

CORTLAND SOFTBALL LEAGUE
10U MINORS DIVISION RULES

Goal

To teach the fundamentals of softball and to develop a positive attitude towards sports and team play. **OUR MOST IMPORTANT GOAL IS TO HAVE FUN!**

Conduct Rules

1. The goal of the Cortland Softball League is to teach the fundamentals of softball and to develop positive attitudes towards sports and team play. Most importantly, we want to foster a playing environment where everyone has fun.
2. Teamwork and building an enjoyable experience for all the girls in the league is our desired goal.
3. Coaches are expected to know and abide by all rules.
4. Coaches are responsible for the safety and conduct of their team.
5. Good sportsmanship and good behavior are expected from all players, coaches, and spectators, always.
6. Cheering for your own team is highly encouraged, but cheers against the other team will not be tolerated.
7. Sudden noises (shouts, horns, foot-stomping, yelling "swing", or other chants or noise-making devices) will not be tolerated.
8. Players and coaches should not purposely distract the other team's pitcher.
9. There will be no arguing with umpires. Inquiries and discussions about calls (other than balls and strikes) are okay, but arguments will not be tolerated.
10. Coaches are responsible for adherence to these conduct rules for themselves, their players, and the spectators.

Player Eligibility

1. All players must be in 5th grade or lower.
2. A player must play for the town they reside in unless they qualify for one of the three exceptions listed below:
 - a. A town is unable to field a team for the player to play on.
 - b. A player "school choices" into another town, then they can play for that town. Documentation of school enrollment would be required.
 - c. Priority is given to town players before non-resident players can be registered.
3. If a player's parents each live in two different towns, the player can choose to play for either town.
4. Both Cortland town league reps and Cortland League Steward must approve the player transfer to the other town.

General Game Preliminaries

1. The home team head coach is responsible for postponing a game due to weather/field conditions and contacting the umpires and the opposing coach.
2. Prior to each game, batting orders must be exchanged and recorded into the

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respective scorebooks.

3. Teams should be ready to play at the scheduled time.
4. No game should be started without a minimum of 7 players on a team. A forfeit could be called, however, we are here to let the kids play, so try your best to work it out. Free substitution of players is allowed. Players arriving late may enter the game immediately upon arriving at a stoppage in play. Late arriving players should be added to the bottom of the batting order.
5. Forfeits require a full game fee for the umpire.
6. The home team is responsible for acquiring and paying the umpire.
7. If there is no umpire present at game time, both coaches must agree on a substitute, or the game should be made up.
8. Home team supplies at least two game balls. A 11" traditional (optic yellow) softball will be used.
9. Coaches are not permitted in the playing field. The only time a coach is allowed to be on the field during a game is when the coach has come in to replace a pitcher that has walked more than the allotted batters in that inning or if there is an injury to a player. A coach may speak to the pitcher one time during the inning after first asking the umpire for time out. The batting team may have adult coaches serve as first and third base coaches.
10. Catchers must wear full protective equipment, even when warming up.
11. All infielders including the pitcher, are required to wear a fielding mask. It is strongly recommended that the entire outfield wear one as well.
12. All batters and base runners must wear a league-approved helmet at all times. Helmets must contain a face mask.
13. No jewelry, metal cleats, or casts. If a player cannot remove her jewelry, she must cover it with a bandage or athletic tape.
14. All players must remain on the bench or in the dugout when not batting or on deck. The only exception is players warming up with the permission of their coaching staff in designated areas agreed on before the game.

Game Rules

1. All rules not specifically noted here will follow USA Softball rules.
2. There are 5 innings per game (if time permits). No new inning may begin after 1 hour and 30 minutes has elapsed from the start of the game.
3. Three outs or 4 runs end an inning. The final play of the inning should be allowed to finish even if more than 4 runs are scored. However, only 4 runs should be officially recorded. If time allows, the fifth inning (**and ONLY the 5th inning**) is an unlimited-run inning.

Playoff rule modification: In the playoffs only, there will be 5 innings per game with no time constraint. Three outs or 4 runs will end all innings except in the last inning which will be unlimited runs. If the game ends before the last inning due to darkness or other circumstances, the three outs or 4 run rule is still in effect. It is only lifted in the last inning.

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4. The “mercy rule” for the game is invoked when a team is ahead by 15 or more runs after 4 complete innings.
5. Ten players on the field, the short fielder must stay in the outfield. All outfielders must play on the outfield grass.
6. All players should play a minimum of 3 innings, should not sit out 2 innings in a row, and should not sit out more than 2 innings in a game. Coaches should rotate players to different positions during each game. No one should be an outfielder only. (You might try making a position roster ahead of time to post in the dugout, so time is not wasted telling the players where to play.)

