

WESTLAKE GIRLS SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION (“WGSA”)

2025 LEAGUE RULES – PIGTAIL and MINOR DIVISIONS

Annual registration takes place online at our website – <http://www.westlakegirlssoftball.org>

PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

All girls within the city of Westlake, Ohio and surrounding communities (within established age restrictions) are eligible to participate in the Westlake Girls Softball Association (WGSA) League.

PLAYING RULES

The Westlake Girls Softball Association (WGSA) League follows Amateur Softball Association (ASA) Playing Rules (<http://www.asasoftball.com>). The slow pitch, modified pitch, and fast pitch programs abide by the rules set forth in the A.S.A. manual. Some of these rules have been modified and/or clarified by the WGSA as contained herein:

GENERAL RULES APPLICABLE TO ALL DIVISIONS

CONDUCT

No spectators, coaches or team members are allowed immediately behind the backstop. Spectators are not allowed on the bench, or near or on the field. Unsportsmanlike conduct and abusive or foul language by players, spectators, or coaches is forbidden. **ONE WARNING MAY BE GIVEN, BUT IS NOT NECESSARY FOR EJECTION BY THE UMPIRE.** Players, spectators, or coaches failing to leave the field within five (5) minutes of an ejection by an umpire will result in the immediate forfeiture of the game by their respective team. Furthermore, players or coaches ejected from any game by an umpire will be automatically suspended for the next two (2) games. This includes All-Star games and playoff games. A second ejection during the same season will result in a suspension for the remainder of the season. Suspended individuals will not be permitted to be at the field thirty (30) minutes prior to and during the scheduled game time. Any suspended person may appeal a suspension to the appropriate Division Director, whose decision will be final and not appealable further. If a suspension is given and/or upheld, no registration fees will be refunded. Umpires will eject coaches, players or spectators before, during or after games for infractions which the league considers unsportsmanlike behavior including, but not limited to, the following:

- a) Threats of physical intimidation towards umpires, players, coaches or spectators including threatening physical conduct.
- b) Verbal abuse of umpires, players, coaches or spectators such as profanity, name-calling, belittlement or excessive harassment. (e.g., balls, strikes and safe/out calls by the umpire are judgment calls and are not debatable).
- c) Throwing of equipment. (e.g., bats, helmets, gloves, etc.).

d) Fighting involving coaches and/or players (Fighting will result in immediate suspension of any/all participants for the remainder of the season).

As representatives of the Westlake Girls Softball Association, it is our responsibility to set a positive example of fair play and sportsmanship to the players and their families on and off the field.

FACILITIES/MEDICAL FORMS/SUPPLIES: COACHES MUST BRING REGISTRATION/MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION FORMS & MEDICAL KITS TO ALL GAMES. IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT AN ICE PACK OR ICE CUBES BE AVAILABLE AS WELL.

UNIFORMS: Players should wear tie shoes (i.e. no flip-flops, clogs or beach sandals). No metal cleats are allowed - molded cleats only (if used). Uniforms must be worn unaltered for all games (i.e., no torn shirts, etc.). Jewelry of any kind cannot be worn during a game.

EQUIPMENT: Equipment Bags and medical kits will be provided for each team and are to be returned to the WGSA at the end of the season.

PROTECTION: Helmets must be worn while at bat and running the bases during all games and practices. Catchers must wear helmets/facemask, shin guards, and chest protectors at all games and practices.

SAFETY: No on deck practice swings are to be taken except at fields equipped with a batting cage. Only 1 batter is allowed inside the cage at a time. Bats should be kept behind the backstop or against the fence nearest the bench or placed on the rack if available. For safety reasons, only official regulation softball or Tee-ball bats will be allowed (i.e., no hardball bats). A batter is out if she throws a bat after hitting the ball (umpire's judgment).

GAME PREPARATION: IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COACHING STAFF TO STRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF FUN, GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP AND TEAMWORK. IN ADDITION, THE COACH SHOULD HAVE PREPARED IN ADVANCE THE GAME PLAN, SPECIFICALLY, PLAYER BATTING ORDER AND POSITIONING.

