



2019 SOFTBALL RULES

Approved March 20, 2019

ABOUT THESE RULES

The rules contained in this document are some of the more common Little League rules, plus rules that are specific to Suffern Little League (“House Rules”) and other District 18 Leagues playing with SLL. They have been written to reflect the house rules of our partner leagues in order to minimize confusion during interleague play. Always consult the Official Little League Rules book for further explanation or clarification, and any rule not specifically addressed in this document. House rules should be confirmed with opposing manager before the game.

ROOKIES

This is a non-competitive program designed to teach, develop and encourage young players

Start Time / Game Length

- Game clock begins at the **scheduled** start time
- All games must end after 2 hours
- Managers are responsible for getting games started on time

Equipment & Safety

- Home team will provide 2 game balls
- All batters & base runners must wear a safety helmet with a cage
- Players must not wear watches, rings, pins, jewelry or other metallic items
- It is suggested that all children wear an under-jersey chest protector
- It is suggested that all children wear a fielding mask
- Players must wear sneakers or softball/baseball cleats with plastic spikes only. Cleats made for other sports are prohibited for player safety and the health of our fields
- Catchers must wear a mask, throat protector and catcher's helmet
- No “On Deck” positions allowed, only 1 batter allowed outside the dugout during offense
- No bat weights or donuts permitted
- No glass permitted in dugouts
- Smoking is not permitted at any Suffern Little League game, practice, or event
- Managers, Coaches, Parents, & Spectators will behave appropriately at all times
- Managers are responsible for the condition of their dugout after each game
- All Managers, Coaches, Volunteers, & assisting parents are **required** to undergo a Little League background check
- Parents & Spectators are not permitted in the dugout unless recruited to assist by the team manager

- While running to first base, the batter must safely touch the runner's base or may be called out for interference (Applies to offensive interference by batter rules)

Game Play

- A continuous batting order will be utilized
- Every player shall play at least 3 defensive innings
 - **Note:** This does not apply to rain/weather shortened
- No player shall sit out 2 consecutive defensive innings
- A team shall play between 8 and 10 players on the field at all times. The 10th player shall remain on the outfield grass until the ball passes home plate or is put in play
- There is no mercy rule in this division
- No stealing or bunting is permitted
- Coaches will pitch or batting tees may be used for the entire season
- A catcher will be used (with a coach behind her)
- Catcher speed-up can be used upon agreement of managers & umpire
- No Strikeouts
- Team is retired after three fielded outs or the team has batted around once

MINORS

Start Time / Game Length

- Game clock begins at the **scheduled** start time
- No inning can begin 2 hours after the scheduled start of a game when there is no game following it
- No inning can start 1 hour and 45 minutes past the actual start time of the game when another game follows, which is determined by the Director/Umpire
- Subsequent innings begin the moment the 3rd out is made in the previous inning
- Managers are responsible for getting games started on time
- If a game is called before it has become a regulation game, but after one (1) or more innings have been played, it shall be resumed exactly where it left off
- A game is official if the players have completed 4 innings

Equipment & Safety

- Home team will provide 3 game balls
- All batters & base runners must wear a safety helmet with a cage
- Players must not wear watches, rings, pins, jewelry or other metallic items
- It is suggested that all children wear an under-jersey chest protector
- It is suggested that all children wear a fielding mask
- All pitchers must wear a fielding mask
- Players must wear softball/baseball cleats with plastic spikes only. Cleats made for other sports are prohibited for player safety and the health of our fields
- Catchers must wear a mask, throat protector, catcher's helmet, chest protector, & shin guards
- No "On Deck" positions allowed, only 1 batter allowed outside the dugout during offense
- Relief pitchers & their catcher warming up on sidelines must be protected from errant balls
- No bat weights or donuts permitted
- No glass permitted in dugouts

- Smoking is not permitted at any Suffern Little League game, practice, or event
- Managers, Coaches, Parents, & Spectators will behave appropriately at all times
- Managers are responsible for the condition of their dugout after each game
- All Managers, Coaches, Volunteers, & assisting parents are **required** to undergo a Little League background check
- While running to first base, the batter must safely touch the runner's base or may be called out for interference (Applies to offensive interference by batter rules)

