

Interleague Council Local Rules 8U - 14U Games

Updated Fall 2023 - August 18

1. Scope and Intent

- a. These rules govern all Interleague play, regardless of the field at which the game is being played. To the extent that the home teams league rules differ from these rules, these rules take precedence and will govern play for all Interleague games. For items not addressed in these Interleague rules each team will abide by their individual league rules for those matters.
- b. The Interleague games adopt the general Official Rules of Softball published by USA Softball for Junior Olympic girl's fast pitch.

2. Home Team Responsibilities

- a. Notify visiting team of unplayable conditions or postponements
- b. Reschedule postponed games
- c. Utilize third base dugout
- d. Prepare and mark field
- e. Secure and pay umpires
- f. Official scorebook, clock, and score reporting to Interleague
- g. Coaches should make every effort to contact each other the day before their teams play to confirm game time, location, field rules regarding metal cleats and pets, preferred locations for parking and other relevant information.

3. Rosters and Participation

- a. Minimum Players
 - i. 8U - 6
 - ii. 10U - 7
 - iii. 12U & 14U - 8
 - iv. No penalty out is taken for missing player(s)
- b. Maximum Fielding Players - 10
- c. Required & Maximum Infielders - 6
 - i. Outfielders must be on the grass when ball is pitched and may enter dirt area of infield only after the ball has been hit.
- d. Batting Order - All players at the game will bat using a continuous batting order.
 - i. Batting order must be submitted to umpire at the start of the game
 - ii. Players may freely substitute on defense.
 1. Only pitchers and catchers initial assignments and changes need to be communicated to the umpire and opposing team
 - iii. Players arriving late or leaving early must be communicated to the umpire and opposing team.
 1. Players arriving late are inserted at the bottom of the batting order.
 - a. Exception - A player may be inserted into the order in the middle of the lineup if that position in the order has not yet batted in the game.
 2. Players leaving early are removed from the batting order and skipped
 - a. No penalty out is taken for skipping a player who left early.
- e. Courtesy Runners
 - i. Courtesy runners for next innings's pitch and/or catcher.
 1. Must be announced to umpire and opposing team
 2. Must be the player least likely to come to bat that inning
 - a. Bottom of the batting order at the start of the inning.
- f. Injured players, no longer able to play, will be treated as if they had to leave the game early
 - i. No out shall be automatically taken.
 - ii. An injured play may re-enter the game upon agreement of the umpire and opposing managers.
 - iii. An injured batter/runner may be substituted with a courtesy runner as per above.

4. Field and Equipment

- a. Ball size/type
 - i. 8U - 10-inch low compression softball
 - ii. 10U - 11-inch low compression softball
 - iii. 12U & 14U - 12-inch low compression softball
- b. Pitching Distance
 - i. 8U - 30 feet
 - ii. 10U - 35 feet
 - iii. 12U - 40 feet
 - iv. 14U - 43 feet
- c. Pitching Circle - 8' radius
- d. Balls hit over the fence on the fly are considered an automatic Home Run. Balls hit over the fence on a bounce are considered a Ground Rule Double.
- e. All batters and base runners must wear an ASA approved batting helmet with full face shield. Per ASA rules, chin straps are not required, but must be tight against the chin if worn. Coaches please check that all equipment is worn properly and fits the player.
- f. Catchers must wear a full set of catching equipment that meets ASA standards including full helmet with face mask, chin guard, chest protector, and knee/shin/foot guards that wrap around the leg. Catchers should be properly instructed on the location to crouch to receive a pitched ball that avoids contact with the batter.
- g. Players are not allowed to wear jewelry of any kind other than medical alert information pieces (which should be covered by wrist band or tape).
- h. Bats must have ASA/USA softball certification mark
 - i. Only players, managers, coaches, and scorekeepers may occupy player dugout benches
- j. Metal cleats are not allowed in 8U, 10U, and 12U
- k. 8U Only - Pitchers must wear a defensive fielder's mask at all times.
 - i. All players in all age groups are encouraged to wear fielder's masks for improved safety
- l. 8U Only - A batter that throws her bat (unintentionally as deemed by the umpire) will be warned as many as two times. The third time a bat is thrown, that player will be automatically called out.
 - i. Any player deemed to have intentionally thrown her bat will be immediately called out without a warning.
- m. 8U only - To help speed up rec season games, a staff member of the defensive team may stand at the backstop to retrieve passed balls and also return the ball back to the pitcher. However, that staff member must move out of the way when a ball is hit into play to avoid interference.
- n. Missing Umpire - The defensive team will supply a coach umpire if an umpire is not otherwise provided for the game. The coach umpire will stand either at the back of the pitcher's circle or behind the catcher to call balls and strikes. If a coach pitcher enters the field to pitch, the coach umpire will stand off the field in a position to make safe/out calls.

