

## Rookie League Softball ----- WMLL Local Rules

1. All National Little League rules, as described in the rulebook, apply unless specifically addressed here or by past WMLL custom. What follows are notes of emphasis.
2. **Stealing:** Stealing is not allowed. Runners may leave the base when the ball crosses the plate. Players detected leaving early will be called out. If the ball is not hit into play, runners must return immediately to their original base(s) when the ball is returned to the pitching circle. Note: "pickoff" throws (by catchers, for example) are allowed and runners may NOT advance on pickoff throws.
3. **Dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> Strike:** Batters may not advance to 1<sup>st</sup> base on a dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike.
4. **Bunting:** Bunting is not allowed.
5. **Players:** Teams can play with up to 10 players on defense. Teams forfeit the game if they have fewer than 8 players to start. Teams that start the game with 8 players but lose one or more players during the game may continue. If the number of players drops below 8, an out is recorded each time a missing player's turn to bat occurs. A courtesy runner for the catcher is recommended when there are 2 outs. The player making the last out will be the runner.
6. **Substitutions:** . All players will be included in the batting order. Free defensive substitution of all players is allowed. No player should be out of the game for two fielding innings before each player has been out once. Coaches should make every attempt to rotate fielding positions and substitutions as equally among players as possible. All players should play roughly the same number of innings in the infield (including pitcher or catcher) as one another, the same number of innings in the outfield as one another, and spend the same number of innings on the bench as one another.
7. **Infield:** No more than 6 players may begin a play in the infield. All outfielders (4, if 10 players are on defense) must be on the outfield grass when the ball is pitched
8. **Time Limit:** Games will consist of up to 6 innings. A new inning may not start after 1 hour 15 min. An inning is started immediately after the 3<sup>rd</sup> out is registered on the home team. If the score is tied at the end of 6 innings or at the time limit, the game is a tie. Games will end promptly at 1 hour 30 minutes unless the outcome is still in question.
9. **Runs Scored:** A maximum of 5 runs can be scored per half inning.
10. **Sliding:** On close plays at 2<sup>nd</sup> base, 3<sup>rd</sup> base or home plate, the runner is required to slide or to avoid collision with a defensive player who has the ball while located within the batter's box area or within the vicinity of another base. If a contact is made and the runner did not slide, the umpire shall call the runner out for offensive interference. The runner has the primary responsibility to avoid a collision with the defensive player. No headfirst sliding is allowed. Players should be taught and encouraged to slide properly.

11. **Play Stoppage:** Play stops when the fielding pitcher has control of the ball in the circle area, approximately a 10-foot circle centered by the pitcher's plate. The umpire will return runners that are not in stride and more than halfway to the next base to the preceding base.

12. **Ball:** 11-inch softie ball.

13. **Pitching:** Coach pitch: Coaches will pitch to their own teams. If there is no pitching plate at 35', coach pitcher will stand on a line at 35' from home (i.e. in front of the 40' pitching plate). Umpires will call strikes on pitches in the strike zone. Where practical, a pitching machine can be used. A ball that hits the coach inadvertently remains in play. If a coach intentionally touches a ball in play, the batter is out and runners are returned to their bases.

16. **Infield fly rule:** There is no infield fly rule.

17 **Inning Switch:** Coaches are encouraged to hustle players on and off the field. The first pitch of a half inning must be delivered not longer than 60 seconds after the third out of the previous half inning.

18. **Bat throwing:** A player will receive one warning each game for inappropriately throwing the bat. For any subsequent instance of throwing the bat in that same game the player will be called out. The warning and out can be on the same at bat. If a hitter is called out for throwing the bat the ball will be dead and any runners must return the base, which he/she occupied prior to the pitch. Note: this rule applies to accidental bat throwing, not to bat throwing in anger or protest.

19. **League Standings:** League standings will not be kept or updated.

20. **Coaching positions:** Each team may have one fielding coach stationed in fair territory, on the outfield grass, during that team's innings in the field. No coaches except the fielding coach, the base coaches, and the coach pitcher are allowed on to the field; other coaches should be in the dugout at all times.