

**LMYA SOFTBALL LEAGUE**  
**USA Softball Rule Modifications – Local Rules**  
**14u, 12u, 10u, 8u & 7u Divisions**

USA Softball (FKA ASA) recommends age appropriate rule modifications for local youth softball leagues. LMYA has made the following modifications to the *Official Rules of Softball* as published by USA Softball. It is the responsibility of each coach to be familiar with both USA Softball official and LMYA local rules.

The modifications have been made in order to accomplish the following objectives:

- ◆ Assist young players’ softball skill development
- ◆ Enable a greater number of players to participate
- ◆ Reduce the risk of injury
- ◆ Help each game progress at an appropriate pace

**ALL DIVISIONS**

The following additions and exceptions apply to all divisions of play in LMYA except where noted.

**Article 501—ELIGIBILITY**

LMYA is comprised of 4 divisions of play: 14u/12u, 10u, 8u and 7u. A player’s birth year and age on September 1 determines the division in which the player is eligible to play. Exceptions can be granted by the District Committee for a player to “play up” in an older division or “play down” to a younger division.

Missing an at bat During the regular season, if a player leaves early from a game for injury or for another reason (i.e. another event), the player's spot in the batting order is skipped and is NOT recorded as an out. However, as stated in the LMYA rules, any time you fall below the required minimum number of players for your division, the game is forfeited.

Please note, this rule differs from USA Softball Official Rules because our recreational leagues are required to have all players bat in the batting order, there are no substitutions available for batters.

During the playoffs only, in case of an injury or any other reason that a player cannot complete their at bat NOT caused by a hit by pitch, this batter is recorded as an out. The player's coach must inform the ump as soon as it's known the player cannot bat, the umpire must inform the other team.

### **Rule 3—EQUIPMENT**

Facemasks - batting All batting helmets used by a team must have an approved facemask (including any personal helmets belonging to a player). Facemasks approved for use in LMYA events shall be designed for softball use and of a compatible size and shape for the helmet to which they are attached. They shall be in good condition and firmly attached to the helmet with all attachment points tight.

On the batting team, all players on the field must wear a helmet with approved facemask, including batters, runners, on-deck batters, and player-base coaches.

Facemasks – pitching Facemasks are mandatory for pitchers in all LMYA events when pitching is live (batter is up, game or practice). They are not required during warm up pitches. During games, the umpire is responsible for enforcing this rule.

Gloves – pitching Pitchers gloves may be multicolored BUT may not contain any yellow or white coloring. (No colors of the ball being used in the game)

Wearing of Jewelry Hard stone or metal jewelry, including earrings and necklaces, may not be worn during games or practices and must be removed prior to taking the field for any game or practice. "Taping" is not acceptable as an alternative to removal of the jewelry. An exception is made for Medical Alert bracelets, which do not count as jewelry. These bracelets must be taped to the body in such a way that the Medical Alert information is visible. For the purposes of this rule, fabric, twine, or woven

plastic bracelets (“friendship bracelets”) also do not count as jewelry and may be worn if judged by the umpire to not be dangerous. This is a serious safety issue and umpires and coaches will be responsible for enforcement of this rule.

Cleats Metal cleats or spikes are not allowed in LMYA at any age level.

**Rule 5—THE GAME (14u/12u, 10u):**

**Complete Games:** Regular season games will be considered “complete and official” as long as at least two full innings have been played. If two full innings are not completed (rained out, called for darkness, etc.), the game will be scored a tie. Playoff games are considered complete if 4 innings or 60 minutes have been played. If a playoff game is rained out before 4 innings or 60 minutes are completed, the game must be played over. Pitching limits are not affected if a playoff game is rained out. Championship games must reach 7 innings to be considered complete.

Forfeit Time If a team does not have the minimum number required to play by game time, they shall forfeit the game.

Game Start Time The game “start time” is defined as the end of the coach/umpire meeting at home plate. The umpire should (loudly) call out the game start time. To be clear, the start time is not when the home team takes the field, it is not at the first warm up pitch, it is not at the first pitch. The game start time is at the end of the coach/umpire meeting at home plate.

The official game time is managed by the umpire, which may take into account stoppage time.

