

# Rookie Softball - 2021 Playing Rules

Managers and coaches should familiarize themselves with the official baseball regulations as published by Little League International. The following items are intended to clarify those rules and to identify local Mukilteo Little League rules.

## 2021 Rookie Softball Playing Rules

### 1. Game Preliminaries (Supplements LL Rule 3.00)

- 1.1. The philosophy of the Rookie Softball division is to be a developmental division whereby all players receive quality playing time throughout each game. These guidelines have been established to ensure the consistency of this philosophy:
  - 1.1.1. No player may be on the bench for more than two consecutive defensive innings per game.
  - 1.1.2. No player shall sit out three innings unless every player has sat for at least two full innings.
  - 1.1.3. Players shall not play more than two (2) innings at the same defensive position, and each player must play two (2) innings in the infield.
  - 1.1.4. All players should play, as close as possible, the same number of innings per week.
- 1.2. Eleven Inch (11") safety softballs shall be used for all games.
- 1.3. Teams shall have the option to field ten (10) defensive positions (six infielders and four outfielders). Outfielders will be positioned at a minimum depth of 20 feet back from the baselines.
- 1.4. Players shall be rotated through the various defensive positions so that every player has the opportunity to play each position during the course of the season.

Sample Positions Rotation

Twelve Player Roster	Eleven Player Roster	Ten Player Roster	Nine Player Roster
P	P	P	P
C	C	C	C
1B	1B	1B	1B
RF	RF	RF	RF
2B	2B	2B	2B
RC	RC	RC	CF
Bench	SS	SS	SS
SS	LC	LC	LF
LC	3B	3B	3B
3B	LF	LF	
LF	Bench		
Bench			

Rotation use: Once a manager has determined their playing roster for any given game, players are assigned a starting position per the table above. Each player should then rotate one position down for each subsequent inning played. Managers should continue the rotation as initially defined until all players have had a chance to play all positions. Managers are required to provide the opposing manager a copy of their defensive rotation upon request.

Because games are limited to 6 innings, the grids above should be used for consecutive games to ensure each player gets to play all six [main] positions.

- 1.5. Umpire Coverage: The Home team should provide the plate umpire, the Visiting team should provide the base umpire.
- 1.6. Managers shall provide the home plate umpire and opposing manager completed line-up card. Each batter shall bat in the order in which they are listed.
- 1.7. Unlimited player substitutions are allowed between innings.

- 1.8. Scorebook: The Rookie Softball division is an instructional league, yet a scorebook will still be kept by the home team. Regardless of the score, both halves of every inning will be played, subject to any time limit requirements.
- 1.9. One fielding coach may take the field with the defensive team. The Fielding coach must remain in the outfield grass during live ball play. The fielding coach must not distract the offensive / defensive players or interfere with play while on the field of play.

## **2. Starting & Ending the Game (Supplements LL Rule 4.00)**

- 2.1. Teams must use a continuous batting order that contains all present eligible players on the roster regardless of whether they are currently in the defensive line-up (rule 4.04)
- 2.2. Six (6) players are required to start a game
- 2.3. Games will consist of a maximum of 6 innings.
- 2.4. The first of either three (3) outs or five (5) runs ends a half inning.
- 2.5. In compliance with Little League Rule 8.03. Coaches & Umpires must strive to minimize downtime between half innings to one (1) minutes or less.
- 2.6. One adult manager, coach or parent must be in the dugout at all times. If a team has additional coaches, they may coach the bases.
- 2.7. Time Limits: No new inning shall start after 90 minutes from the time the game was scheduled to start. All games must end at 110 minutes (HARD STOP) regardless of where you are in the game. Time limits must be strictly adhered to.

## **3. Putting the Ball in Play – Live Ball (Supplements LL Rule 5.00)**

- 3.1. Pitching Progression
  - 3.1.1. All innings will be coach pitch for the first six (6) weeks of the season.
  - 3.1.2. Starting June 1<sup>st</sup> coaches will pitch the first two (2) innings and players shall pitch for the remaining four (4) innings of the game.
- 3.2. Coach Pitch Innings
  - 3.2.1. The manager, coach, or other adult designated by the manager shall pitch to his or her own team. The adult pitcher shall not coach his or her offensive players, distract the defensive players, or interfere with play while on the field of play.
  - 3.2.2. The adult pitcher must pitch from the regulation Softball Minors distance of 35' from home plate. The pitching circle should be 8 feet in diameter around the pitching rubber.
  - 3.2.3. There are no called strikes. However, a batter still gets a strike if she hits a foul ball or swings and misses a pitch. A batter can strike out if she swings and misses a third strike.
  - 3.2.4. A batter cannot be walked and will not be awarded first base when struck by a ball. A batter will be awarded first base if the catcher interferes with her swing.
  - 3.2.5. Each player will receive up to six (6) Coach Pitches to put the ball into play. In the event the batter fouls their 6th pitch, they will continue to receive pitches until they put the ball in play or strike out.
  - 3.2.6. The adult pitcher must make a reasonable effort to avoid contact with the live ball. A batted ball that strikes the adult pitcher is a dead ball and the batter and any base runners will advance one base. A batted ball that passes through the pitching area without obstruction (doesn't come in contact with the adult pitcher) is a live ball.
- 3.3. Player Pitch Innings
  - 3.3.1. The standard three strikes (called or swinging) and the batter is out apply.
  - 3.3.2. There are no walks granted, upon the occurrence of ball four (4), a coach shall enter the game and pitch up to three additional pitches to the batter. Strikes on the batter carry forward to coach delivered pitches.
  - 3.3.3. Pitchers shall not pitch more than 2 innings per game. Delivery of a single pitch constitutes having pitched in an inning.

## **4. The Batter (Supplements LL Rule 6.00)**

- 4.1. The infield fly rule is not applicable.

- 4.2. Bunting is allowed. Bunting Foul on a third strike is an out. A Batter will be called out for illegal action if she fakes a bunt and then takes a full swing.
- 4.3. If a player throws a bat, her team will be given one team warning, and upon the next infraction, the player will be called out. This is a judgment call by the umpires.

**5. The Runner (Supplements LL Rule 7.00)**

- 5.1. Base runners cannot take a lead and no base stealing is allowed. If a runner leaves a base before a pitched ball has reached the batter, the umpire shall immediately declare "no play." The runner must return to the base and the batter will resume her at bat with an unchanged pitch count.
- 5.2. The runner shall be declared safe if a defender is standing or otherwise obstructing first base causing the running to slow down to avoid a collision. This a judgment call by the umpire.
- 5.3. On any fair ball hit to the outfield:
  - 5.3.1. The batter is allowed to advance a maximum of two bases
  - 5.3.2. When a batted ball reaches the outfield, existing base runners' advancement is unlimited until the batted ball is returned to the infield. If a runner is between bases when the ball reaches the infield, the runner may continue to the base she is attempting to reach. The ball is considered to have entered the infield when it breaks the plane between the bases, whether the ball is controlled or not.
  - 5.3.3. All base runners are subject to be put out on any attempts at advancement.
- 5.4. Base runners may not advance on an overthrow, to any base.
- 5.5. Sliding is allowed (Feet first only, Rule 7.08(a)(4))
- 5.6. A special pinch runner is allowed for a catcher that gets on base or is on base with two outs to help expedite the game. The special pinch runner will be the player that made the last out in the current at-bat.