

# SGSL USSSA Rules Modifications

## Approved February 2026

### League-Wide General Rule Modifications

#### General Play Rule Modifications

1. A continuous batting order utilizing all players on the roster shall be used in each division. If a player leaves a game early due to injury or another event, that player's spot in the batting order will be skipped, and no out will be recorded. If a player arrives late, they will be added to the end of the batting lineup. If a player leaves the game and returns before the game ends, they will resume their original position in the batting order.
2. Unlimited and free substitutions by position will be permitted with the exception of the pitcher who may only re-enter as a pitcher one time during any single game.
3. Teams may field ten position players on defense. No less than eight constitute a team (Minors and above).
4. No new inning should be started after one hour and fifty minutes. Rookie ball however shall have a sixty minute time limit on all games. Farm division will not begin a new inning after 90 minutes.
5. Games will be scheduled and rescheduled by the League Scheduler.
6. Teams without a sufficient number of players may borrow players from the opposing team on a rotating basis to field an adequate number of defensive positions. If players are called up from a lower division they may not pitch.
7. A complete game shall be four innings for a scheduled six inning game and five innings for a scheduled seven inning game, unless the home team is ahead after three and one half or four and one half innings respectively. If the inning requirement has not been met when the game is called because of darkness, the game will be considered an official game. "Darkness" will be considered 15 minutes after the official sundown time that evening (to be announced by the umpire at the pre-game meeting). If the inning requirement has not been met as a result of inclement weather, the game will be resumed from the point where play was stopped to the completion of a regulation game. The Coaches must agree prior to leaving the field on a point where play was stopped. A playoff game must be played to the completion of the regularly scheduled innings.
8. During the regular season, a team may request to reschedule a game due to a civic- or school-sponsored event that impacts player attendance by contacting the League Scheduler at least two (2) weeks in advance. Event details and affected players must be provided. If approved, the League will notify the head coaches of both teams.

Playoff games may only be rescheduled for school-sponsored events impacting at least four (4) rostered players. Call-up players may be used under the same restrictions as regular season games. All reschedule requests are subject to approval based on field availability, umpire availability, and other scheduling factors.

Requests for Saturday game cancellation will not be honored, as Saturday is league game day for all teams.

No scheduling changes will be made due to coaching conflicts, as each team is expected to have 2-3 coaches and, while it is preferred to have all coaches on hand, only one coach is required to attend each game.

9. Each player must play at least one half of the scheduled innings per game and no player should sit on the bench twice before each player has sat on the bench once. Coaches must attempt to balance the number of innings played. The exception being the home team not playing the bottom of the last inning, an injury, or a complete game called due to weather or darkness.

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10. Each player must be given fair opportunities to play both infield and outfield positions for at least two (2) innings during all regular season games, unless there is a safety concern. If the Executive Board is notified via email on the same day as a game that a team may not be in compliance with this rule, the Board may require that team to submit batting lineups and defensive fielding positions for the next two (2) games to verify compliance.
11. As stated in Rule #7, call of game on account of darkness will be enacted at 15 minutes past the official sundown time that evening or earlier if it is determined unsafe to play by the umpire, on-duty E-Board member or coaches from both teams. It is strongly advised that both head coaches-speak to the umpire prior to the game to discuss this topic to minimize disagreements when the game is called. Head coaches and the umpire are asked to note the game start time.
12. There will be no enforcement of the "Run" or "Mercy" rule, however, scores will be posted with a five (5) run maximum margin of victory (a score that ends 23 – 5 will be reported as 10 – 5). This will hold true for all divisions.
13. Speed up rule: Coaches should substitute a courtesy runner for the player catching the next half inning if that player is on base with two outs- The substitute runner must be the player who made the second out of the inning.
14. Speed up rule: Coaches must have a defensive team on the field and ready to resume play within two minutes of the final out of the previous half inning. Failure to do so may result in being charged with an automatic out in the teams' next at bat.
15. Speed up rule: Coaches should have a written line up including batting order and fielding positions by inning available for players to see and use in preparation for each inning. The lineup should be posted on the fence of the team dugout.
16. Speed up rule: Pitchers will be allowed to take up to 5 warm-up pitches each inning, with the option of the catcher throwing down to second base on 5th pitch. This applies to both new and returning pitchers.
17. Pinch-runners for a player who is injured or who can play but is unable to run/slide: The rules call for a player who is not in the lineup to run for a player in this instance, but since all of our players are in the lineup we cannot follow this rule. Since the alternative is to force an injured player to run for herself (which we do not want to do) we will use the following rule for pinch-runners: If a player is unable to run for herself, the coach will call time-out once the player has reached base safely and the play is dead. The last batted out in the lineup will take the place of the injured player and run for them. This "pinch-runner" will not be allowed to steal or advance on a passed ball, but may only advance on a batted ball. The intent here is to avoid any arguments about a coach's intent when using a pinch runner.
18. All managers and coaches must arrive at a reasonable time before each game to ensure preparation of the fields for play and warm up the players. Field preparation includes raking the infield area and lining the batter's boxes, first and third base lines, and the pitcher's circle. Fields should be game ready at least 10 minutes prior to the scheduled start time of the game.
19. There will be no regular season championship. All teams in the High School, Major, and Minor divisions will qualify for the playoffs.
20. There will be no fake bunting and then swinging for a hit allowed.

