

West Deptford Little League Spring 2026

Rookie Softball Rules



LEAGUE RULES:

- No parents/family members are allowed on the field or in the dugout.
- When players are in the dugout, a coach must also be in there to supervise.
- Teams must remove all belongings and trash before leaving the field after a game/practice.
- The home team grooms and lines the field for games and the away team grooms the field post-game.

GENERAL:

- Rookie Softball is intended to be a hybrid of both Tee Ball and Coach Pitch. Players shall work towards hitting live pitching while still developing good softball mechanics with teaching and instruction interspersed throughout play.

OFFENSE:

- All player bats must meet USA Softball standards set by Little League.
- A coach may pitch from an area up to 6 ft from in front of the mound (roughly one large step) or from the mound area.
- All pitching will be underhand.
- Each batter will receive no more than five (5) pitches to make a hit. Following the fifth pitch, a tee shall be placed for batters to hit.
- There will be no called strikes or walks granted.
- The side will be retired and the half inning over when one of the following conditions has been met:
 - Three (3) outs have been recorded on the bases
 - The offense has scored three (3) runs
 - Each batter on the offensive team has had one at-bat
- With the exception of a ball hit into the outfield, base runners should be coached to advance only one base. Try to enforce fundamentals without getting overly aggressive and taking advantage of players struggling in the field.
- Tag rule is in effect except for at home plate.
- No leads and no steals.
- No infield fly rule.
- No bunting.

- If a batted ball hits a coach, it is considered a live ball.
- All teams will use continuous batting.
- One coach or parent must be in the dugout at all times.
- Offense may use two (2) adult coaches total in the field (other than pitcher) – one at first base and one at third base.

DEFENSE:

- The defense shall field no more than four (4) infielders plus a pitcher. 1B – 2B – SS – 3B
- The defense shall field a pitcher for defensive purposes, but the pitcher must play behind the pitching mound.
- All defensive pitchers MUST wear a Heart Guard Protector during defensive play. The use of a mask is encouraged but not mandatory.
- The defense will not provide a catcher. One (1) coach from the defensive team shall serve as the catcher.
- Teams can play with a minimum of 5 players. Infield positioning should be a prime focus with players learning positions. Outfielders should remain in the grass for backup purposes only.

SAFETY:

- Only players, managers, and approved coaches are permitted on the playing field during game play and practice sessions.
- Batters and base runners are required to wear a helmet at all times.
- Headfirst slides are not permitted. Feet first slides should be discouraged.
- Regulations prohibit on-deck batters. No player should handle a bat until it is his/her time to bat.
- All bats should be kept on the outside of the dugout area during game play.
- Players may not wear watches, rings, pins, jewelry or other metallic items.
- There will be no tag out plays at the plate. All plays at the plate will be considered “force” plays regardless of whether there are additional runners behind the scoring runner.
- A player is not allowed to wear metal spikes.
- If a player is injured, no matter how minor, an incident report must be completed and turned in by the manager (forms will be located at the concession stand and can be turned in there).

All other rules are by the Little League Rulebook.