



2025 League Rules

Age 12 - Recreational

Updated January 15th, 2025

*Coaches may be suspended for not adhering to official USA Softball rules or the league modifications below.

Starting and Ending the Game

- ◆ Fields have 60' bases and a 40' pitching rubber.
- ◆ Games will be seven innings. No new inning may start after 75 minutes. Timing starts when the home team takes the field to start the game. Games may end in a tie.
- ◆ The 8-run rule is in effect after five innings. If the home team is ahead by 8 or more runs after the top of the sixth inning, the game is over.
- ◆ Maximum of five runs per inning. If a play results in multiple runners scoring beyond the limit of five runs, only five runs may be counted.
- ◆ If a team is short players:
 - o Teams with eight players must play. There is no automatic out for the ninth spot in the order. The opposing team may play its full complement of players.
 - o With seven or fewer players, the team with enough players wins by 6-0 forfeit. If both teams have seven or less, the game is not recorded in the league standings and the game will not be made up.
- ◆ Games will be canceled if the wind chill is 40 degrees or less at game time. After a game starts, umpires may use their own discretion to call off games at any time due to weather conditions.
- ◆ A game called by the umpire shall be regulation if five or more complete innings have been played, or if the team second at bat has scored more runs in four or more innings than the other team has scored in five or more innings. The umpire is empowered to call a game at any time because of darkness, rain, fire, panic or any other cause that places the patrons or players in peril.
- ◆ When thunder is heard or lightning is seen, play **MUST** be suspended for at least 30 minutes before resuming play. Any subsequent thunder or lightning starts a new 30-minute delay. No additional playing time is added due to a weather delay. Time limit rules still apply.
- ◆ If the Air Quality index is between 151-200, games will still be played. If you have an insufficient number of players due to air quality concerns, and teams are at the fields, it will be up to the umpire to decide if the game will be played.



- ◆ If the Air Quality index is higher than 200, games will be canceled.

Playing Time

- ◆ Playing time will be solely determined by the team manager or coach. The league strongly encourages coaches give the maximum amount of playing time to the maximum amount of players.
- ◆ A player may not play the same position for more than three innings in a game.
- ◆ The three outfielders MUST be positioned in the grass.
- ◆ Mandatory use of continuous batting order, meaning all players will always be in the batting lineup. Players with a defensive position are not required to be in the first nine batting spots. The batting order may not change during the game.

Batting/Base Running

- ◆ Batters can run on a dropped third strike.
- ◆ Stealing is allowed. Runners may advance on a passed ball or wild pitch.
- ◆ Runners may advance on an overthrow from the catcher to the pitcher, or from the catcher on a steal.
- ◆ On a batted ball in play, runners may advance at their own discretion on any overthrow.
- ◆ There is no “must slide” rule. However, a runner is called out if they do not attempt to get around a fielder who has the ball and is waiting to make the tag. NO PLOWING!
- ◆ With two outs, a courtesy runner may be used for the catcher and/or pitcher of record.
 - The courtesy runner must be the player who made the last out.
 - The same courtesy runner shall not run for the pitcher and the catcher at any time during the game.
- ◆ Only one warning for a player throwing the bat, whether intentional or unintentional. Next violation, the player may be declared out by the umpire.

Pitching Regulations

- ◆ Batters may advance to 1st base after 4 balls and may advance to 1st base when hit by pitch.
- ◆ No pitcher shall pitch more than three innings per game in league play pending teams’ number of pitchers.
- ◆ Coaches are encouraged to use multiple pitchers.



◆ A coach or a player off the bench may warm up the pitcher. Any player warming up a pitcher must wear a mask.

Equipment

◆ All bats shall bear the USA Softball logo signifying that the bat meets USA Softball Standards.

◆ Shoes with metal cleats or spikes shall not be worn by players, managers, coaches or umpires.

◆ Exposed jewelry, which is judged by the umpire to be dangerous, must be removed and may not be worn during the game. Medical alert bracelets or necklaces are not considered jewelry. If worn, they must be taped to the body so the medical alert information remains visible.

◆ Batting helmets need to have a cage or face mask on the helmet.

Team Expectations

◆ Teams are encouraged to arrive 30-45 minutes before the game to warm up. This early arrival teaches kids how to start preparing for games and helps ensure enough players are fielded to have a game.

◆ Home and away designations are on the league schedule. For doubleheaders, teams shall switch home and away for the second game.

◆ Each team provides at least one new softball each game. Umpires return the softballs after the game.

◆ After the game, teams will shake hands with their opponent in a line extending from the dugouts across home plate. For doubleheaders, this will be after the second game.

◆ Both teams are responsible for cleaning their dugout, under the bleachers and around the field. Please dispose of all garbage in proper receptacles.

◆ It is required that the home team listed on the schedule enters the game scores on the website. This **MUST** be done by the following Monday when your game was played. If the score is not entered the home team will be penalized with a 6-0 forfeit.

◆ No family or friends may be in the dugout unless they are a coach, practice helper or team manager.

Umpires

◆ Understand that umpires will make mistakes just as the players and coaches will. Many umpires are young and/or new to umpiring, and this is where they get their start.



- ◆ Umpires are instructed to call a large strike zone to encourage players to swing the bat. The strike zone will be from the armpits to the knees approximately 4” off the outside corner and 2” off the inside corner.
- ◆ Remind parents that the game is for the kids and the atmosphere should be one of recreation, education and fun. Encourage parents to support their team and not yell or demean the umpires.
- ◆ Coaches and players shall not yell at umpires across the field or from the dugout. Doing so may result in removal from the game and/or future games. Even if a coach or player is not ejected, but a report or complaint is filed with the league office, that coach or player may be suspended from future games if the league office and board of directors deem inappropriate or non-sporting behavior.
- ◆ Only the head coach of the team should raise questions with the umpire. The conversation should be held in a respectful manner. If there is an issue a team would like addressed, the coach should contact the league office 24 hours after the game to discuss the issue.