

Local Rules (2020)

SOFTBALL

The official rules for Arcadia Little League division play for Softball are covered in the handbook entitled "Official Regulations and Playing Rules" of Little League Softball (also known as the "Orange Book"). All managers and coaches will be given this handbook and are required to become knowledgeable with the rules. The following is intended to clarify some of the key rules and to provide additional guidelines for Arcadia Little League division play.

GENERAL RULES (Applicable To All Divisions)

Section 1 – Field/Game Set Up.

1(a). The home team is responsible for field and equipment set up and take down and keeping the official score in divisions where score is kept.

1(b). The home team will occupy the third base dugout. The visiting team will occupy the first base dugout.

1(c). As may be permitted due to other scheduled games, each team will have exclusive use of the field for a 10-minute period for warm-up prior to the start of each game. The visiting team's warm-up period shall begin 25 minutes prior to game time. The home team's warm-up period shall begin 15 minutes prior to game time.

1(d). Each team is responsible for cleanup of their respective dugout after the game.

1(e). Each manager is responsible for the behavior of his/her team's parents and spectators as well as that of his/her team's players and coaches at all times while at Little League games.

1(f). Use of an on deck circle is prohibited. All offensive players other than the batter and any base runner shall remain in the dugout. This rule does not apply to defensive players, who include a pitcher and catcher engaged in pitching warm-up activities in a bullpen as may be expressly permitted by other rules.

1(g). A continuous batting order shall be utilized for all divisions. If a player arrives late for a game she shall be placed at the bottom of the order. All players, while at bat or on base, shall wear a batting helmet.

1(h). All players shall remain on the playing field or in the dugout at all times during a game.

JUNIOR VARSITY (5-6)

Section 1 – Game Rules

1(a). A coach shall pitch to his or her team during their turn at bat. The pitch shall be underhand and have a flat arc. The distance from the pitching plate to home plate shall be twenty-five feet (25'). Each batter will get 5 pitches to hit the ball. If the batter has not put the ball in play after 5 pitches then a tee will be used. A batter cannot strike out.

1(b). A coach may offer assistance to the batter, and then only in regard to positioning the batter relative to the plate (i.e., the coach may only direct the batter to move closer to the plate, or further from the plate, or deeper in the batter's box, or forward in the batter's box).

1(c). Score shall not be kept.

1(d). The half-inning duration shall be concluded only when one (1) full rotation of the batting roster has occurred.

1(e). The three (3) out rule does not apply. A runner may be called out, however she shall remain in the game as though she were ruled safe.

1(f). The game ends after three (3) innings, or one (1) hour and fifteen (15) minutes, whichever occurs first.

1(g). All players may occupy the field at one time. The manager shall use his or her best efforts to arrange the players effectively to teach both infield and outfield positions.

1(h). A Runner may not advance on an overthrow to any base.

VARSAITY (7-8)

Section 1 – Game Rules

1(a). Managers are encouraged to fill out a game roster prior to the start of the game. The roster should show the batting order and defensive positions to be played by each player. The purpose of the roster is to assist the coaching staff in planning substitutions prior to the start of a game to insure that rules 2(b) and 2(c) are met. The roster can be changed as necessitated by changing circumstances (e.g., player injury, illness, early departure) during a game.

1(b). Score shall be kept.

1(c). Games shall be five (5) innings or approximately one hour and 30 minutes in length. No new inning may be started after one hour 15 minutes. A half inning shall consist of three (3) outs or five (5) runs scored, whichever occurs first. Any inning started shall be completed.

1(d). The coaches on the field will act as umpires as needed. A coach for the offensive team will pitch to his or her team (the "pitcher-coach") and call balls and strikes. During the kid pitch portion of the game the pitcher-coach will be positioned behind the pitcher. The coach closest to a play will have the final decision on a call, unless he or she defers to another coach with a better view. No appeals or protests of a call are allowed. Due to the instructional nature of the Varsity Division, when in doubt plays are to be decided in favor of the defense.

Section 2 – Playing Rules - Defense

2(a). The defense shall consist of not more than ten (10) players: a pitcher, catcher, first baseman, second baseman, shortstop, third baseman, left fielder, left-center fielder, right-center fielder and right fielder. If a team is unable to field 10 players, the team may play with nine players, using three outfielders. In order to field a team of nine players only, a temporary additional player(s)

from the opposing team may be used. Pre-pitch the outfielders shall start with their feet in the outfield grass.

2(b). Every player shall play one of the first 4 innings in the infield. No player may play a third inning in the infield until all players have played two innings in the infield. For purposes of this rule, the infield positions are: pitcher, catcher, first base, second base, shortstop and third base.

2(c). No player shall sit out two defensive innings until every player has sat out one defensive inning.

2(d). A batter and/or base runners may advance one base only on a batted ball hit that remains in the infield

2(e). A batter and/or base runners may advance one or two bases only on a batted ball hit that ends up in the outfield grass, unless the batted ball is hit on the fly over the fencing in the outfield and declared a homerun. The outfield is defined as the grass area where the infield dirt ends. For example, a runner on first may advance on a hit that ends up in the outfield no further than third base. Play shall stop and the ball declared dead when the base runners have advanced two bases.