5. Time Limits and Scoring

- a. Start time: within 15 minutes of the scheduled start time (based on field availability).
- b. Game Length - Time - 90 minutes.
 - i. No new inning starts after time has expired, but the inning in progress will be played to completion.
 - ii. The clock starts with first pitch of the game.
 - iii. Official inning time will be the moment the last out is recorded.
 - iv. Home team's official scorer will keep the official clock.
 - v. Home team timing rules may override Interleague rules in cases of field availability - these should be communicated prior to the start of the game
- c. Game Length - Innings
 - i. 8U - 5 inning
 - ii. 10U - 6 innings
 - iii. 12U - 6 innings
 - iv. 14U - 7 innings
- d. Games may end in a tie.
- e. Run Rule
 - i. 10U - Winning by 10 or more after 4 innings.
 - ii. 12U & 14U - Winning by 13 or more after 4 innings.
- f. Run Limit
 - i. 8U & 10U
 - 1. Innings 1 through 3: A half inning ends when the defensive team achieves three outs or when the offensive team scores 4 runs.
 - 2. Innings 4 through 6: Starting with the 4th inning, the half inning ends when the defensive team achieves three outs or when the offensive team increases its lead by 4 runs (or takes a 4 run lead if trailing).
 - ii. 12U & 14U
 - 1. Innings 1 through 3: A half inning ends when the defensive team achieves three outs or when the offensive team scores 4 runs.

6. Participation and Pitching Limits

- a. Minimum Innings
 - i. 8U - All players must play a minimum of two innings on defense and at least one of those innings must be played at an infield position. No player shall sit the bench for a second inning in any game unless all other players on the team have sat at least one inning on defense in that game.
- b. Pitching Limits
 - i. 8U & 10U
 - 1. In general, during the first four innings of a game, no pitcher should throw more than two innings.
 - 2. If the game goes to a 5th or 6th inning, a pitcher is allowed to throw one additional inning for a total of no more than three innings in the same game.
 - 3. Each league has their own pitching limit guidelines as to how those limits will be measured and managed, and each team should abide by their own league rules on pitching limits.
 - ii. 12U & 14U
 - 1. No specific limits, however coaches should endeavour to provide pitching opportunities to those players who are interested in pitching and capable of doing so.

7. Stealing - 8U & 10U

- a. 8U
 - i. Not allowed in any situation (wild pitch, overthrow back to pitcher, etc.).
- b. 10U
 - i. No stealing home until the second Saturday of April (no stealing home in Fall).
 - ii. May not steal on coach pitch.
 - iii. May only advance a single base on a steal - overthrows do not allow additional base specifically for steals.
 - iv. One warning per team will be issued for leaving the base early.

8. Overthrows - 8U & 10U

- a. 8U
 - i. When a batted ball is fielded in the infield by an infielder and thrown to attempt any force out, the play is immediately dead on an overthrow and batters may only advance to the base they were attempting to reach.
 - ii. On all other plays at bases, an overthrow allows up to one additional base advancement, at the risk of the runner.
 - iii. For example - with a runner on first and a ball hit to the pitcher, overthrowing second will not allow runners to advance beyond first and second. If the lead runner had rounded second and a tag play attempt was made at third resulting in an overthrow, the runners could advance to second and home - however if the runners could be put out while advancing to second or home.
 - iv. Offensive coaches are asked to help monitor this rule and return runners after the play is over if they advanced too far.
- b. 10U
 - i. On all plays at bases, an overthrow allows up to one additional base advancement, at the risk of the runner.

9. Sliding - 10U Only

- a. Players must make an attempt to slide on plays occurring at second base, third base and home plate.
- b. Should a collision occur (or almost occur as determined by umpire's judgment) as a result of a player not sliding, the runner may be called out by the umpire.

10. Bunting - 8U & 10U

- a. May not bunt on coach pitch.
- b. May not 'slash' (show bunt, pull back, hit away).

11. Infield Fly - 8U & 10U

- a. No Infield Fly rule

12. Dropped Third Strike - 8U & 10U

- a. No dropped third strike rule.

