

# 2025 A.L.L Rules for 8U Division Games

## General Note:

**These rules govern all Almaden Little League play at the 8U level. Almaden versus Almaden. These rules can be used for inter-league home games if agreed upon by the visiting team prior to the start of the game.**

## **Introduction**

The 8U (AA) Division play emphasizes learning and development across a wide range of individual and team-based skills. At this level the players pitch and catch, and both hitting and fielding become essential aspects of the game play. Almost every aspect of ASA fastpitch softball is introduced here.

Batters will face a player pitcher for the first time in addition to some coach pitching. Games may include trained youth umpires, and scores will be kept. The ultimate goal is not winning the game; however, an element of competition will be introduced at this AA level. Coaches, please enjoy this experience and be certain the kids have fun as you do your best to teach all aspects of fastpitch softball including fundamentals, rules, gameplay and strategy.

## **Division Rules:**

1. The AA Division games will be played using a 10-inch low compression softball.
2. Pitching distance is 30 feet. An 8' radius circle, centered on the pitching rubber, is used.
3. AA Division games will be a maximum of 5 innings with a 90-minute time limit. No new inning starts after time has expired, but the inning in progress will be played to completion. The clock starts with first pitch. Official inning time will be the moment the last out is recorded. Home team's official scorer will keep the clock.
4. A team must have a minimum of 6 players to start the game. Players arriving late are inserted at the bottom of the batting order. No penalty out is taken for missing player(s).
5. A team uses 10 players on defense. Pitcher, catcher, first, second, third, shortstop, and four outfielders. If fewer than 10 players are available, coaches should deploy all available players on defense, keeping a maximum of 6 players on the infield (catcher, pitcher, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and shortstop).
6. Outfielders must be on the grass when ball is pitched and may enter dirt area of infield only after the ball has been hit.
7. All players at the game will bat using a continuous batting order.

8. All players must play a minimum of two innings on defense and at least one of thoseinnings must be played at an infield position. No player shall sit the bench for a secondinning in any game unless all other players on the team have sat at least one inning ondefense in that game.
9. Innings 1 through 3: A half inning ends when the defensive team achieves three outs orwhen the offensive team scores 4 runs.
10. Innings 4 through 6: Starting with the 4th inning, the half inning ends when the defensiveteam achieves three outs or when the offensive team increases its lead by 4 runs (or takes a4 run lead if trailing).
11. A team trailing by 10 or more runs in the bottom of the last inning (in which time hasexpired) is not subject to the 4 run limitation regardless of which inning the game is in, butcan only score enough runs to tie the game at that point and cannot win the game.
12. If a team trails by 10 runs or more after its 4th at bat, the game ends.
13. No infield fly rule at this level.
14. ***No stealing is allowed for the first half of the season (until April 1st). Once stealing is allowed it will only be during player pitch, and only one base per pitch. Stealing home is not allowed in any situation. Bunting is allowed but only against a player pitcher. Baserunners cannot leave their base to lead-off until the ball is released by the pitcher.***
15. In general, during the first four innings of a game, no pitcher should throw more than two innings. If the game goes to a 5th or 6th inning, a pitcher is allowed to throw one additional inning for a total of no more than three innings in the same game. Each league has their own pitching limit guidelines as to how those limits will be measured and managed, and each team should abide by their own league rules on pitching limits.
16. No walks allowed. The player pitcher throws to each batter. After the pitcher throws 4balls out of the strike zone, as called by the umpire, the coach pitcher will enter the gameto pitch. The strike count will remain on the batter. The coach will pitch to the batter until:
  1. The ball is hit into fair play,
  2. The batter strikes out swinging (no called strikes),
  3. The coach throws a total of three pitches and batter is out. Foul balls with twostrikes are unlimited.
17. Hit batter is a dead ball and batter is awarded coach pitch. ***If a player pitcher hits the batter (HBP) the count will reset.*** However, if the batter is hit by a ball that hits theground first, the pitch is a ball and the batter continues to face the player pitcher. If a batterswings at a pitch that then hits the batter, the pitch is considered a “strike” and playcontinues. A batter is considered to be “hit by pitch” if she is struck by a ball traveling intothe batter’s box regardless of whether she attempts to get out of the way.
18. Hit by Pitch Rule: Upon the 3rd batter being hit in a single inning by one pitcher, that

pitcher will be removed from the mound immediately for the duration of the inning. Said pitcher will be allowed to pitch the next inning (provided that it is only her 2nd inning), but upon the second batter hit next inning, she is removed and ineligible to pitch for the remainder of that game.

