

2024 OMGAA/PWYSA GIRLS FASTPITCH HOUSE LEAGUE RULES 12U & 14U-18U (14U+)

National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) softball rules apply with exceptions below

Team/Fair Playing & Time Limits

Coaches should ensure equal playing time for all players. Official team rosters are established by the participating leagues and filed with the respective league coordinators. Roster changes are not permitted without written approval from all league coordinators.

1. Teams must submit their lineup to the opposing team prior to the first pitch.
2. Teams must **bat and play all available players.**
3. A **continuous order batting lineup** will be used in regular season games. For example: if batter #4 was the last out of the game, then batter #5 starts the next game. All teams must have the batting order **set by the 3rd game played of the season.** A team batting order will be made and followed through the entire game. Players missing a game or arriving late will resume their normal slot in the continuous batting order. Players unable to make a plate appearance due to injury, or other reason, will also be skipped in the continuous order without penalty. If a player bats out of order and a pitch is thrown to them, the batter is out if an appeal is made by the first pitch of the next batter, otherwise the batting order continues without penalty.
4. No player that arrives on time **will sit out two innings until all players have sat out one inning.** The only exception is for a player who has been removed for unsportsmanlike conduct or injury.
5. All coaches should strive for equal infield/outfield play time over the course of the season
6. **No new inning will start after 80 minutes of play.** Time starts when the umpire calls "play ball" prior to the first pitch of the game and ends at the time of the third out of the last full inning, not when the team taking the field is ready. Seven innings constitutes a complete game. Regular season games tied at the end of regulation will end in a tie.
7. In time limit games, the game is over if in the last inning of play (as designated by the umpire) the home team is winning upon the completion of the visiting team's at bat in the top of the last inning.
8. Teams must have at least **seven players** (1 outfielder) and no more than ten players in the field (4 outfielders). Free substitution of defensive players is allowed.
9. There is a maximum of five runs per inning (with the effect on play noted below under "Batting" rule #4).
10. The ten-run rule after four and one-half innings of play is not in effect.
11. **Five warm-up pitch maximum and two-minute limit between half-innings.** Time starts immediately after third out. Umpires will enforce and coaches need to promote speed of play. Pitcher, catcher, fielders and next batter must be ready at the start of the inning. Coaches need to warm-up pitchers if catcher with mask is not ready.
12. All **outfielders must start positioned on the outfield grass** when the pitch is delivered.
13. Home team is listed first on the schedule and will occupy the **first base bench.** The home team is the "**official**" **scorebook** for the game. Scorekeepers for both teams should record the game start time and confirm their team's runs scored after each half-inning with the opposing team scorekeeper.
14. Both teams shall supply a new ball to the Umpire prior to the start of the game.

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Batting

1. **Three strikes** is an out, **four balls** is a walk.
2. For 12U, the batter is out on a dropped third strike. The batter cannot attempt to advance to first base.
3. For 14U+, batters **may advance to first base on a dropped third strike** in the following circumstances:
 - When the catcher fails to catch the third strike before the ball touches the ground, there are less than two outs, and first base is unoccupied by a Runner; or
 - Any time there are two outs.
4. There is a **maximum of five runs per inning**. If a team exceeds five runs during a play, live play should continue, but only the first five runs will count.
5. The **infield fly rule is in effect** when declared by the umpire with runners on first and second base (or all three bases) and there is less than 2 outs. The **“intentionally dropped ball” rule**, as determined by the Umpire, also applies. The infield fly rule has precedence over an “intentionally” dropped ball.
6. A foul ball on the third strike not caught by the catcher or other fielder is not an out no matter how many are hit, except a batter who fouls the ball while attempting to bunt on the third strike.

Pitching

1. **Five warm-up pitch maximum and/or two-minute limit between half-innings** – Pitcher needs to be ready with the game ball on pitcher’s plate and any warm-up balls off the field of play with the umpire’s “play ball” call.
2. There is no limit on the number of innings a pitcher can pitch in a game.
3. The pitcher’s plate is **40 feet for 12U and 43 feet for 14U+** from home plate. Coaches are responsible for ensuring the correct placement of the pitcher’s plate prior to the start of the game (if the plate is movable).
4. Only 1 foot (pivot foot) has to be on the pitching rubber to start. The non-pivot foot can be in contact with or behind the pitcher’s plate.
5. There must be a change of Pitchers if in one inning a second time-out is called and the Coach visits the pitching mound. Note: With free substitution the pitcher could re-enter the game in a later inning if their maximum innings pitched has not been reached..
6. The Pitcher must not make any motion to pitch without continuing to deliver the ball to home plate or else a balk will be called. The first balk will result in a verbal warning from the umpire. A second balk will result in a ball to the Batter and an advance base to all runners*.
7. Rocker Motion, in which after having the ball in both hands in the pitching position in front of the body one hand is removed from the ball, a backward and forward swing is done, and the ball is returned to both hands in front of the body, is not allowed.
8. The umpire, at their discretion, can remove a Pitcher that hits four or more Batters in one inning.