2(f). In the event of an overthrow a runner may advance at her own risk to the next base only. There is no penalty to the defense if the defensive player attempts to throw out the runner advancing to the next base due to the overthrow. For example, with a runner on first, the batter hits the ball to the second baseman, who attempts to throw out the batter at first. The ball is overthrown, so the runner starting on first advances to second on the hit and may try, at her own risk, to advance to third on the overthrow. The batter having reached first base may attempt to advance to second on the overthrow. The defensive player may try to throw out either one of the advancing runners, with no further penalty because the runners cannot advance more than the one extra base. An overthrow is defined as any throw that goes three or more feet from the player covering a base. A dropped ball, bobbled ball, or a ball that stays within approximately three feet of the defensive player covering the base is not an overthrow.

2(g). Defensive players must play one set position per inning (i.e., defensive players cannot switch positions during an inning), except in cases of a pitching change, injury, illness or disciplinary action.

2(h). The catcher must wear (i) a catching helmet and mask with a hard throat protector; (ii) a chest protector; (iii) shin guards; and (iv) use a catcher's or regular mitt.

2(i). During the coach pitch portion of the game (see Section 4 below), the pitcher may stand to the left or right of the coach-pitcher, but no closer to the batter than the coach-pitcher.

2(j). While on defense a team may station no more than two coaches in the field of play and one coach immediately outside the team's dugout entrance.

Section 3 – Playing Rules - Offense

3(a). A batter may bunt the ball. Any batter fouling off a third strike while attempting to bunt is out.

3(b). A player who throws a bat during a game will receive a warning from a coach/umpire. A player who throws a bat for a second time during a game after having received a warning will be declared out.

3(c). Base stealing is not permitted. Base runners will not leave the base until the ball has been put in play by the batter.

3(d). Feet first sliding is allowed. Head first sliding is not.

Section 4 - Pitching Rules

4(a). The front of the pitching plate will be 35' from the back point of home plate.

4(b) (i) During the first half of the season two (2) separate players will pitch the first two innings only. After the first two innings conclude play for the remainder of the game will be by coach pitch as described below. The pitcher will pitch to the first seven batters of the inning. After the initial seven batters the Coach will pitch the balance of the inning.

(ii) During the second half of the season three (3) separate players will pitch the first three innings only. After the third inning concludes play for the remainder of the game will be by coach pitch as described below. After the initial seven batters the Coach will pitch the balance of the inning.

(iii) A player may pitch only one (1) inning in a game. Delivery of a single pitch in any inning constitutes pitching one (1) inning.

4(c). During player pitch there will be no walks. If the count reaches four balls or a batter is hit by a pitch, the pitcher-coach shall pitch to his or her batter. The batter retains the number of strikes left in the strike count. For example, 4 balls and no strikes, then 3 strikes remain, 4 balls and 1 strike, then 2 strikes remain; 4 balls and 2 strikes, then 1 strike remains. The coach-pitcher shall pitch to the batter until the batter puts the ball in play or strikes out. The coach-pitcher shall call balls and strikes. Coach pitches that are strikes shall be called as such. Coach pitches that are balls shall be called as such and disregarded. As a general rule, the strike zone is from chin to knees and a few inches on either side of the plate

4(d). After the player pitch innings conclude, the remainder of the game will be played by coach pitch. A coach-pitcher shall pitch to his or her team. Each hitter has five (5) pitches to put the ball in play. A player can strike out swinging (in less than 5 pitches). If the player doesn't swing at the 5th pitch, then she is out. A player may receive more than five (5) pitches (at and after the 5th pitch) if she fouls off pitches that are not caught. The coach-pitcher may declare "no pitch" any time he or she delivers a pitch that is unable to be hit (e.g. so high that it is at or about the batter's head height, or so low that it hits in front of home plate, or hits home plate). The pitch is declared "dead." In the event the batter puts a pitch declared "dead" into play the hit shall not count and the batter must repeat the at bat. A "no pitch" will not be counted toward the five (5) pitches allowed.

4(e). The coach-pitcher is responsible for ensuring that the catcher is ready to receive a pitched ball before each pitch.

4(f). Any time a batted or thrown ball comes into contact with a coach in the field of play the ball shall be declared dead and each runner shall be awarded the next base.

4(g). Pitches from the coach-pitcher shall be underhand and have a flat arc. The coach-pitcher shall pitch with at least one (1) foot touching the pitching plate and not move closer to the plate to shorten the distance of the pitch.

MINORS (9-10)

Section 1 – Game Rules

1(a). All Little League rules in “Official Regulations and Playing Rules” of Little League Softball (also known as the "Orange Book") shall apply.

1(b). Managers are required to fill out a batting lineup card prior to the start of the game. The lineup card at a minimum shall designate the number and the first and last name for each player in the roster. The lineup card is exchanged with the opposing manager with an extra copy that shall be provided to the official scorekeeper prior to the first pitch.

