

## 2026 Softball MAJOR LEAGUE RULES (12U)

The Universal Rules apply to this league. The rules outlined in this document apply only to the Major Girls (U12) Softball League and are intended to supplement the Universal Rules for this level of play. If there is a contradiction between the two documents, this document shall take precedence.

### General Rules:

1. Maximum Player Age: 12 years as of 1/1/26
2. No metal spikes.
3. 12 inch yellow raised seam softball.
4. No jewelry may be worn.
5. Helmets must be worn at all times by the batting team when on the field. This includes players who are coaching bases.
6. All teams will adhere to the following playing time requirements. Failure to do so will result in a forfeit
  - All players present will play, goal is for players present to have equal playing time
  - One pitcher may pitch a maximum of three (3) consecutive innings per game.
  - Pitching any part of an inning counts as a full inning (1 pitch in relief will count as a full inning for that pitcher)
  - No player may re-enter a game as a pitcher once she is removed as a pitcher.
  - Catchers must wear a mask when warming up pitchers.
  - Cheers are allowed but should not be directed at opposing players.
  - Heckling of opposing players is not permitted.
  - Coaches are responsible for good sportsmanship at all times, including players and spectators.

### Field:

1. Base Paths: 60 feet.
2. Pitching Rubber: 40 feet from the center front of the pitching rubber to the point of Home Plate.
3. Pitchers circle is 16 feet in diameter from the center front edge of the pitching plate. Must be marked in chalk prior to the game.

### Equipment:

1. Equipment must be in good shape.
2. Uniform:

Updated 2/17/2026

- Players will be furnished a uniform per each league's policy. Girls must wear this uniform for the games. Uniforms may not be altered as to be different from the rest of the team.

### 3. Bats:

- Bats must be official softball bats: wood, metal, graphite, or other material approved by the Little League rules or certified by ASA/USSA.

### 4. Catchers Gear:

- Catchers must wear a protective helmet, catching mask, chest protector, throat guard, and shin guards that will be furnished by the league.

### Games:

1. Innings per Game: Standard games consist of 6 innings. Three and one-half (3 ½) innings is considered a full game if the home team is ahead, Four (4) innings if the visiting team is ahead. Score reverts back to the last completed inning for a game called in the middle of the inning. No new inning will begin after 1 hour and 45 minutes.

a. Coaches are expected to take steps to ensure that the games move quickly (i.e. assist catchers in putting on equipment, limit the amount of gear the catchers removes, and using a pinch runner for the catcher after two outs.

b. Organized position changes, etc.

c. Allow no more than five (5) warm-up pitches between innings.

d. Tournament games went over on time

Championship tournament games are considered full games after 6 innings. Full game is considered 6 and half innings if home team is winning, if game is called due to weather, including sunlight, the score reverts back to the top of the last full inning score.

2. Once an inning is started, it must be completed. Reasons for not completing the prescribed number of innings are limited to:

a. Weather – rain, lightning

b. Darkness

c. Injuries result in either team not having enough players.

Updated 2/17/2026

3. Games finishing standard innings at a tie score may play up to a maximum of two extra innings to determine a winner, provided time limit of 1 hour and 45 minutes have not expired. If after the two extra innings the game is still tied, the game is then considered a tie and it is added to the standings as such. Ties are considered a half a win and a half a loss for each team.

4. Injury Substitutions: A player who is injured during the game may be taken out and a substitute put in her place. If, after resting a minimum of one (1) inning, she is able to play again, she may rejoin the game. She must sit out a minimum of one complete inning. For example, a player removed because of injury in the top of the 2nd inning may rejoin the game no sooner than the top of the 3rd inning. A player may not start a game or rejoin a game if she unable to run the bases or play in the field. If a pitcher is removed due to injury, she may not return to pitching if she re-enters the game.

5. A team may start a game with 8 players. Less than 8 players will be considered a forfeit. Teams are allowed to substitute as many 10U players needed to field a full team but may only substitute one major player from the same league to field a team. In case of injury to the 8<sup>th</sup> player, it is strongly encouraged to finish the game even though it will be a forfeit.

7. Home team shall supply the game balls (2) and the umpires.

8. Inning limitations: Three (3) outs or six (6) runs per ½ inning for all innings. Exception is that during 6<sup>th</sup> inning or called last inning there is no run limit.