13. Hit By Pitch Limits

- a. 8U
 - i. Upon the 3rd batter being hit in a single inning by one pitcher, that pitcher will be removed from the mound immediately for the duration of the inning.
 - 1. In future innings, upon the second batter being hit in a single inning, said pitcher will be removed from pitching for the remainder of the game
 - ii. Hit by pitch results in coach pitch
 - 1. if the batter is hit by a ball that hits the ground first, the pitch is a ball and the batter continues to face the player pitcher.
 - 2. If a batter swings at a pitch that then hits the batter, the pitch is considered a “strike” and play continues.
 - 3. A batter is considered to be “hit by pitch” if she is struck by a ball traveling into the batter’s box regardless of whether she attempts to get out of the way.
- b. 10U
 - i. Upon the 2nd batter being hit in a single inning by one pitcher, that pitcher will be removed from the mound immediately for the duration of the inning.
 - 1. In future innings, upon the first batter being hit, said pitcher will be removed from pitching for the remainder of the game
 - ii. Hit by pitch gives batter two options
 - 1. Coach pitch
 - 2. Awarded first base
- c. 12U & 14U
 - i. Upon the 3rd batter being hit in a single inning by one pitcher, that pitcher will be removed from the mound immediately for the duration of the inning.
 - 1. In future innings, upon the first batter being hit, said pitcher will be removed from pitching for the remainder of the game

14. Walk Limits - 8U & 10U

- a. 8U - No walks allowed
 - i. After 4 balls, coach pitch
- b. 10U - 2 walks per half-inning
 - i. Hit By Pitch does not count toward the 2 walk limit
 - ii. Subsequent batters - after 4 balls, coach pitch

15. Coach Pitch - 8U & 10U

- a. The batting team will supply a coach pitcher.
- b. The coach pitcher must be in contact with the pitching plate when the pitching motion is started and when the pitch is delivered.
- c. When a coach pitcher is pitching, the player pitcher must have at least one foot within the pitcher’s circle when the pitch is released.
- d. Strike count remains.
- e. Coach continues to pitch to batter until:
 - i. Ball is hit fair
 - ii. Batter strikes out swinging
 - 1. No called strikes are allowed
 - iii. Coach throws a total of three pitches
 - 1. After two pitches, foul balls allow an extra pitch and are unlimited
- f. If a coach pitcher is accidentally struck by a batted ball (either when pitching or when acting as the umpire), the ball is immediately ruled dead and the pitch is treated as “no pitch”. The batter returns to the batter’s box and the count remains the same.

16. 6U Rules

- a. 6U is an introduction to the exciting game of fastpitch softball. Our goal as a program is to teach basic individual and team fundamentals, preparing the kids to develop their skills and advance to the 8U in subsequent seasons. Key fundamentals introduced at this level include: batting, throwing, fielding, and running. The players learn basic game rules and strategy as well. Kids, upon completion of a season, should understand defensive positions on the field, be able to demonstrate the name and place where each position is located on the field, balls and strikes, fair ball and foul ball, how to make an out and what an out means, and the objective of advancing around the bases to score a run.
- b. Game play will begin with a coach pitching to a batter. After 6 coach pitches, regardless of whether the pitches thrown were balls or strikes, the batter who has not successfully hit a ball in fair play will then use a batting tee.
- c. Coaches will umpire the games as needed.
- d. Games are played with a 10-inch reduced flight, cushion type ball.
- e. No scores will be kept or recorded.
- f. Players will not slide, and the Infield Fly Rule is not used.
- g. Team on defense will use 5 infielders (behind the coach pitcher, 1st base, 2nd base, shortstop, and 3rd base) and the balance of the roster will play in the outfield.
- h. No catcher will be used although the pitcher may cover home. A coach from the batting team will catch and assist the hitter, placing the batting tee in place as needed if after 6 pitches the batter has not hit a fair ball.
- i. An inning will last until all the players on the batting team have come to the plate, assuring each player receives equal opportunity to bat.
- j. Fielding Rules
 - i. There can be 2 defensive coaches on the field, supporting the defensive team. The coaches may teach and provide instruction to the fielders but should not physically assist the fielders.
 - ii. Outs will be recorded but not for the purpose of ending the inning.
 1. Outs can be achieved by catching a fly ball, tagging a base where a force out exists, or tagging a runner who is off a base. Coaches should keep in mind the goals and spirit of the A Division, trying whenever possible to teach the game.
 - iii. The play will be considered over when the pitcher has control of the ball inside the pitcher's circle or if the runners have stopped running, making no effort to continue.
- k. Batting Rules
 - i. A team will bat their entire roster of players each inning.
 - ii. A batter will receive up to 6 pitches from the coach pitcher to successfully swing and hit a fair ball. If the player does not put the ball into fair play after 6 pitches, regardless of whether the pitch is a strike, she will then hit the ball off a batting tee which is placed in position.
 - iii. If a batted ball hits the coach pitcher, the play is considered dead, no pitch, and the base runners return to their base. If a batted ball hits a defensive coach the ball is considered live.
 - iv. A batter and base runner may only advance one base on a ball that does not leave the infield. If the ball reaches the outfield grass, base runners and the batter may advance as many as 2 bases.
 - v. There is no advance on an overthrow.
 - vi. If a base runner or batter is put out, they will come off the base that the out was recorded to begin to teach players about outs in normal game play.