OPEN WOUNDS/INJURIES: A player or coach who is bleeding or who has an open wound shall be prohibited from participating further in the game until appropriate treatment has been administered. If medical care or treatment can be administered in a reasonable amount of time, the individual does not have to leave the game. The length of time that is considered reasonable is judged by the umpire. The re-entry rule would apply to players for whom medical treatment cannot be rendered in a reasonable amount of time. Any casts, splints, or medical wraps worn by players must be properly padded.

DEFENSIVE PLAYER ROTATION: Due to the recreational nature of the League, coaches are encouraged to rotate their players at all positions to encourage skill development and maintain player interest. In certain cases, the rules specify a minimum level of rotation, but this should not discourage more liberal position changes. All girls must play a defensive position for a minimum of three innings per game. All infielders (except pitcher and catcher) must remain behind the pitching rubber prior to the ball being hit.

PITCHING: ASA rules govern pitch delivery. Pitch delivery is specified by division as defined herein.

FORFEITS: A team may start a game with a minimum of **SIX** players (i.e., five or fewer is a forfeit). If, however, a team ends up with less than six players due to an injury occurring during a game, the team does not have to forfeit. There will be a 10-minute grace period past the scheduled start time to allow enough girls to arrive, but game length time is measured from the scheduled start time not the actual start time. Players may be freely substituted. Games will be rescheduled due to rainouts only, no exceptions. It is the coach's responsibility to ensure that they have at least the minimum number of players to avoid a forfeit.

GAME LENGTH: All games are a maximum of 7 innings or will last 1 hour and 30 minutes (PIGTAIL - one hour), whichever comes first. There will be no tie games in any All Star or Playoff game in any division. Tied games will be played to their conclusion regardless of time, unless weather or darkness stops the game (at umpire's discretion). No new innings are otherwise to start after the 1 1/2 hours are completed. A game is "complete" if 4 innings are played (3 1/2 innings if the winning team is up to bat last) and the umpire calls the game due to weather or darkness. In the event of rain after the start of the game, the umpire will determine whether to continue or postpone the game. All "complete" games stopped due to rain or darkness shall not be made up. The score that exists at the end of the last complete inning prior to the rain out shall be considered the final score. All rained out games not "completed" must be rescheduled. Rescheduled rain-out games shall resume at the point in which they were postponed; however, different line-ups are allowed. **IF LIGHTNING IS SIGHTED OR THUNDER IS HEARD THE GAME MUST BE STOPPED IMMEDIATELY AND POSTPONED OR COMPLETED BASED ON THE INNING RULE!**

MAKE UP GAMES: All rained out games should be rescheduled and made up at the discretion of the Division Director based on field availability. The forfeit rule still applies for make-up games. If both teams fail to have enough players for a make-up game, a double forfeit shall be recorded in the standings.

GAME SCHEDULES: Assume all games are to be played as scheduled, unless the rain out number recorded message (Rainout Hotline 440-808-5710) says otherwise. Before the game, if the weather is bad, the umpires will decide if the game should be postponed. To prevent field damage, you are not permitted to use the field if the game is called because of rain. No raking, shoveling or sweeping is allowed to try to make the field playable.

UMPIRES: If umpires don't show up for the game, the coaches may agree upon a spectator to umpire.

COACHING POSITIONS ON THE FIELD: Coaches are not allowed inside the left and right field fences during game play unless they are coaching 1st or 3rd base. **COACHING PLAYERS FROM BEHIND THE BACKSTOP BY COACHES, TEAM MEMBERS, OR SPECTATORS IS PROHIBITED!**

BASERUNNING: When the ball goes out of play, runners may advance only 1 base. That is, the base they are going to plus one additional base.

FIELD: The infield is the dirt area and the outfield is the grass area on all Westlake Girls Softball fields and in all divisions.

BATTING: All players will bat in all divisions. All players bat in the batting order before the 1st batter bats again. A player who bats out of order shall be called out. A player arriving late may be inserted at the end of the line up as the last batter.