19. If a coach pitcher is accidentally struck by a batted ball (either when pitching or when acting as the umpire), the ball is immediately ruled dead and the pitch is treated as “nopitch”. The batter returns to the batter’s box and the count remains the same.
20. To help speed up rec season games, a staff member of the defensive team may stand at the backstop to retrieve passed balls and also return the ball back to the pitcher. However, that staff member must move out of the way when a ball is hit into play to avoid interference.
21. Balls hit to outfield: Regardless of whether the ball is hit into the outfield on the fly or on the ground, if a hit ball reaches the outfield, runners may advance the bases until the ball is thrown back into the infield and controlled by the pitcher. ***Controlling the ball in the pitcher’s circle will be required to prevent further advancement starting (April 1st).***
22. If the ball is thrown back into the infield and is possessed by any player other than the pitcher, or if the pitcher possesses the ball but is not in the pitcher’s circle, runners may continue to advance until the pitcher has possession and is in the pitcher’s circle. Runners will be called out if physically tagged by the ball (or by the glove with the ball inside) when possessed by an infielder. If the runner has “rounded” the base at the time the ball is possessed by the pitcher in the pitcher’s circle, they may advance (at the risk of the runner being tagged out) to the next base. Base coaches are asked to honor the game and return runners back to the correct base should the umpire not be in position to see where the runner was when the ball is possessed by the pitcher in the pitcher’s circle.
23. Balls hit to any player playing an infield position (i.e. all players except the 4 outfielders) and thrown to first base or thrown against a forced runner to 2nd base, 3rd base, or homeplate stops all play even if there is an overthrow. Runners can only advance to the base they are running to at the start of the play. In attempted tag plays at 2nd, 3rd or home from the infield with no force out, only one additional base may be advanced on an overthrow (at the risk of the runner).
24. Base runners may not advance on any pitch not batted in play by the batter regardless of wild pitch or passed ball. ***Until Stealing is allowed starting (April 1st).*** Runners may not advance on an overthrow by catcher when returning the ball to the pitcher.
25. Runners must avoid making contact with a defensive player when that player is in the act of fielding a batted ball (either in the air or on the ground). Runners will be called out for interference if they do not allow enough room for a defensive player to field a batted ball. Otherwise, the runners must remain in the base paths when moving from one base to the next and the fielder must not contact the runner unless they are attempting to field the ball or if they are in possession of the ball. If a fielder creates interference, the runner will be allowed to safely advance to the next base.
26. If a batted ball passes a defensive player in the infield and that player could reasonably make a play on the batted ball but does not, and the runner is unintentionally struck by the ball, the ball is considered in play and the runner is not ruled out per ASA rules.

## **Additional Notes And Rules:**

1. Games may end in a tie.
2. All batters and base runners must wear an ASA approved batting helmet with full face shield. Per ASA rules, chin straps are not required, but must be tight against the chin if worn. Coaches please check that all equipment is worn properly and fits the player.
3. Catchers must wear a full set of catching equipment that meets ASA standards including full helmet with face mask, chin guard, chest protector, and knee/shin/foot guards that wrap around the leg. Catchers should be properly instructed on the location to crouch to receive a pitched ball that avoids contact with the batter.
4. Players are not allowed to wear jewelry of any kind other than medical alert information pieces (which should be covered by wrist band or tape).
5. Balls hit over the fence on the fly are considered an automatic Home Run. Balls hit over the fence on a bounce are considered a Ground Rule Double.
6. The batting team will supply a coach pitcher. The coach pitcher must be in contact with the pitching plate when the pitching motion is started and when the pitch is delivered.
7. The defensive team will supply a coach umpire if an umpire is not otherwise provided for the game. The coach umpire will stand either at the back of the pitcher's circle or behind the catcher to call balls and strikes. If a coach pitcher enters the field to pitch, the coach umpire will stand off the field in a position to make safe/out calls.
8. Strike zone for AA Division will be considered the bottom of the knee to the arm pit. Any pitch that crosses the plate within that area based upon the player's height when normally standing (with a slight knee bend) is a strike. An umpire is not to reduce a player's strike zone if that player crouches down or has a significant bend at the waist or knee.
9. A batter that throws her bat (unintentionally as deemed by the umpire) will be warned as many as two times. The third time a bat is thrown, that player will be automatically called out. Any player deemed to have intentionally thrown her bat will be immediately called out.
10. A pitcher must follow all standard ASA rules including the need to have both feet in contact with the pitching plate when the pitching motion is started.
11. Pitchers must wear a defensive fielder's mask at all times.
12. When a coach pitcher is pitching, the player pitcher must have at least one foot within the pitcher's circle when the pitch is released.