Run Rule In a regular season game, if prior to either 7 innings or 45 minutes the run rule has been met, the game is complete. The Run Rule is a 15 run differential after 3 innings; a 12 run differential after 4 innings; or an 8 run differential after 5 innings. If the run rule is invoked after the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning, and the losing team has not had a chance to bat all players, the umpire verifies if all players have not bat, and the game is called officially over by the umpire. The team continues to bat through the lineup until those remaining players have had an at bat. The score does not change if runs are scored.

The Run Rule also applies to playoff and championship games.

**Rule 10, Section 9, A—UMPIRES (DISPARAGING or DISRUPTIVE CHEERS or REMARKS)**

Before each game, umpires shall give notice to the coach of each team that it is the coach’s duty to make sure that cheering by players, coaches, and spectators is exclusively supportive of player performance.

Umpires shall not permit teams and individuals (players, coaches, and spectators) to intentionally “cheer” or behave in a manner that is, *in the umpire’s judgment*, intended to taunt, tease, humiliate, distract, annoy, or otherwise impair the performance of a member of the opposing team. Examples are:

- ◆ Cheers that focus on a bad pitch, a batter’s failure, a fielding or base running error,
- ◆ Cheers (screams or noises) that are timed to disrupt a pitcher, hitter, or fielder,
- ◆ Cheers that in any way refer to the other team or its players in a negative way.

A coach must bring his/her concern about such behavior to the umpire’s attention. If the umpire has not heard the alleged behavior, he/she must report the complaint to the other coach. If, in the umpire’s judgment there has been a sportsmanship violation, the umpire must warn the coach of the offending team or the spectator. If there is a second offense, the umpire may eject any persons or players responsible. Ejected players may, at the discretion of the coach, remain in the dugout unless the umpire disagrees. A third offense will result in forfeit by the offending team.

**Rule 7, Section 4—BATTING (Point of Emphasis 9-Check Swing/Bunt Strike)**

**Bunt Strikes**                    If a batter assumes a bunting position and extends her bat across the plate prior to the pitcher releasing the ball, she will be considered to have attempted to hit the ball and a strike will be called unless the batter removes her bat from the strike zone or obviously attempts to remove her bat from the strike zone at the time the pitch crosses the plate. If she moves into a bunt position and extends her bat into the strike zone while the pitch is in the air, she will be considered to have attempted to hit the ball and a strike will be called.

**Intent:** This is intended to prevent a coach from sending the entire lineup (good and not so good hitters alike) up to the plate, assuming the bunt position, and making no attempt whatsoever to hit the ball thus drawing a potentially large number of walks and frustrating the pitcher. This also is intended to force the batters to make an active determination of balls and strikes to further their development as hitters.

**Rule 8, Section 10—BATTER-RUNNER AND RUNNER**

**Courtesy Runners**            Unless there are 2 outs, courtesy runners shall not be used for the pitcher or catcher.

**Rule 6—SUBSTITUTES**

**Injured Runner**            If a batter-runner or runner is injured on a play, she must make it to the base on her own unless her injury is the result of being hit by a pitch. A substitute runner is permitted to replace the injured player on the bases until the runner is out or has scored. The substitute runner shall be the last player to make an out.

## MISCELLANEOUS

- Time Delays** It is the obligation of the coach, at the time of what s/he perceives to be undue delay (e.g., pitching change, player injury, appeal, rules dispute), to request that the umpire add an appropriate amount of time to the remainder of the game. It is entirely within the umpire's judgment whether or not to grant a request for added time. This rule does not apply to 8u and 7u. The right to appeal for more time is lost as soon as the next pitch has been thrown.
- Intent:** To discourage coaches from unnecessarily delaying games in order to have time elapse or the time-limit expire to their team's benefit.
- Timeouts** In 10u, & 12u/14u games, the umpires will stop the game clock during timeouts to ensure that timeouts are not used to unfairly advantage one team. In the event that an umpire does not stop the clock or forgets to restart the clock during a timeout, the umpire will use their best judgment as to the amount of time added to the game.
- Intent:** Time outs called by coaches are an important opportunity to talk to teams about specific game situations. Unfortunately, they are also often used to delay a game, so that a team with a lead can ensure time ends before the opposing team has an opportunity to score more runs. While this strategy is common in travel ball, high school, and college programs, it is deemed by LMYA to not be in the best interests of the goals and objectives of this rec program.
- Coaches** Coaches must adhere to the USA rule and not be in the field of play during the game (except for 8u and 7u). Sitting on buckets outside the dugout in foul territory is prohibited. Coaches can be in the dugout or outside the field of play behind the fence or behind the dugout fence line.
- Charged Conferences** **Offense:** There shall be no more than one charged conference between team representatives and the batter, another team representative, and/or runners in an inning. The umpire shall not permit any such conferences in excess of one in an inning. (per USA rules)
- Defense:** There shall be only three charged conferences between a manager/coach or other team representatives from the dugout with any defensive players in a seven-inning game. For every inning beyond seven, there shall be one charged conference per inning between a manager/coach or other team representatives from the dugout with any defensive players. (per ASA rules)
- Batters Hit By Pitches** It is the duty of the umpire to maximize the safety of LMYA players. When a pitcher has hit 3 batters in a single game, the umpire must make a decision as