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21. Head-first sliding while advancing is prohibited and will result in the runner being called out; however, a runner may dive back to a base.
22. Hit-by-Pitch Rule (All Divisions)
  - a. Pitcher must be removed (as a pitcher) from the inning after three (3) hit batters in the inning
  - b. Pitcher must be removed (as a pitcher) from the game as a pitcher after five (5) hit batters during game (includes extra innings)
  - c. Hit-by-Pitch includes pitched balls that hits ground and/or hits foot or cleat
  - d. Hit batter does not include pitch ruled as slipped pitch by umpire
  - e. The player must make an attempt to get out of the way of the pitch. (Approved 11/12/2024)
23. No bat wagging to distract the catcher
24. There will be no continuation or delayed stealing.
25. Walk up music will not be allowed during any regular season or playoff game.
26. Slap-hitting is allowed.
27. No on-deck swinging is allowed.
28. Playoff Seeding Procedure (Minors, Majors, High School Divisions):
  - a. Points Awarded (Win = 2 pts., Tie = 1pt.)
  - b. Head-to-head winner (only for a two-team tie)
  - c. Lowest average runs allowed per game for season (total runs allowed divided by total number of games played)
  - d. Coin toss
29. Players are not allowed to be used as call-ups when their assigned team has a conflicting scheduled game.
30. Playoff extra innings use the International Tiebreaker. Regular season games can end in a tie. When used, the last batter of the previous inning starts on second base. Each team bats every inning; the game is not sudden death. The game ends when one team is ahead at the end of a full inning.
31. The close of registration is dependent on available team roster spots, but players must be registered by the first official league game (Opening Day) to be available to participate in the current SGSL spring season.
32. Draftable divisions (Minors, Majors, High School): Only players who are registered and paid in full by one day before the draft will be included on the draft board. Players who register and pay after this deadline will be added to a team within five (5) days after registering. Requests for specific coaches are not permitted.
33. Any rule interpretation questions must be raised to the umpire before the next pitch following the disputed play. If the dispute is not resolved by the coaches and the umpire, the umpire will suspend play and notify the Umpire-In-Charge (UIC) or the UIC's designee if the UIC is not available. The umpire and UIC (or designee) will consult to resolve all rule interpretation disputes. The UIC (or designee) will rule on all protests, and their decision is final. No protests are allowed on judgement calls, and no rule interpretation protests are allowed after the umpire has left the field at the end of the game.

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### **Pitching Rule Modifications**

1. Any pitcher can be removed from the game (as a pitcher) and re-entered once as a pitcher. (i.e. any pitcher can be removed from the game (as a pitcher) and re-entered once as a pitcher)
2. When a relief pitcher comes into the game during an inning, both the exiting and relief pitchers will be charged with an inning pitched.
3. Failure of a team to comply with the maximum innings pitched rule will be cause for protest by the opposing manager and possible forfeiture of the game in question.
4. Any pitcher may pitch extra innings in an extra inning game without being charged for innings pitched.
5. Non-windmill pitching (slingshot and power phase) is allowed in all divisions. Overhand pitching is not allowed.

# SGSL USSSA Rules Modifications

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### RULE MODIFICATIONS BY DIVISION

#### High School Division Rule Modifications

1. A pitcher will be allowed to pitch a maximum of five (5) innings per game. If a game goes into extra innings, a pitcher may pitch the extra innings, thus exceeding the five innings maximum for that game.
2. A pitcher may exceed the maximum of five innings when their team is trailing by 10 or more runs. Once their team cuts the deficit to under 10 runs the pitcher must be removed from the game.(Regular Season)
3. Regulation games are to consist of seven innings
4. A player can leave the base (take a lead) when the pitch crosses home plate or hits the ground.
5. The distance from the pitcher's rubber to the back of home plate is forty-three (43) feet for High School. (Regulation distance).
6. There is a five-run limit for the first two innings. The inning ends following the scoring of the fifth run.
7. Infield fly rule is in effect for this division. "An infield fly is a fair fly (not including a line drive or an attempted bunt) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort (rule does not preclude outfielders from being allowed to make the catch); and provided the hit is made before two are out and at a time when first and second base or all bases are occupied" (USSSA, 2024).
8. "Safety first" rules are enforced: Runners must slide if there is a potential play at the plate. Failure to do so will result in the runner being called out.