Note: Coaches should make every attempt to let any girl who wishes to pitch an opportunity to do so, however the first time the girl is on the mound should not be during a game. Please make sure they have a chance to practice pitching prior to a game situation.

7. All players must be in the batting order whether they played in the field during the inning. Pinch-hitting is not allowed. No batting out of order.
8. There will be no penalty if a team has less than 9 players available for the game.
9. Free substitution for defensive positions.
10. Bunting is **NOT** allowed.
11. Infield fly rule is **NOT** in effect.
12. Dropped third strike rule is **NOT** in effect.
13. A batted ball in the playing field is live until returned to and controlled in the pitching circle. A “hit” by a batter can be as many bases as the batter can reach before the ball is returned and controlled in the pitching circle. The ball remains live until it is returned and controlled in the pitching circle.

Clarification: On overthrown balls begun by a batted ball (i.e. balls overthrown in attempt to make a defensive play), runners may attempt to take as many bases as they desire, provided the ball is still within play and not controlled and within the pitching circle. Once the ball is controlled and within the pitching circle, no further advancement can be made other than the base they may be in the process of reaching at the time. If the ball is out of play, it becomes a dead ball and the appropriate out of play advancement is instituted. (One base on an overthrow that goes out of bounds).

14. When the ball hits a batter, the umpire will call “dead ball”. If a batter is hit by a pitched ball within the batter’s box and can continue the at-bat, the pitch is ruled a “ball.” If a batter is hit by a pitch in the strike zone while attempting to hit the ball, the pitch is ruled a “strike.” If a batter cannot continue her at bat, the last batted out can take her place as a pinch runner at 1st base.
15. Runners may not leave the base (lead or steal) until the ball has crossed the plate. If the ball is put in play and a runner has left early a “dead ball” will be called.
16. Runners may steal 2nd and 3rd base only. A steal is defined as an advancement of a non-batted ball, including but not limited to a passed ball (EXCEPT WHEN A COACH IS PITCHING) and an attempt by a catcher to pick off a leading base runner.

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If the defense tries to throw the runner out who is stealing and an overthrow occurs, the runner may not advance.

Though double steals are allowed, a base runner on 1st may not advance on the overthrow attempt of the runner stealing third.

Runners may advance from 1st to 2nd base and from 2nd to 3rd base on a passed ball (one base at a time). The same rules on an overthrow apply.

17. Stealing of home plate is **NOT** allowed.
18. If a runner cannot continue her place at any base, the last batted out can take her place as a pinch runner.
19. No pitcher will appear in more than 2 innings. A pitcher may leave the game and return in later innings if she doesn't appear in more than 2 innings per game. One pitch thrown in an inning constitutes an inning of pitching.
20. Kid pitch should be encouraged whenever feasible. If all available pitchers have pitched their 2 innings, the inning will become coach pitch with the offensive coach as pitcher.
21. Pitching distance is 35 feet. If pitchers are struggling early in the season, coaches may agree on allowing the pitcher to pitch from 32 feet, but she must start with both feet at or behind that spot and not take extra steps forward before letting go of the ball. In the playoffs, pitchers must pitch from 35 feet, no exceptions.
22. The pitcher must not make two revolutions of the arm in the windmill motion. A pitcher may drop the arm to the side and to the rear before starting the windmill motion. If the windmill motion is not used (ie, the "L" or "T" stance), the ball must be delivered toward home plate on the first forward swing of the pitching arm past the hip.
23. There will be a limit of 2 walks per inning. If a batter receives a fourth ball with a player pitching after 2 walks have already been recorded for that inning, the batter will retain the number of strikes and the offensive coach will pitch to the batter for the remainder of the at bat. The umpire will still call strikes when the coach is pitching, but the batter is not allowed to walk. The girl who was pitching will remain near the pitching circle (within 5 feet) and may field any "IN PLAY" balls that come to this location. The coach is not allowed to make any plays on the field.
24. If a batter receives a fourth ball with a player pitching, the batter will retain the number of strikes and the offensive coach will pitch to the batter for the remainder of the at bat. The umpire will still call strikes when the coach is pitching, but the batter is not allowed to walk. The girl who was pitching will remain near the pitching circle (within 5 feet) and may field any "IN PLAY" balls that come to this location. The coach is not allowed to make any plays on the field.
25. For the safety of all players, any pitcher who hits 3 batters in a game must immediately be removed from the pitching position for the rest of the game (she may play any other position). Hit by Pitch (HBP) is determined by the umpire. Coaches should review this rule with the umpire before each game.
26. Call-ups/call-overs cannot pitch.