**Batting:**

1. Continuous batting order applies. All girls must bat. The batting order cannot be changed after the game starts. Players arriving late may play but must bat at the end of the batting order.

2. Bunting and slashing is allowed.

3. Fake bunting (squaring up, and then swinging in full or slashing) is allowed.

4. Helmets: Batters and runners must wear helmets while in the field of play.

5. A batter, during her time at bat, may switch to either side of the plate.

6. A batter throwing the bat after striking the ball will first be warned about the situation, as well as warning the coach. Should the same player throw the bat a second time, that player will be called out and all runners will return to their original base.

7. A called ball four (4) will result in walking the batter.

9. Drop third strike rule is in effect.

10. The batter must make an attempt to move away from the ball on any hit by pitch situation. If a batter is hit by a pitch, they are awarded first base.

- A pitched ball which strikes the ground before striking the batter will be considered a live ball and the batter will be awarded 1st base.

### **Base Running:**

1. The runner may lead off from any base after the ball leaves the pitcher's hand. All players leaving a base early can be called out by the umpire.

2. A player may advance at any time while the ball is in play until it is in the pitcher's hand within the pitching circle. Base runners will be held to the nearest base once the ball is in the pitcher's hand within the pitching circle.

3. Passed ball, overthrow or wild pitches: Players are allowed to advance bases at their own risk on an overthrow to any base, a poor throw back to the pitcher or wild pitch. The runner can continue to advance bases, at their own risk, until they are tagged out or the ball is returned to the pitcher within the pitcher's circle. There is no limit to the number of times per batter that the runner can advance on a passed ball, overthrow or wild pitch.

- Example: • Player 1 is on first base, and Player 2 is up to bat. • The first pitch is a wild pitch, the player at first can advance to second at their own risk.
- The second pitch is a passed ball, the player at second can advance to third at their own risk.
- Upon returning the ball to the pitcher, the catcher throws the ball over the pitcher's head, the runner at third can advance home at their own risk.

4. Stealing second and third is permitted after the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.

5. Two Runners may advance to home on a pass ball per  $\frac{1}{2}$  inning (pitch that gets past the catcher).

a. After the second runner crosses home in an inning safely, no other runner can advance to home on a pass ball in that  $\frac{1}{2}$  inning.

b. Example, if one runner has crossed home safely on a pass ball in a given inning, but second runner is tagged out on their attempt, team still can try to advance one other runner from third that inning.

6. Players running to first base must use the orange/red safety base. On a dropped third strike, runner is allowed to use either white or orange safety base and the defense can use the orange safety base to record the out.

7. Runners are allowed to deviate no more than 3 (Three) feet from the base paths to avoid a tag/force out. Runners have the right of way on the base paths, and will not be called out if having to run around a fielder not involved in the play.

Updated 2/17/2026

8. Sliding in all situations where there is a possible play on the runner is required, except first base. This includes home and multiple out situations. The intent of this rule is to prevent players from running into each other. The umpire has final decision if a player was required to slide.

9. **A courtesy runner must be used for the catcher after two (2) outs.** That runner will be the player that made the last out. The coaches must help get the catcher prepared for the next inning.

10. If a player is injured while running to a base and is safe, a courtesy runner may be used. That runner will be the player that made the last out or the third out in the previous inning.

11. Infield fly rule is in effect.

### **Pitching:**

1. Pitchers are limited to 3 innings per game.

2. WIAA rules take effect for all pitching, with the exception that per Little League rules, one of the pitcher's feet may leave the rubber during the wind up.

3. Pitchers are allowed five (5) warm-up pitches between innings.

4. Pitcher may not re-enter as the pitcher once removed.

### **Fielding:**

1. Fielders should stay clear of the base paths when not involved in a play. Runners have the right of way and should not be impeded by a fielder not involved in the play.

**Interleague Tournament Rules:**

1. Rules above apply for Interleague tournament games leading up to the championship game unless noted below:
  1. All teams will adhere to the following playing time requirements. Failure to do so will result in a forfeit.
    - a. All players present at the game must play.
    - b. No player shall sit twice before all other players have sat once.
    - c. A player may not sit consecutive innings.
2. Championship game will be considered a full game after 6 innings. Full game is considered 5 and half innings if the home team is winning
  - a. If the game is called due to weather, including sunlight, the score reverts back to the top of the last full inning score when the game is resumed/rescheduled.
  - b. Time limits do not apply in the championship game