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Base Running

1. Stealing is allowed.
2. Runners may lead off (or steal) once the pitcher has released the ball. Base runners leaving early will be called out.
3. Once the pitcher has control of the ball and is in the pitching circle, runners must stop at the base they occupy at that time or, if between bases, must immediately continue to the next base or return to the previous one. Any runner purposely stopping between bases to draw a throw from the pitcher will be called out. The umpire will call play ended when the pitcher has the ball within the pitching circle and he/she has deemed play stopped; there is no delayed stealing (running after a clean throw from an infielder to the pitcher). Once play has been stopped and runners are on a base they will be declared out if they leave said base unless (1) a play is made on her or another runner, (2) the Pitcher leaves the pitching circle or drops the ball, (3) the Pitcher releases the next pitch, or (4) a timeout has been taken and/or the umpire allows the player to leave the base in a dead ball situation.
Note for this section generally: only one runner will be called out if more than one runner has been determined by the umpire to not be proceeding to a base once the pitcher has control of the ball in the pitching circle as described above. In this case, once one of the runners has been declared out the ball is ruled dead.
4. All base runners must try to avoid contact with fielders. Any runner purposely running into a fielder will be called out at the umpire's discretion.
5. A baserunner running from 3rd to Home plate must attempt to slide in the event the catcher has the ball and is attempting to cover home plate or make a play on the runner. This rule does not apply if the catcher is not covering Home plate or if there is a force play at home and the catcher is not attempting to make a tag play on the runner. Infractions of this rule will result in the runner being called out. **The umpire has final say as to what constitutes an infraction of this rule.**
6. Base runners can advance at their own risk on overthrows where the ball remains live in play and not in the pitcher's possession within the pitching circle. The ball remains "live" until time is called by the Umpire and/or the pitcher has possession of the ball within the pitching circle.
7. **Courtesy runner (pitcher/catcher injured player).** The last out may be used as a substitute runner, by notifying the umpire and opposing coach, for a player when: requested prior to the games first pitch; requested prior to the first pitch of each at bat if injured during the game; requested prior to next pitch if injured during course of play as becoming batter-runner or runner. Notification does not have to be if the player is not injured and is playing pitcher or catcher.

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Individual Safety

1. Helmet with face guard and chin strap (if available) snapped-on must be worn while on the field when your team is at bat.
2. No jewelry of any kind is allowed. Exception: "post-style" starter earrings must be covered with tape or bandage.
3. Shirts must be tucked in at all times.
4. Long hair should be pulled back and secured.
5. **Metal cleats are not allowed.**
7. Catchers must wear a helmet with mask, chest protector, and shin guards.
8. All fielders must wear fielding facemasks

Sportsmanship

1. All players, coaches, and spectators will treat all participants with respect and dignity – before, during, and after the game.
2. Players may be removed from a game by the umpire for unsportsmanlike conduct.
3. Cheering for your team is encouraged. No cheering or bantering is allowed when directed at the opposing pitchers or hitters. Always encourage good sportsmanship.

Umpires' Authority

1. Umpires are in charge of the game. The Umpire has the authority to remove players, coaches and spectators from the playing field area and the stands if they are disruptive and abusive to anyone on or off the playing field.
2. Umpires will call illegal or no-pitch prior to the pitched ball crossing the plate. Balls and strikes will be called after the ball crosses the plate.
3. Once a call is made the decision is final. Only in an event of interpretation of the rules can any protest be addressed. At this time, both coaches should meet with the umpire to discuss the call. Protests cannot be made on judgment calls.
4. In the event of inclement weather, the Umpire will confer with the two Coaches as to continuation of play or delay. Under no situations will play continue or begin when thunder or lightning is present.

Coaching

1. Only the head Coach, or designated Assistant Coach(s), are allowed to confer with the Umpire or be allowed to protest a call or interpretation of a rule. The designated Coach(s) will meet with or be identified with the Umpire prior to the game starting.
2. Adults or players may coach first and third bases. If players are coaching bases they must wear helmets. One coach per base. A Coach cannot touch a player to get them to advance to second or home or back to first or third base. If a player is touched to assist them to advance or retreat to a base, the runner is out.

Playoffs

1. Extra Innings: In playoff games that result in a tie at the conclusion of the last full inning, the following tie breaking procedure will be used to determine the winner of a game
 - Each team will continue play while starting with 2 outs and a runner on second base. Play then continues normally from that point.
 - In an extra inning game, pitchers are allowed 1 additional inning to pitch
2. Home/Away: The home team is determined by the higher seed.