1(c). A half inning consists of three outs or maximum five (5) runs. In the event that the batter hits a home run over the outfield fence, all runs are counted including the batter’s run. During the top half of the last inning, the visiting team is allowed to score enough runs to tie the current score plus score 5 more runs maximum. During the bottom half of the last inning, the run rule is waived allowing the home team the ability to tie or win a game. During the Regular Season the last inning shall be declared by the Umpire and agreed to by both Managers before the start of said inning.

1(d). Regular season games will be six (6) innings.

- (i) For games played Monday through Thursday no new inning may be started after one hour 30 minutes. Any inning started shall be completed.
- (ii) For games played Friday, Saturday or Sunday, no new inning may be started after one hour 45 minutes. Any inning started shall be completed.

1(e). The home team shall be responsible to keep score in the League’s official score book. The score-keeper at a minimum shall designate the number and first and last name for each player on both teams. Each team is required to maintain a game score and an inning count log for each pitcher for inclusion in the League inning count log book. Delivery of a single pitch in any inning constitutes pitching one (1) inning. During the Regular Season a pitcher may pitch no more than two (2) innings during a game. During the End of Season Tournament a pitcher may pitch no more than three (3) innings during a game.

1(f). Any pitcher who hits three (3) batters in an inning or (4) four batters in a game will be removed from the circle.

Section 2 – Playing Rules (Offense)

2(a). A runner may not lead off from a base. A runner may not leave a base until after the pitched ball has crossed home plate. If a runner leaves prior to the pitch crossing home plate that runner will be called out. Head first slides are prohibited.

Section 3 - Regular Season Roster Guidelines

3(a). During the Regular Season, Managers will provide every player with the opportunity to play an infield position for at least one (1) full inning during every game. This guideline is put in place to ensure that every player in the Minor Division is provided with an opportunity to participate in playing multiple defensive positions throughout the season as a way to learn new skills and gain a more enjoyable Little League experience. It is not acceptable for Managers in this League to execute game strategies that do not include player rotations that meet the spirit of this guideline.

3(b). During the Regular Season, a player should not sit out two (2) defensive innings until every player has sat out one (1) defensive inning. The only exception is if the Manager believes there are no other eligible players on the roster that are qualified to be a catcher for player safety reasons. No player will sit out three (3) defensive innings.

Section 4 – End of Season Tournament

4(a). End of Season Tournament games shall be five (5) innings in duration and have no time limit. In the event of a tie after five (5) innings then extra innings will be played to determine a winner.

During the End of Season Tournament, a pitcher may pitch no more than three (3) innings during a game.

During the End of Season Tournament, a team leading by 10 or more runs after the completion of the 4th inning will be declared the winner and the game will end.

MAJORS (11-12)

Section 1 – Game Rules

1(a). All Little League rules in “Official Regulations and Playing Rules” of Little League Softball (also known as the "Orange Book") shall apply.

1(b). Managers are required to fill out a batting lineup card prior to the start of the game. The lineup card at a minimum shall designate the number and the first and last name for each player in the roster. The lineup card is exchanged with the opposing manager with an extra copy that shall be provided to the official scorekeeper prior to the first pitch.

1(c). A half inning consists of three (3) outs or maximum five (5) runs. In the event that the batter hits a home run over the outfield fence, all runs are counted including the batter’s run. During the top half of the last inning, the visiting team is allowed to score enough runs to tie the current score plus score five (5) more runs maximum. During the bottom half of the last inning, the run rule is waived allowing the home team the ability to tie or win a game. During the Regular Season the

last inning shall be declared by the Umpire and agreed to by both Managers before the start of said inning.

1(d). Games will be six (6) innings.

- (i) For games played Monday through Thursday no new inning may be started after one hour 30 minutes. Any inning started shall be completed.
- (ii) For games played Friday, Saturday or Sunday, no new inning may be started after one hour 45 minutes. Any inning started shall be completed.

1(e). The home team shall be responsible to keep score in the League's official score book. The score-keeper at a minimum shall designate the number and the first and last name for each player on both teams. Each team is required to maintain a game score and an inning count log for each pitcher for inclusion in the League inning count log book. Delivery of a single pitch in any inning constitutes pitching one (1) inning. During the Regular Season a pitcher may pitch no more than three (3) innings during a game. During the End of Season Tournament a pitcher may pitch no more than four (4) inning during a game.

1(f). The runner may not lead-off the base. The runner may steal a base at her own risk, however, the runner may not leave the base until after the pitched ball has been released by the pitcher.

1(g). End of Season Tournament games shall be six (6) innings in duration and have no time limit. In the event of a tie after five (6) innings then extra innings will be played to determine a winner.

During the End of Season Tournament, a pitcher may pitch no more than four (4) innings during a game.

During the End of Season Tournament, a team leading by 10 or more runs after the completion of the 4th inning will be declared the winner and the game will end.