Manager & Coach Rules

- Each team may have 1 manager and no more than 3 coaches in the dugout at any time
- When the game is in play, only one member of the manager/coaching staff can remain outside of the dugout while the team is on the field
 - He/she must be within arms distance of the dugout fence
- When a team is at bat, with the exception of the 1st and 3rd base coaches, no one else can be outside the dugout
- Managers or coaches must not warm up a pitcher
- Any manager, coach or player ejected from a game is suspended from the next physically played game
- Only the manager or an acting manager may approach or confer with an umpire
- Managers are not permitted to argue with opposing managers
- Only one offensive time-out will be permitted each inning
- Managers or his/her designated coach will confirm recorded runs each half inning with opposing team

Game Play

- A continuous batting order will be utilized
- Every player shall play at least 3 defensive innings
 - **Note:** This does not apply to rain/weather shortened
- No player shall sit out 2 consecutive defensive innings
- A team shall play between 8 and 10 players on the field at all times. The 10th player shall remain on the outfield grass until the ball passes home plate or is put in play
- On a base on balls, or hit by pitch, the runner **cannot** advance beyond first base
- Base Runners may advance (steal) only one (1) base after a pitch, at own risk, for a maximum of **four (4)** bases in an inning. However, stealing of home is allowed for a maximum of 2 times
 - After the maximum number of advances has been reached, if a base runner attempts to advance and reaches the base safely, the play is dead and runner returns to the previous base
 - Otherwise, if she is tagged out by a fielder, she is out
 - After the four advances have been achieved, players may only advance on a batted ball, walk, hit by pitch, and catcher's interference.
 - If a player attempts to steal a base but is thrown out, it does not count as a stolen base/advance
- Base runners may not leave the base until the ball has been pitched and has reached home plate
- Fake bunt/slash is **not** allowed. A player who squares and then pulls the bat back and then takes a swing will be an automatic OUT even if they don't make contact
- Infield Fly rule will not be called
- Circle rules are applicable
- Catcher speed-up can be used upon agreement of managers & umpire

- When a thrown ball goes out of play, the ball is dead. If the wild throw is the first play by an infielder, each runner advances two bases from the base occupied when the ball was pitched (batter advances to second base)
 - In all other cases, each runner advances two bases from the position of the runner at the time wild throw was made
- A pitch that goes out of play results in all runners advancing one base, subject to each division's rules on runners advancing
- A runner is out when the runner does not slide or attempt to get around a fielder who has the ball and is waiting to make the tag
 - Runner must try to avoid contact with fielder
 - The runner is not out for not sliding as long as they try to avoid contact
- Any runner is out when the runner slides head first while advancing

Pitching Rules

- The calendar week for pitching is Sunday to Saturday. (LL Rule)
- Delivery of a single pitch constitutes having pitched an inning
- Pitchers can pitch a maximum of 9 innings in a 2 game week and 12 innings in a 3 game week
- There will be no more than 6 innings pitched in a single game
- If a ball slips from the pitchers hand before, during or up to the delivery of a pitch, a ball is declared on the batter
 - The ball will remain in play and the runner(s) may advance at their own risk. (LL Rule)
- A pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position, can return as a pitcher anytime in the remainder of the game but only once in the same inning she was removed
 - **Exception:** The pitcher cannot return if she has hit 3 batters in an inning or 5 batters in the game.
- If a pitcher pitches one pitch, she is considered having pitched one inning
- If a pitcher hits 3 batters in an inning, or 5 batters in a game, that pitcher must be removed from the game as a pitcher
- A manager or coach may come out twice in one inning to visit with the pitcher, but the second time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher
- A manager or coach may come out three times in one game to visit with the pitcher, but on the third time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher

Mercy Rules

- A maximum of 5 runs are permitted per ½ inning except 5th & 6th innings, or extra innings
- If after 5 innings, or four and one-half innings when home team is ahead, the number of runs used to concede via terms of the "Mercy Rule" shall be 12