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### Major Division Rule Modifications

1. A pitcher will be allowed to pitch a maximum of four (4) innings per game. If a game goes into extra innings, a pitcher may pitch the extra innings, thus exceeding the four innings maximum for that game.
2. A pitcher may exceed the maximum of four innings when their team is trailing by 10 or more runs. Once their team cuts the deficit to under 10 runs the pitcher must be removed from the game. (Regular Season)
3. A player can leave the base (take a lead) when the pitch crosses home plate or hits the ground.
4. Any player may attempt to steal second or third base. Players may only advance one base at a time and may not advance on an overthrow. Runners who reach base on a walk may not continue to the next base. This rule does not apply to advancement on a batted ball.
5. One player may attempt to steal home once (1) per inning at coach's discretion. "Safety first" rules are enforced: Runners must slide if there is a potential play at the plate. Failure to do so will result in the runner being called out.
6. A team may score no more than 5 runs per inning during the first four innings. The inning ends following the scoring of the fifth run. In the 5th and 6th innings, the maximum number of runs allowed per inning is 10. The inning ends following the scoring of the tenth run.
7. A batter cannot advance to first on a dropped third strike.
8. Infield fly rule is in effect for this division. "An infield fly is a fair fly (not including a line drive or an attempted bunt) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort (rule does not preclude outfielders from being allowed to make the catch); and provided the hit is made before two are out and at a time when first and second base or all bases are occupied" (USSSA, 2024).
9. Regulation games are to consist of six innings
10. The distance from the pitcher's rubber to the back of home plate is forty (40) feet for Majors. (Regulation distance).

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### Minors Division Rule Modifications

1. For approximately the first four weeks of the season, depending on the number of teams, coach-assist pitching will be used so that each team plays every other team once with coach-assist pitching and once with player-pitching only. After the first walk of each inning, the next time an opposing player is walked, the batter's team's coach will come to the pitcher's mound to pitch to the batter to complete the at-bat. The player-pitcher will stay to field the position. The number of strikes in the count carries over, and the batter must either put the ball into play or strike out. If the ball is put into play, the coach should try to get out of the way of the ball. No stealing is allowed while a coach is pitching, and the coach may not give instruction while pitching. The umpire continues to call balls and strikes. Note: A batter awarded first base due to being hit by a pitch does not count as the first walk of the inning.
2. A pitcher will be allowed to pitch a maximum of three (3) innings per game.
  - a. If a game goes into extra innings, a pitcher may pitch the extra innings, thus exceeding the three innings maximum for that game.
  - b. A pitcher may exceed the maximum of three innings when their team is trailing by 10 or more runs. Once their team cuts the deficit to under 10 runs the pitcher must be removed from the game.
3. The ball size for Minors is eleven inches (11").
4. The distance from the pitcher's rubber to the back of home plate is thirty-five (35) feet for Minors.
5. The distance between bases is sixty (60) feet for Minors.
6. No tagging up.
7. Players may attempt to steal second or third base, or advance on a passed ball. Each player may attempt only one steal per inning, and stealing home is not permitted. Players may advance only one base at a time and may not advance on an overthrow; this includes runners who reach base on a walk. This restriction does not apply to advancement on a batted ball. Double steals, where two players steal at the same time, are allowed.
8. A batter cannot advance to first on a dropped third strike.
9. Intentional walks are not allowed.
10. There will be no enforcement of the infield fly rule.
11. A team may score no more than four (4) runs per inning for the first five innings. The inning ends following the scoring of the fourth run. In the sixth inning, there is no run limit.
12. A dead ball is called when the ball is in possession of any fielder in the infield clay area. Runners must return to the base they last touched at the time dead ball is called, unless, in the umpire's judgment, the runner is at least halfway to the next base at the time dead ball is called.
13. A player can leave the base (take a lead) when the pitch crosses home plate or hits the ground.
14. During a pitch, a ball that hits the pitchers leg or slips from their hand will be called a no pitch.
15. A team will be allowed two (2) visits to the pitcher's mound or pitchers timeouts per inning, however, the pitcher must be removed on the second visit. Teams will be allowed a maximum of four (4) timeouts per game.

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16. There will be two game balls used for each game in an effort to speed up the games. A member of the defensive team (coach or parent) shall stand behind home plate, up against the back stop and not directly behind the catcher. They will throw the second ball back to the pitcher after a pitched ball gets past the catcher. The coach or parent will then retrieve the passed ball. This person is NOT ALLOWED to coach from this position. When a player is stealing, the coach or parent will let the catcher pursue a passed ball.
17. Minor Division Strike Zone:
  - a. Over any part of home plate (white-to-white).
  - b. Shoulders to mid-shin.
18. Bunting allowed in Minors:
  - a. Batter must square before pitcher begins motion.
  - b. No fake bunting to swinging.
  - c. Bunting is not allowed when there is a base runner on third base. **Penalty:** The batter is declared out.
19. Regulation games are to consist of six innings.