to whether or not the pitcher should be ineligible to pitch for the remainder of the game. *It is entirely within the umpire's judgment* to decide whether or not there is a danger to the batters. If, after two batters have been struck, the umpire believes the pitcher's inaccuracy, pitching speed, the type of ball, and the skill level of the batters pose a substantial danger, the umpire must inform the defensive coach that the pitcher may be replaced if another batter is struck by a pitch. Batters must make an attempt to avoid being hit. If the pitcher is replaced, she is not removed from the game and may play any other defensive position. She may not, however return to the pitcher position for the remainder of the game. Before issuing a warning or removing a pitcher, umpires should take into account the totality of the circumstances. For instance, if a pitcher who is one of the fastest at her age level has struck 3 batters, inflicting significant pain to one or two, the umpire may be justified in replacing her. On the other hand, if a very slow pitcher has struck 3 players who immediately ran to first base without any apparent pain, the pitcher should not necessarily be replaced.

#### Umpires Calls

The only appeal plays the Umpire will rule on are missing a base, leaving a base too early when tagging up and batting out of order. All other calls are final. There are no game protests allowed.

#### Standings

The standings for the season will be determined by win/loss record for each team. In the event that at the end of the season, two or more teams have the same win/loss record, the order shall be determined by the following methodology:

1. Wins/losses.
2. Head to head.
3. Runs against.
4. Coin toss.

## 12u/14u DIVISION - LOCAL RULES

### **RULE 2—THE PLAYING FIELD**

*Pitching Distance*      40 FEET from the front of the pitcher's plate (rubber) to the back tip of home plate. (per USA Softball)

### **RULE 3—EQUIPMENT**

*Softball: Size, Color,* All games shall be played with an 12-inch, optic yellow USA Softball approved fastpitch softball. (as per USA Softball)

### **RULE 4—PLAYERS & SUBSTITUTES**

**Batting Order**            All players shall bat in the order, whether or not they are playing defense.

*Note:* Coaches must include all players in the batting order at the beginning of the game. Any players who arrive late must be added at the end of the batting order. For example: If 10 players are present at the beginning of the game, the lineup presented to the umpire must contain 10 players. If an 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> player arrive later, during the game, their names must be added to the batting order in places 11 and 12.

**Number of Players on Defense**      The defense shall be comprised of 10 players, 4 of whom are outfielders.

*Note:* Before each pitch, outfielders must be positioned at least 10 feet behind the baselines between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> bases and 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> bases. Nothing in this rule prohibits an outfielder from covering a base, taking part in a rundown, or otherwise making a play in the infield.

**Last Batter Option**      There is no last-batter rule in 12u/14u, and no maximum number of batters per inning.

**Re-entry**                    Unlimited substitutions are permitted for defensive positions. Substitute runners may not be substituted for players unless there has been an injury. In the event of any injury to a base runner, the player who made the last out shall be substituted for the injured runner. Pitchers are no longer required to stay on the field to re-enter. Pitchers have the same re-entry rights as all other players. They continue to have pitching limits with re-entry.

**Number of players**            To avoid forfeit, a team must field at least 7 players on defense, whenever the team takes the field. No automatic out is assessed when the 8th and 9<sup>th</sup> place in the batting order is due up. Any time you fall below the 7 players, the game is forfeited. You cannot start a game with 7 players and then continue with 6 or less.

*Note:* In the event of a forfeit, teams should play, or continue to play the game as an unofficial practice game so that the attending players do not miss the opportunity to gain game experience.

Defensive play requirement

All Players must play defense. No player shall sit out for more than one inning on defense. If the game goes enough innings, no player shall sit out for more than 1 inning on defense until all players have sat out for 1 inning. There is no requirement for a player to play an infield position.