PINCH RUNNING: Pinch runners are only allowed for an injured player that is removed from the game. The last player in the lineup that made an out must be inserted as the pinch runner.

SCORING: SCORE KEEPING IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HEAD COACH FOR EACH TEAM, NOT THE UMPIRE(S). EACH COACH IS EXPECTED TO EXCHANGE LINE-UPS (BATTING ORDERS) AT THE BEGINNING OF EACH GAME, AND KEEP SCORE DURING THE GAME, RECONCILING THE SCORE WITH EACH OTHER AT THE END OF EVERY HALF INNING.

PLAYOFFS: Playoff positions will be determined by the regular season standings in the MINOR division. In the event of a tie in the regular season standings, the division winner and playoff positions will be determined by head-to-head competition results (won/loss) and then by total score of those games if necessary. If this is inconclusive, the winner will be determined by a coin flip by the division director and the respective head coaches. The home team for playoff games is the team with the higher seed and will occupy the left field dugout.

ALL STAR GAME: The home team for the All-Star game is the determined by a coin flip before the game starts. In the event that the All-Star game is rained out, that game will be rescheduled as soon as possible.

WSGA BOARD OF DIRECTORS DISCLAIMER: The Westlake Girls Softball Association Board reserves the right to rule on any issue that happens during the season and reserves the right to remove anyone from our league for any reason. We reserve this right and will use it only as the board deems necessary.

PIGTAIL DIVISION RULES

- 1) FIELD: Base distance 55 ft. Pitching distance 20 FT (approximate).
- 2) BALL: 11", yellow cover, soft core, ASA certified
- 3) PLAYERS:
 - a) All girls play each inning in the field but only eight infielders, including the catcher, are allowed on the dirt.
 - b) No girls shall play the same position in the field for more than 1 inning of an entire game unless there are a low number of players present.
- 4) PITCHING:
 - a) Coaches pitch in Pigtail Division, approximately 20 - 25 ft. from the plate. There is a limit of seven pitches per batter. (ONLY 1 BALL IN PLAY DURING GAMES).
 - b) If the batter does not hit the ball, it is not an out, the batter returns to the bench. However, by mutual agreement of the coaches prior to the game, that player may also be designated to take first base.
 - c) Each team shall bat through their lineup once per half inning. After batting through the lineup once, the half inning is over. If three outs occur before the team bats through their lineup, the inning is over. If a player is called out on base, they must return to the team bench.
 - d) There are no balls and strikes called, and no outs by strikes.
- 5) BATTING and BASERUNNING:
 - a) There is no stealing allowed and no lead-offs from the bases.
 - b) Runners may not leave the base until the ball is hit.
 - c) Most fields have a double first base. When a double base is present, the runner is to step on the base on the right side (orange) and the fielder touches the base on the left (white).
- 6) FIELDING:
 - a) There is no infield fly rule.
 - b) There are no advancements on overthrows.
 - c) There is no advancement once the ball, hit to the outfield, has been thrown back into the infield.

d) Once the ball has hit the dirt, or a player's glove, the runners may no longer advance. The ball does not have to be caught or returned to the pitcher to stop the advancement.

7) COACHING NOTES:

a) Two coaches are allowed in the outfield to instruct their players in the field, but should not interfere or touch a ball in play.

b) The home team coach shall provide a new game ball.

c) Make-up games due to rainouts, though scheduled, are optional and will be up to the discretion of the coaches involved; no umpire will be provided for make-ups.

d) Keeping score is at the mutual agreement of the coaches, but is not required.

e) There are no forfeits.

