

Southwest Suburban Girls Fastpitch Softball League  
2021 Rules for 10 and Under In-House  
April 2021

Official USA Softball Rules will govern play with the exception of the following rules:

1. To be an official game the losing team must bat in the fourth (4th) inning or one hour and forty minutes from the start of the game. No new inning may begin after one hour and forty minutes from the start of the game, with the exception of a tie game, which will be played to its conclusion using the USA Softball tie-breaker rule (see below for information on tie-breaker rule).
  - USA Softball Tie-Breaker states that starting with the top of the eighth inning, and each half inning thereafter, the offensive team shall begin its turn at bat with the player who is scheduled to bat last in that respective half inning being placed on second base (e.g., if the number five batter is the lead off batter, the number four batter in the batting order will be placed on second base. A substitute may be inserted for the runner).
  - If a team is in the tie-breaker and the Short Handed Rule is in effect, do not declare an out if the absent player is the one who should begin the half inning at second base. Instead, place on second base the player whose name precedes the absent player's name in the line-up.
2. A fifteen (15) minute grace period will be in effect for each team to field the required number of players before a forfeit is called.
3. Home team is official scorebook.

4. Only players on a team's official roster may participate. If a team is caught using players not on their official roster, that team will forfeit the game and manager will be subject to a one game suspension. For a second offense, team will be excluded from tournament play subject to appeal to the SWS Board of Directors. Teams are permitted to roster up to 3 players that are also rostered on another team (SWS or non-SWS). Such players will be identified on a team's official roster, and will be restricted to the same or lower age and skill classification.
  - A player may not be a regular full time rostered player on a second team (SWS or non-SWS). Players may "fill-in" on a limited basis for a travel division team or in house team, up to a maximum of five games combined. Upon playing a 6<sup>th</sup> game, the player is ineligible for their original in house team for the remainder of the season.
  - Double rostering players from another SWS team is permitted provided it is from a same or lower age in-house division team.
  - Double rostering from a non-SWS team is permitted provided it is from the same or lower age classification and skill level.
5. In order to participate in the SWS tournament, a player must have played in at least 10 of her team's regular season games (listed in the line up and on the playing field for at least 3 innings). Lone exception is a documented injury (physicians note required). Use of an ineligible player in the tournament may result in suspension or expulsion from the league going forward, subject to appeal of the SWS Board of Directors.
6. If a game is suspended before the fourth inning or one hour and forty minutes, the game shall be resumed at the point it was stopped and played to its natural conclusion. No game shall be

started over. A tie game is allowed only if an official game has been called due to darkness or weather; otherwise the USA Softball tie-breaker is an effect.

7. All players must play a minimum of three defensive innings in a full seven-inning game, with the exception of players being benched for disciplinary reasons.
8. Ten defensive players are allowed on the field (four outfielders). The four outfielders may be in any alignment providing they are all in the grass at the start of the play.
9. The maximum number of runs a team may score in an inning is five (5).
10. Mercy Rule. If a team is up by eleven (11) runs after the losing team has batted in the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) inning the game will be declared over.
11. A pitcher can pitch no more than three innings (3) per game, unless the game goes 7 innings, at which time a pitcher who has pitched three (3) innings may return (or continue) to pitch. Otherwise the game is forfeited if a pitcher exceeds three (3) innings. The pitcher is credited with an inning when she throws one (1) pitch in that inning. Innings pitched for a regular scheduled game that is called for any reason will count for that game.
12. Continuous batting order and free defensive substitution are mandatory.
13. When exchanging line-ups prior to a game, coaches must submit a complete line-up (number, last name, first initial) of all players expected to play in that game, including any players that are expected to arrive late.

14. If a player's turn at bat is reached and that player is not available, the coach has the option of taking an out to keep that spot open or scratching that player with no penalty as long as there are at least eight (8) remaining players in the batting order.
15. A team playing with eight (8) players will not incur an automatic out for the 9<sup>th</sup> player in the batting order.
16. If a player is injured during her at-bat and must leave the game, the player who made the last out will assume her count and finish the at-bat.
17. If a player has one turn at-bat and then leaves the game, there will no penalty as long as there is a minimum of eight (8) players in the batting order. Said player may not return to the game.
18. Both the pitcher and catcher of record may receive a courtesy runner at any time. Last batted out is courtesy runner.
19. The batter is called out for throwing a bat, no warning.
20. Runners starting at 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> base may advance or steal one base only per pitch. Runners at 3<sup>rd</sup> base may advance or steal home only if played upon. Runners are liable to be put out between bases, or if they advance beyond the one base they are entitled to. If a runner safely reaches a base beyond that which they are entitled to, when play ceases, they shall be returned to the previous base with no liability to be put out.
21. There is no drop third strike.
22. Batter-runner may only advance to first base on a walk, no continuation.

23. Pitching distance is 35'.
24. Artificial noisemakers are not permitted at any games. Coaches, players, and parents are required to use appropriate language in appropriate tones at all times. At the umpire's discretion, continued violations will result in a warning followed by an ejection (violator has 5-minutes to leave the facility subject to team forfeit).
25. Any manager or coach ejected from a game for any reason will be subject to an automatic one game suspension for their next scheduled game.
26. If excessive or extreme heat warnings are issued by any local weather service, games will be suspended until such a time when this warning has been removed. Coaches should exercise the same judgment for excessive heat as they would for other extreme weather conditions when determining whether it is safe to play. Final decision on "playability" due to excessive heat shall rest with the home team (or tournament host if during SWS Tournament).