Pitching limits

No pitcher can pitch more than 4 innings per game. Any pitch thrown in an inning constitutes an inning pitched. The pitching limit will be waived in the event that the game goes to an extra inning. An extra inning is played if the game ends in a tie (playoffs only).

## **RULE 5—THE GAME**

Time Limit

Games will last 7 innings or 60 minutes, whichever occurs first, unless the run rule has been triggered (see below). Unless there is a tie, no new inning may start after 50 minutes, based on the umpire's timekeeping device. A new inning starts immediately after the 3<sup>rd</sup> out is called by the umpire, not when the defensive team is ready.

Championship games will last 7 innings, with no time limit. Ties after regulation play in playoff and championship games are played according to International Tie-Breaker Rule as follows: Starting with the first extra inning of play, and each half inning thereafter, the offense begins with the player who is scheduled to bat last in that inning on 2<sup>nd</sup> base.



## **RULE 8—BATTER-RUNNER & RUNNER**

Dropped 3 <sup>rd</sup> Strike	A dropped third strike is an automatic out.
Thrown Bat	Umpires shall exercise their judgment when batters throw the bat after hitting the ball. A warning is appropriate for a first offense and an out may be assessed in instances where the second offense is judged to be flagrant or dangerous.
Dead ball	Whether or not a runner may advance on a dead ball shall be solely at the discretion of the umpire.
Runners' advance	USA Softball Rule 8.7.T (Look Back Rule) applies.  <b>Note:</b> The ball in the pitcher's circle does not stop the runners' advance as in the 10u. However, the runner has many responsibilities associated with this rule and coaches should make every effort to instruct their players in these important base running rules.
Stealing	Stealing will be from 1st to 3rd only. While attempting to steal a base, a runner may not advance past 3rd base. A runner may only score from 3rd as a result of a batted ball, or a walk with the bases loaded. A runner cannot score from 3rd on a steal, passed ball, wild pitch, throwback to the pitcher or a throw to any base during a steal.  If the score differential is 10 runs or greater, no stealing is allowed by the team in the lead
Sliding – contact	The runner must either slide, try to avoid a tag, or avoid a collision with a defensive player at any base. Crashing into a defensive player or failing to slide or otherwise avoid contact is an out. The umpire's judgment prevails.

## **RULE 10—UMPIRES**

### Appeal Plays

#### No-shows

The only appeal plays the Umpire will rule on are missing a base, leaving a base too early when tagging up and batting out of order. All other calls are final.

If no umpire is available, coaches must find someone to umpire any game for which no substitute is available. Games will not be rescheduled because of an umpire no-show. Coaches must play the game and agree upon some mutually acceptable umpiring situation.

## **10u DIVISION - LOCAL RULES**

### **RULE 2—THE PLAYING FIELD**

*Pitching Distance*     35 FEET from the front of the pitcher's plate (rubber) to the back tip of home plate. (per USA Softball)

### **RULE 3—EQUIPMENT**

*Softball: Size, Color*   All games shall be played with an 11 inch, optic yellow, USA Softball approved fastpitch softball. (note: this is a hardball, not the soft "incrediball") (as per USA Softball)

### **RULE 4—PLAYERS & SUBSTITUTES**

*Batting Order*            All players shall bat in the order, whether or not they are playing defense.  
*Note:* Coaches must include all players in the batting order at the beginning of the game. Any players who arrive late must be added at the end of the batting order. For example: If 10 players are present at the beginning of the game, the lineup presented to the umpire must contain 10 players. If an 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> player arrive later, during the game, their names must be added to the batting order in places 11 and 12.

*Number of Players on Defense*     The defense shall be comprised of 10 players, 4 of whom are outfielders.  
*Note:* Before each pitch, outfielders must be positioned at least 10 feet behind the baselines between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> bases and 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> bases. Nothing in this rule prohibits an outfielder from covering a base, taking part in a rundown, fielding a hit ball, or otherwise making a play in the infield.

*Re-entry*                    Unlimited substitutions are permitted for defensive positions. Pitchers are no longer required to stay on the field to re-enter. Pitchers have the same re-entry rights as all other players. They continue to have pitching limits with re-entry. Substitute runners may not be used unless there has been an injury. When a base runner is injured, the player who made the last out may be used as a substitute runner.

