in the Spring but shall be considered complete when time expires in the following situations:
 1. If Home Team is batting and ahead.
 2. If Visiting Team is batting and Home Team cannot catch up (due to run limit per inning).
 3. If Home Team is batting but cannot catch up (due to run limit per inning).
 4. If Home Team scores the go-ahead run.
 - If games are cancelled due to weather conditions, games will be considered complete if 3 innings were completed.



2. 6U Division Rules Highlights

- a. **Duration of Game:** Games will have a 7-inning limit. No new inning will start after 55 minutes. No extra innings.
- b. **Run Limit per Inning:** 5 runs
- c. **Playing Time:**
 - All players will play on defense in each inning with equal participation between infield and outfield assignments throughout the season.
- d. **Coaching Staff:**
 - 3 Offensive Coaches – Coach-pitcher, First Base, Third Base
 - 3 Defensive Coaches – Positioned down the first and third base lines, beyond the offensive coaches, to help instruct the players. Also a home plate assistant to help the catcher retrieve passed balls.
 - Dugout Chaperone - There must be at least one volunteer in the team dugout at all times.
- e. **Batting:** Ball/Strike count will be kept. Batter will have up to 5 pitches to hit a fair ball, but out after 3 strikes. Should a batter fail to hit a ball at the end of 5 pitches even if there are less than 3 strikes, the batter will be called out. Should a batter foul off the 5th pitch, she will be allowed a 6th pitch. If the 6th pitch is fouled off the batter will get a final 7th pitch. If the batter fails to hit a fair ball, then the batter will be called out.
- f. **Baserunning:**
 - Runners may get a lead off when the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
 - Runners may only advance a maximum of 1 base on an errant throw to any base or to the pitcher.
- g. **Time will be called when:**
 - the ball is returned to the pitcher's circle and the pitcher has control of the ball (encourage her to hold the ball up for the umpire so control is clear)
 - when the lead runner is tagged while safely occupying a base; however, other base runners may still advance if the base ahead is open
 - after the baserunners have advanced 1 base following an errant throw to any base or the pitcher
 - in the judgment of the umpire, all play has come to a complete halt

3. 8U Division Rules Highlights

- a. **Duration of Game:** Games will have a 7-inning limit. No new inning will start after 55 minutes. Only 1 extra inning allowed for Progressive International Tie Breaker.
- b. **Run Limit per Inning:** 6 runs (5 runs in the Fall season)
- c. **Number of Fielders:** Up to 10 players may be positioned on the field, including 4 outfielders. Catcher must be positioned in the catcher's box (within 7' from back of batter's box) and shall squat in the catching position. However, if at least one of the teams has 13 players in the lineup, the coaches may agree during the pre-game meeting to play up to 11 players in the field, with 5 outfielders.
- d. **Coaching Staff:**
 - 3 Offensive Coaches – Coach-pitcher, First Base, Third Base
 1. The coach-pitcher may coach or talk to the batter but must not leave the circle before the pitch. Once the batter becomes a batter/runner the coach may continue to talk to the batter/runner as long as he/she is moving to foul territory and does not interfere with the play.
 2. Base coaches shall remain within the coach's box anytime the ball is live.
 - 2 Defensive Coaches – Positioned in the outfield along the first and third base lines to help instruct the players. The coaches should remain behind the offensive coaches and not interfere with play during a live ball.
 - Dugout Chaperone - There must be at least one volunteer in the team dugout at all times.
- e. **Batting:** Ball/Strike count will be kept. Batter will have up to 5 pitches to hit a fair ball, but out after 3 strikes. Should a batter fail to hit a ball at the end of 5 pitches even if there are less than 3 strikes, the batter will be called out. Should a batter foul off the 5th pitch, she will be allowed a 6th pitch. If the 6th pitch is fouled off the batter will get a final 7th pitch. If the batter fails to hit a fair ball, then the batter will be called out.
- f. **Time will be called when:**
 - the ball is returned to the pitcher's circle and the pitcher has control of the ball (encourage her to hold the ball up for the umpire so control is clear)
 - when the lead runner is tagged while safely occupying a base; however, other base runners may still advance if the base ahead is open
 - in the judgment of the umpire, all play has come to a complete halt

4. **10U Division Rules Highlights**

- a. **Duration of Game:** Games will have a 7-inning limit. No new inning will start after 70 minutes. Only 1 extra inning allowed for Progressive International Tie Breaker.
- b. **Run Limit per Inning:** 4 runs
- c. **Coaching Staff:**
 - 2-3 Offensive Coaches – First Base, Third Base, Coach-pitcher only when necessary
 - No Defensive Coaches will be allowed on the field of play.
- d. **Number of Fielders:** A typical game will have the standard 9 defensive players. However, if at least one of the teams has 12 players in the lineup, the coaches may agree during the pre-game meeting to play up to 10 players in the field, with 4 outfielders.
- e. **Batting:**
 - When the pitcher reaches a ball-four count after having already walked 2 batters in an inning, the batter's coach will come into the game to pitch the remaining strikes left in the count. (i.e. If the batter has 0 strikes, she will get 3 pitches; if she has 1 strike, she will get 2 pitches; if she has 2 strikes, she will get 1 pitch.) The at-bat will continue if third strike or any pitch thereafter is fouled off. When the coach-pitcher is pitching:
 1. the defensive player-pitcher must have both feet within the pitcher's circle before the ball is pitched and cannot leave her position until the batter makes contact with the ball.
 2. the coach-pitcher must have one foot in contact with the pitching rubber.
 3. the coach-pitcher will try to avoid interfering with the play after the ball has been hit by moving to foul territory away from the play.
 4. no bunting will be allowed.
 5. no base stealing will be allowed.
 6. no base will be awarded if the batter is hit by a pitch.
 7. the batter is out on a third strike, whether caught by the catcher or not.

5. **12U / 14U Divisions Rules Highlights**

- a. **Duration of Game:** Games will have a 7-inning limit. No new inning will start after 70 minutes. Only 1 extra inning allowed for Progressive International Tie Breaker.
- b. **Run Limit per Inning:** 5 runs

Rule Definitions for 10U and up:

Dropped Third Strike Rule

When the catcher fails to catch the third strike before the ball touches the ground and there are:

- fewer than two outs and first base is not occupied at the time of the pitch, or
- anytime there are two outs,

the batter may run to first base. If the batter runs under these conditions, a play is required to put out the runner.

Infield Fly Rule

The batter will be called out, if an infield fly is declared. An infield fly is a fair fly ball, not including a line drive or an attempted bunt, which can be caught by an infielder, pitcher or catcher with ordinary effort when first, first and second, first and third or first, second and third bases are occupied with less than two outs.

Look Back Rule

The Look Back Rule is triggered when the pitcher has control of the ball in the pitcher's circle and is not attempting to make a play on a runner (including a fake or threatened throw); any runner stopped on a base must stay on the base, and any runner not on a base must immediately either advance toward the next base or return to the previous base. Any subsequent change in direction or stop by the runner while off the base will result in the runner being called out, so long as the pitcher does not attempt to make a play. The responsibility is on the runner. There is no obligation on the pitcher to look, fake, or throw.