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### Farm Division Rule Modifications

The purpose of the "Farm" Division is to provide players a transition from the Rookie Ball Division to the Minor Division. The focus is to be on teaching hitting and fielding in an encouraging environment while introducing the "rules of the game." The emphasis should be on developing skills during practices. Each team should practice twice per week prior to starting games and once per week thereafter. There will be no play-offs or championships. There will be an end of season All Star Game (Jewel Classic).

1. Coach-pitch. Tee available after 5 pitches.
2. Games are to be played on modified minors division fields.
3. Bases are to be 50 feet apart (60 feet when using field #4/#6).
4. Each team shall field all players on defense. ALL fielders shall play the respective positions (1B, 2B, etc.). NO more than seven players shall be within the "cut" infield. They are P (2), C, 1B, 2B, SS, and 3B. NO additional infielder positions are to be included. The pitchers shall stand parallel to the pitching machine/coach on the first and third base sides.
5. No jewelry will be worn during games or practices. (The only exception will be for a player who has recently had her ears pierced.)
6. Regulation games are to consist of six innings (with no new inning beginning after 90 minutes).
7. An inning shall consist of each team batting either six batters or three (3) outs (whichever comes first). If the 6th batter puts the ball in play, she is to round all of the bases, clearing the bases to end the inning.
8. Players are to advance only one base on a ball put in play. If a ball reaches the outfield grass **in the air**, the runners may attempt to advance a second base.
9. No WALKING allowed. Maximum of 4 swings and misses or eight (8) total pitches to any batter. Tee should be utilized after the 4th missed swing or the 8th pitch.
10. Scores are NOT to be kept. Coaches are encouraged to remember the opposing team's players during games (avoid running up scores!!!).
11. Defensive Coaches may stand in the outfield to help direct players during the game. They should avoid being part of the infield.
12. No bunting, leading, stealing, tagging up, fake swinging, drop third strike, infield fly rule.
13. All other applicable Minors Division Rules will apply.

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## Approved February 2026

### Rookie Ball Rule Modifications

The purpose of the Rookie Division is to introduce players to the game and have fun playing softball. The focus is to be on teaching hitting and fielding in an encouraging environment while introducing the “rules of the game.” The emphasis should be on developing skills during practices. Each team should practice twice per week prior to starting games and once per week thereafter. Coaches should use the hitting tee in practices and games as a tool to help players develop good hitting technique. The tees may need to be modified to a lower height. There will be no play-offs or championships. There will be no end of season All Star Game (Jewel Classic).

1. The batting tee should be used, with progression towards coach-pitching as the season progresses. No more than 5 pitches per batter.
2. No Outs Recorded: Defensive plays (tag outs, force outs, catches, etc.) are still encouraged and celebrated, but outs do not remove players from the bases or end the inning.
3. Coaches will pitch and catch when their team is at bat.
4. Games have a 60-minute time limit. No new inning shall begin after 50 minutes of play. The home team shall be given the opportunity to bat to complete the last inning of play.
5. Games should play until the time limit is reached. Each player will bat once every inning. Last batter keeps running to complete a home run and clear the bases for the end of the inning.
6. The team in the field should stay in their positions until the last runner crosses home plate.
7. No calling balls or strikes, bunting, stealing, sliding, or tagging up.
8. Use Farm Division rules as appropriate for all other issues.

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### Jewel Classic Rule Modifications

1. Teams will be formed in each division using the following format:
  - a. Farm - only 2nd grade players are eligible and all 2nd grade players are invited to play
  - b. Minors/Majors/High School - number of players selected from each team will be determined by the number of teams in each division
2. Players will be selected by the Head Coach of each team and must be submitted to the League Vice President(s) at least one week prior to the scheduled game date.
3. Head Coaches of each Jewel Classic team will be determined by the current posted standings as of Memorial Day weekend. All coaches are invited to help with the Jewel Classic teams, but at least one Head or Assistant Coach from each team will be assigned to coach.
4. Games in each division will be played to completion, with no time limit.
  - a. Farm/Minors/Majors - 6 innings
  - b. High School - 7 innings
5. Pitching Limits:
  - a. Minors - no coach pitch, 2 innings max per pitcher, one pitch counts as one inning
  - b. Majors - 2 innings max per pitcher, one pitch counts as one inning
  - c. High School - 3 innings max per pitcher, one pitch counts as one inning
6. Batting Order - A continuous batting order utilizing all players on the roster shall be used.
7. Fielding Requirements - Each player must be given fair opportunities to play both infield and outfield positions for at least two (2) innings. No player should sit on the bench twice before each player has sat on the bench once. No player should sit more than 2 innings.
8. All other regular season rule modifications apply for each division.