*Pitching limits*            No pitcher can pitch more than 4 innings per game. Any pitch thrown in an inning constitutes an inning pitched. The pitching limit does not apply to an extra inning due to a tie.

Pitchers may pitch 5 innings in playoff games. There is no pitching limit in the championship game.

***A proven violation of this rule will result in the forfeit of any game in which the pitcher pitched in excess of the permitted number of innings.*** Opposing coaches shall inform the umpire as soon as they realize the pitching limit violation. Appeals of this rule shall be permitted at any time prior to the beginning of

playoffs. Appeals shall be decided by the commissioner after full investigation of all pertinent facts.

**Walk Rule**

After 4 balls have been called on a batter, an adult designated by the batter's coach will pitch no more than 4 times to the batter from the pitching rubber. If the batter fails to hit the ball into play on any of the 4 pitches, the batter is out. If the batter fouls the 4th pitch, they get one more pitch.

**Minimum number of players**

To avoid forfeit, a team must field at least 7 players on defense, whenever the team takes the field. No automatic out is assessed when the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> places in the batting order are due up. Any time you fall below the 7 players, the game is forfeited. You cannot start a game with 7 players and then continue with 6 or less.

*Note:* In the event of a forfeit, teams should play, or continue to play the game as an unofficial practice game so that the attending players do not miss the opportunity to gain game experience.

**Defensive Play Requirement**

Each player must play an infield position for at least one full inning by the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning. All Players must play defense. No player shall sit out for more than one inning on defense. If the game goes enough innings, no player shall sit out for more than 1 inning on defense until all players have sat out for 1 inning.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

**Defensive Coach**

One coach may be on the field (in the outfield, no closer than 15 feet from the baseline between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>)

**10u 5-run max per ½ inning rule**

There will be a 5-run maximum allowable runs per ½ inning, under the following scenarios:

Team A is in the lead, going into their at-bat:

- Team A may only score 5 runs.
- For example: if the ½ inning started at 8-1, it is terminated if the score gets to 13-1 team A leading ½ innings ends immediately once that 5th run is scored.

Team A is in the lead, going into a half-inning where team B is at the plate:

- Team B may tie it up, AND THEN ONLY GO AHEAD BY 5.
- For example: if the ½ inning started with team A leading 8-1, team B may tie it up at 8 and then the inning is terminated if the score gets to 13-8 team B leading.

## **RULE 5—THE GAME**

**Time limit** Games will last 7 innings or 60 minutes, whichever occurs first, unless the Run Rule has been triggered (see below). As per USA rules, there will be no more than three offensive or defensive timeouts/player conferences called by each team coaching staff during a game.

If a game is tied after completion of regulation play, one more inning will be played and the game will then be declared over and complete.

Unless there is a tie, no new inning may start after 90 minutes, based on the umpire's timekeeping device. A new inning starts immediately after the 3<sup>rd</sup> out is made, not when the defense is ready. Coaches of both teams should agree on the starting time along with the umpire and record that time in their scorebooks just before the first pitch of the game.

The Championship Game will last 7 innings. Playoff and championship games that are tied at the end of regulation play will be played according to the International Tie Breaker Rule as follows: Starting with 1<sup>st</sup> extra inning of play, and each half inning thereafter, the offense begins with the player who is scheduled to bat last in that inning on 2<sup>nd</sup> base.

## **RULE 8—BATTER-RUNNER & RUNNER**

**Dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> Strike** A dropped third strike is an automatic out.

**Infield Fly Rule** There is no infield fly rule in 10u.

**Thrown Bat** Umpires shall exercise their judgment when batters throw the bat after hitting the ball. A warning is appropriate for a first offense and an out may be assessed in instances where the second offense is judged to be flagrant or dangerous.

**Dead ball** Whether or not a runner may advance on a dead ball shall be solely in the discretion of the umpire.

**Runners' advance** If the ball is put in play by the batter and an overthrow occurs in an attempt to get a runner out at a base or trying to get the ball back to the pitcher, the runners may continue to advance multiple bases until either the ball is declared "dead" or "out of play" by the umpire OR the ball is returned to and under control of the pitcher in the pitcher's circle.

When the ball is returned to the pitcher during play on a batted fair ball, as long as

the ball remains in the control of the pitcher in the circle, a runner's advance is stopped. A runner between bases is entitled to advance to the next base only, but is at risk for being put out. If a runner advances further return the runner(s) to the base(s) they were entitled to. The ball must be in the glove or hand to be considered "in control".