MINOR DIVISION RULES

- 1) FIELD: Base distances: 60 ft. Pitching distance: 35 ft. to back of home plate.
- 2) BALL: 11", yellow cover, ASA certified
- 3) PLAYERS:
 - a) 12 girls on the field with a maximum of 7 infielders including the catcher and pitcher. Only infielders are allowed on the dirt portion of the infield.
 - b) Pitchers and defensive player positions must be rotated every two innings (i.e., no player may play the same position more than 2 innings in a row). Additionally, no player may play the same position for more than 2 of any 4 consecutive innings.
 - c) A player may resume a position once rotated in accordance with Rule 3(b).
 - d) Catchers must wear helmets/facemasks, chest protectors and shin guards at all games and practices.
- 4) PITCHING:
 - a) Pitchers in this division may use an underhand flat delivery or a traditional "full windmill" motion.
 - b) A legal pitch is delivered with a negligible arc.
 - c) If the pitched ball has an illegal arc, the umpire will call the pitch a ball unless the batter swings at it.
 - d) One foot must remain in contact with the pitching plate at all times prior to and after the forward step of the pitch, until the release of the ball.
 - e) A strike is across the plate between the lowest part of the batter's knee and the top of the uniform letters.
 - f) A batter is not awarded first base if hit by a pitch.
 - g) The pitcher must be replaced after walking 4 batters consecutively. The pitcher who has been removed can pitch subsequent innings if so desired by the coach.
 - h) A dropped third strike is an out, regardless of whether or not first base is unoccupied, and regardless of the number of outs.
- 5) BATTING and BASERUNNING:
 - a) No intentional bunting or base stealing. Sliding is permitted at any base other than first base, but is not required at any time. Any player intentionally sliding into first base will be called "out." Coaches should explain to players the potential impact of a sliding runner.

- b) There is no infield fly rule.
- c) Runners may not leave the base until the ball is hit. Most fields have a double first base. When a double base is present, runner is to step on the base on the right side (orange) and the fielder touches the base on the left (white).
- d) There is no advancement to first base on a dropped third strike or passed ball. The batter is out.
- e) Runners may advance one base on all overthrows that remain in play (but the runner may not advance more than one base in the event of multiple overthrows – e.g., if a player overthrows first base, the runner may attempt to advance from first base to second base. If the first baseman proceeds to then overthrow second base in an attempt to get the runner out, the runner may not advance to third base). There are no lead-offs from any base until the pitched ball is hit. If the runner leaves early, she will be called out. Runners must return to base when the ball is in the pitcher’s control.

6) FIELDING:

- a) When a ball is fielded in the outfield, the fielder needs only to throw the ball to the infield to stop the play. When the ball reaches the dirt anywhere on the infield or touches the glove of a player standing on the dirt of the infield, the base runners are stopped. If a base runner is half way or more to the next base, the runner may take that base. If a runner is less than half way to the next base, the runner must return to the previous base. Judgment of the half-way point is made by the umpire(s).
- b) When a ball is not hit to the outfield, baserunners are stopped when a play is successfully made at a base, the ball is thrown into the pitcher and reaches at or near the pitcher, or a player inside of the base paths raises her hand to signal a dead ball. Once play is stopped under this Rule 6(b), any player may continue to the next base to which she is running (no “half-way” rule).

7) GAME LENGTH:

- a) A regular season game is complete if the game has been played for a full 1.5 hours at the end of an inning or 7 full innings (whichever is first).
- b) In the event of inclement weather, a game is considered complete if 4 innings have been played, or 3.5 if the home team is ahead.
- c) A playoff game is complete if the game has been played for a full 1.5 hours at the end of an inning or 7 full innings (whichever is first - unless there is a tie). In the event of a tie, the game will continue with full innings being played until there is a winner. In the event of inclement weather or darkness, that game will be resumed when possible.

8) MERCY RULE: This division has a 15-run “mercy” rule after four full innings, and a team can

score only a maximum of 6 runs per half inning. Ties will be counted as a half win and a half loss in the standings.

9) COACHING NOTES:

- a) The home team coach shall provide a new game ball.
- b) Coaches may file a protest only to the head umpire during the playing of the game and before the next pitch. If volunteer umpires are used, no protest can be filed.
- c) Coaches will not report standings or scores to the newspapers or media. The winning coach must contact the Division Director with the game score within a reasonable amount of time after the game, or enter the score into a website portal as directed. Season won/loss results for all games played will be reconciled by the Division Director prior to playoff seeding.