



West Windsor Little League
2009 Softball Rules of Play
Rookies Division

Last Update:
3/19/09

All rules promulgated by Little League Baseball Incorporated as 2009 Softball Playing Rules will be in effect, except as superseded, modified or amplified below.

SAFETY

1. Safety of players, coaches and spectators is our most important task. In questions of field conditions, whether it is too dark to practice, etc., safety should be the paramount concern.
2. In case of bad weather, the league coordinators will survey the field and make the final decision as to whether the games should be played. The coordinators will call the managers using the phone chain set-up. If there is no phone call by 8:00am, then the games will be played according to schedule.
3. Managers must bring a set of the player's medical forms to all games and practices. In addition, each team will have a small medical kit with ice packs available at all times, as well as a cellular phone if possible.
4. Absolutely NO Jewelry, with the exception of a medic alert bracelet, may be worn during games and practices. This includes freshly pierced ears; tape may not be worn over ear lobes.

GAME PLAY GENERAL

1. Each game shall consist of a maximum of six (6) innings. Game times will generally be Saturday mornings at 8:30 AM and 10:00 AM
 - a. For the 8:30 AM games no inning will begin after 9:45 AM
 - b. For the 10:00 AM games no inning will begin after 11:30 AM
2. Managers should instruct coaches and parents to have players arrive one-half hour prior to the start of the game. Players should never be allowed to play or practice unless they are supervised by a manager or assigned coach.
3. Managers are encouraged to have lineups and fielding positions prepared before arriving for the game.
4. All teams should clean up and clear off the field as soon as possible following the conclusion of the game. If the manager wants to speak with the team and/or parents, they should move off to the side to allow the next game's teams access to the field.
5. There must be a minimum of five (5) players on the field to play a game.
6. Smoking by managers and coaches is prohibited during the game or at any practices.

DEFENSE

1. No more than 10 players will play the field. There should be no more than two "pitchers", a catcher, first, second, third, and shortstop. Managers should spread outfielders out evenly. The playing field should be moved "in" by placing all players, infielders and outfielders on the dirt.
2. All players shall be rotated in the field so they can experience playing a variety of positions. Each player should play infield and outfield each game and should not stay in one field position for more than two innings. Managers are encouraged to develop all players at infield positions.
3. Managers are encouraged to adopt an active style of play. Every player should be in motion on every play. Team members have a job to do even if the ball is not hit directly to them.
4. Up to two coaches (or a coach and a manager) may be present on the field during the time that their team is on the field. One shall stand in right-center and the other in left-center. The purpose is to encourage good play and to keep the players focused. They should not interfere with a batted or thrown ball. One coach must be in the dugout with the players at all times.
5. There are no out-of-bounds for the purpose of catching a fly ball. All caught fly balls are outs including foul tips caught by the catcher on a third strike or last pitch.

OFFENSE

1. All batters and base runners must wear helmets.
2. There is no on-deck circle for the next batter. This rule was instituted for safety reasons and must be followed. It is the coach/manager's responsibility to ensure that players are not swinging bats while waiting to get up to bat.
3. A coach/manager shall pitch to their team. The pitches should be thrown underhand.
4. Each batter shall receive a maximum of six pitches per at bat. The first five pitches count as pitches regardless of location. The sixth pitch (or last pitch if it is after a foul ball) must be a strike. If a batter does not swing at the strike on the last pitch then they shall be called out. If on the last pitch the batter hits a foul ball, they will receive additional pitches until the ball is put in play or the batter strikes out. A batter will be out if they swing and miss three times during an at bat. We want to strongly encourage the players to swing the bat.
5. Each half inning will consist of 3 outs or 5 runs scored - which ever comes first.
6. A runner shall continue to advance until the ball is returned to the pitchers circle. Play stoppage only happens when the ball is in the control of a defensive player in the circle (coach involvement discouraged, but ok).
7. No sliding, no collisions. Players may not attempt to knock over or hurdle the fielder. A runner may go into a base standing up, but will be called out if they crash into the fielder.
8. NO bat throwing: a team warning will be issued after the first occurrence. On subsequent occurrences, the batter will be called out. Only one warning per team will be issued.

9. No bunting, leading, tagging-up on fly ball outs, or infield-fly rule. Stealing will be introduced in two parts. The first half of the season, (5 weeks) stealing 3rd base only will be allowed. The second half of the season, stealing 2nd base only will be allowed. Base runners may leave the bag when the ball reaches the plate at the earliest.
10. A ball that is accidentally fielded by the "coach-pitcher" shall be considered a dead ball and the batter will be awarded a single and all runners will advance one base.
11. The remaining coaches/manager shall occupy the first and third base coaching positions and/or be in the dugout area supervising the players who are not batting. A coach or manager may stand behind the catcher to assist the movement of the game. This coach may also instruct the batter.
12. The pitcher shall act as the umpire on all batted balls. Their decision is final; however they may defer to a defensive coach for help; in that case the defensive coach's decision is final.
13. In case of an injury to a runner, a courtesy runner may be inserted. This courtesy runner must be the player who recorded the last out for that team.

MISCELLANEOUS

1. Games will be played at Ward Field or at West Windsor Community Park. Each team may play one "travel" game at CPLL.
2. The team designated as the "home" team in the schedule takes the dugout along the first base line. The home team is responsible for providing two brand new game balls. The team designated as the "visitor" team in the schedule takes the dugout along the third base line.
3. Consumption of food is not permitted during games or in the bench area. **THIS IS A WWLL RULE** and must be followed. This includes oranges. Only water is allowed. It is the manager's responsibility to assure that their area of the field is clear of all debris prior to leaving the area. We need to keep the fields clean.

FIELD MAINTENANCE

1. The home team will be responsible for lining the baselines and pitcher's circle prior to the start of the games.
2. The visiting team will be responsible for dragging and raking the field after the completion of the games.

In the spirit of sportsmanship, both teams will work together before and after the game to ensure that the field maintenance is completed as quickly as possible to allow the game to begin and/or to allow everyone to go home as soon as possible.

West Windsor Little League Basic Skills for Rookie Softball Players

2009

Managers and Coaches:

Upon completion of the rookie season, each player should be able to perform the following basic softball skills:

Throwing: Players should be able to grip the ball properly and execute a throw utilizing proper technique. Distance and strength are not as important as form.

Catching: Players should be able to place their glove and throwing hand appropriately to catch the ball *safely*. This is vital.

Batting: Players should be able to know which side of the plate to be on and how to place themselves in the batter's box. They should utilize the proper grip and stance at the plate as well as execute the correct softball swing. Proper form and making contact with the ball are essential.

Pitching: Introduction to the sling shot method. Each player should attempt to throw sling shot pitches during practices.

Fundamental Knowledge of the Game:

1. Number of players on the field
2. Positions on the field
3. The meaning of a "ball" and a "strike"
4. Number of balls and strikes per batter
5. The meaning of an "out" and how they occur
6. Number of "outs" per inning