If a pitcher makes a throw from the circle in front of a runner trying to advance to a new base, before the ball has been called dead by the umpire, and throws the ball past the intended target, the runner is awarded the base they were running to but cannot advance any further. Any other runners can only advance one base. This advantage to the pitcher is the same as that given a catcher who is trying to throw a base runner out stealing.

**Stealing**

At the 10u level, there is no stealing.

**Sliding – contact**

The runner must either slide, try to avoid a tag, or avoid a collision with a defensive player at any base. Crashing into a defensive player or failing to slide or otherwise avoid contact is an out. The umpire's judgment prevails.

**RULE 10—UMPIRES**

**Appeal Plays**

The only appeal plays the Umpire will rule on are missing a base, leaving a base too early when tagging up and batting out of order. All other calls are final.

**No-shows**

If no umpire is available, coaches must find someone to umpire any game for which no substitute is available. Games will not be rescheduled because of an umpire no-show. Coaches must play the game and agree upon some mutually acceptable umpiring situation.

## **8u DIVISION – LOCAL RULES**

*Pitching Distance*     *30 FEET from the front of the pitcher's plate (rubber) to the back tip of home plate. (per USA Softball)*

1. **PITCHER:** Coaches will pitch. Each batter will have up to 7 pitches. If the batter cannot get the ball into play within 7 pitches, the batter is out. If the batter fouls off the 7th pitch, they will get one final pitch. Coach can move up a few steps in front of the pitching rubber.

2. **CATCHER:** Players will catch. Catchers must wear a catchers' helmet, a chest protector and shin guards.

3. **THE FIELD:** The standard softball baseline distance is 60 feet between bases. Coaches may agree to play 8u games on 50-foot base paths. In such cases, the bases must be secured to the ground. Bases must be either regulation bases with posts or *nail-down* bases
  
4. **BATTING:** No throwing the bat. All players on a team shall be in the batting lineup. Three outs or 5 runs constitute the end of an offensive team's half of any inning. There is no requirement that every player in the lineup hit during each half inning.
  
5. **BALLS & STRIKES:** See rule #1
  
  
6. **SCORING:** Scores of games will not be kept.
  
7. **EQUIPMENT:** 8u will use a 11" Incrediball ball.
  
8. **NUMBER OF DEFENSIVE PLAYERS:** All players on the team shall play defense every inning. Only one player shall be positioned at each infield position, including "pitcher". All other players, i.e., outfielders, will play in the outfield, at least 10 feet behind the baselines. To be clear, there should be no more than 6 players in the infield ever. Any extra players must play at the edge of the outfield. To that end we recommend no more than 12-13 players per team. The "pitcher" shall stand no closer to home plate than where the adult pitcher starts his/her delivery and shall be positioned immediately next to the adult pitcher.
  
9. **DEFENSIVE PLAY REQUIREMENT:** Coaches should rotate players through as many different positions as possible.
  
10. **COACHING ON FIELD:** Three instructional coaches are allowed on the field, including the coach who is pitching.
  
11. **RUNNERS:** There is no stealing in 8u.

All runners are stopped from advancing beyond the base toward which they are running by any throw by:

1. An infielder (including catcher and pitcher) or
2. An outfielder if the throw reaches the infield dirt.

*Note:* There is no “halfway” rule. Runners may advance to the base toward which they were running at the moment the advance stopping throw occurred.

A base runner cannot advance if the ball is thrown past the player covering the base, except on a batted ball. You can be tagged out for overrunning or sliding past a base. A base runner may not advance on a pickoff attempt by the catcher. No stealing is allowed during change of pitcher or coach pitch.

## **12. RUNNER’S ADVANCE:**

If the ball is put in play by the batter and an overthrow occurs in an attempt to get a runner out at a base or trying to get the ball back to the pitcher, the runners may continue to advance multiple bases until either the ball is declared “dead” or “out of play” by the umpire OR the ball is returned to and under control of the pitcher in the pitcher’s circle.

When the ball is returned to the pitcher during play on a batted fair ball, as long as



the ball remains in the control of the pitcher in the circle, a runner's advance is stopped. A runner between bases is entitled to advance to the next base only, but is at risk for being put out. If a runner advances further return the runner(s) to the base(s) they were entitled to. The ball must be in the glove or hand to be considered "in control".

If a pitcher makes a throw from the circle in front of a runner trying to advance to a new base, before the ball has been called dead by the umpire, and throws the ball past the intended target, the runner is awarded the base they were running to but cannot advance any further. Any other runners can only advance one base. This advantage to the pitcher is the same as that given a catcher who is trying to throw a base runner out stealing.

**13. TIME LIMIT:** Games will last up to 7 innings or not longer than 60 minutes.

**FIELD SUPERVISORS:** If no umpire is available, the coach in charge of pitching shall make calls on plays (safe or out, foul balls, when runner advance-stopping throws are made, etc.), but should ask for help when s/he is unsure of a call. Explaining why certain calls have been made can be instructive to the players at this age.

### **7u DIVISION – LOCAL RULES**

1. **PITCHER:** Coaches shall pitch to their own team from approximately 30 feet from home plate. If necessary, coaches may pitch from a closer distance, if necessary to throw a strike. Coaches are encouraged to throw a more level pitch, resembling a fast pitched softball, rather than a high slow pitch-type lob. Under no circumstances should the adult pitcher become involved in the play of a live ball.
2. **BATTING TEE:** may be used at the discretion of the coaches.
3. **CATCHER:** Coaches or siblings (at least 16 years old with at least a catcher's mask or full gear) shall catch and should be prepared to help with instruction to the batter. Under no circumstances should the adult catcher become involved in a play of a live ball.
4. **THE FIELD:** The standard softball baseline distance is 60 feet between bases. Coaches may agree to play 7u games on 50-foot base paths. In such cases, the bases must be secured to the ground. Bases must be either regulation bases with posts or *nail-down* bases.

4. **BATTING:** No throwing the bat. All players on a team shall be in the batting lineup. Every player shall bat in every inning.
5. **BALLS & STRIKES:** There will be no calling of balls and strikes and no outs. Each player shall bat until she hits a fair ball. If batter has not hit a fair ball after 4 pitches, a batting tee shall be used, at the discretion of the coaches.

Intent: The intent here is to keep the game moving, keep the defense involved in the game, and avoid overly frustrating the batter.

Note: Adult pitchers are encouraged to have each batter take one practice swing in the batters box to start her at-bat. The intent is for the adult pitcher to take note of the batters swing path and then attempt to give the batter a pitch she can easily hit.

6. **SCORING:** No score is kept.

7. **EQUIPMENT:** 10" safety ball

8. **NUMBER OF DEFENSIVE PLAYERS:** All players on the team shall play defense every inning. Only one player shall be positioned at each infield position, including "pitcher". All other players, i.e., outfielders, will play in the outfield, at least 10 feet behind the baselines.

To be clear, there should be no more than 6 players in the infield ever. Any extra players must play at the edge of the outfield. To that end we recommend no more than 12-13 players per team.

The "pitcher" shall stand no closer to home plate than where the adult pitcher starts his/her delivery and shall be positioned immediately next to the adult pitcher.

Pitcher's defensive position shall be played at a minimum of 30 feet from home plate.

9. **DEFENSIVE PLAY REQUIREMENT:** Coaches should rotate players through as many different positions as possible.

10. **COACHING ON FIELD:** Up to 3 instructional coaches are allowed on the field, including the coach who is pitching. The "catcher" may be a coach from the offensive team (team at bat). Coaches on the field are encouraged to position the shortstop and second base player for relays from the outfield. Coaches have the option of encouraging outfielders and/or relay infielders to make throws to appropriate bases.

**11. RUNNERS:** There is no stealing allowed of any base. Any throw by a defensive player stops the runner from advancing beyond the base toward which she was heading when the throw occurred.

*Note:* There is no “halfway” rule. Runners may advance to the base toward which they were running at the moment the advance stopping throw occurred.

*Note:* A base runner is permitted to leave the base as the pitched ball leaves the pitcher's hand. Runners electing to take this type of "lead" are subject to being picked off.

**12. TIME LIMIT:** Games shall last no longer than 60 minutes.

**13. FIELD SUPERVISORS:** The coach in charge of pitching shall make calls on plays (safe or out, foul balls, when runner advance-stopping throws are made, etc.), but should ask for help when s/he is unsure of a call. Explaining why certain calls have been made can be instructive to the players at this age.