Forfeit Rules

- A game may not be started or continued with less than eight (8) players on each team. This shall not be grounds for an automatic forfeiture but shall be referred to the Board of Directors for a decision
- Each team has 15 minutes from scheduled start time to begin game play or a forfeit may be called (Pending Board of Directors decision)

Appeals Rules

- After the umpire calls “Play”, the pitcher must step on and then off the pitcher’s plate (with pivot foot first) and throw the ball or walk to the base to appeal. This is a live ball and a base runner may attempt to advance to the next base

Protest Rules

- Protest shall be considered only when based on violation or misinterpretation of a playing rule, or use of an ineligible player
- No protest shall be considered on a decision involving an umpire’s judgment
- The protesting manager shall immediately, and before any succeeding play begins, notify the umpire that the game is being played under protest
- All protests must be submitted by the manager, in writing, to the league president within 24 hours

MAJORS

Start Time / Game Length

- Game clock begins at the **scheduled** start time
- No inning can begin 2 hours after the scheduled start of a game when there is no game following it
- No inning can start 1 hour and 45 minutes past the actual start time of the game when another game follows, which is determined by the Director/Umpire
- Subsequent innings begin the moment the 3rd out is made in the previous inning
- Managers are responsible for getting games started on time

Equipment & Safety

- Home team will provide 3 game balls
- All batters & base runners must wear a safety helmet with a cage
- Players must not wear watches, rings, pins, jewelry or other metallic items
- It is suggested that all children wear an under-jersey chest protector
- It is suggested that all children wear a fielding mask
- All pitchers must wear a fielding mask
- Players must wear softball/baseball cleats with plastic spikes only. Cleats made for other sports are prohibited for player safety and the health of our fields
- Catchers must wear a mask, throat protector, catcher's helmet, chest protector, & shin guards
- No “On Deck” positions allowed, only 1 batter allowed outside the dugout during offense
- Relief pitchers & their catcher warming up on sidelines must be protected from errant balls
- No bat weights or donuts permitted
- No glass permitted in dugouts
- Smoking is not permitted at any Suffern Little League game, practice, or event
- Managers, Coaches, Parents, & Spectators will behave appropriately at all times
- Managers are responsible for the condition of their dugout after each game
- All Managers, Coaches, Volunteers, & assisting parents are **required** to undergo a Little League background check
- While running to first base, the batter must safely touch the runner’s base or may be called out for interference (Applies to offensive interference by batter rules)

Manager & Coach Rules

- Each team may have 1 manager and no more than 3 coaches in the dugout at any time
- When the game is in play, only one member of the manager/coaching staff can remain outside of the dugout while the team is on the field
 - He/she must be within arms distance of the dugout fence
- When a team is at bat, with the exception of the 1st and 3rd base coaches, no one else can be outside the dugout
- Managers or coaches must not warm up a pitcher
- Any manager, coach or player ejected from a game is suspended from the next physically played game
- Only the manager or an acting manager may approach or confer with an umpire
- Managers are not permitted to argue with opposing managers
- Managers or his/her designated coach will confirm recorded runs each half inning with opposing team

Game Play

- A continuous batting order will be utilized
- Every player shall play at least 3 defensive innings
 - **Note:** This does not apply to rain/weather shortened
- No player shall sit out 2 consecutive defensive innings
- A team shall play between 8 or 9 players on the field at all times
- On a base on balls, the runner is allowed to advance beyond first base at runners own risk provided the runner does not stop at or run through 1st base. In other words, the walked batter/runner must round first without stopping
- On a hit by pitch, the batter/runner cannot advance beyond first base
- Base Runners may steal after a pitch has left the pitcher's hand, at own risk
- Fake bunt/slash is **not** allowed. A player who squares and then pulls the bat back and then takes a swing will be an automatic OUT even if they don't make contact
- Circle rules are applicable
- Umpire may call the infield fly rule
- Dropped 3rd strike rules are in effect
- Catcher speed-up can be used upon agreement of managers & umpire
- A manager or coach may come out twice in one inning to visit with the pitcher, but the second time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher
- A manager or coach may come out three times in one game to visit with the pitcher, but on the third time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher
- When a thrown ball goes out of play, the ball is dead. If the wild throw is the first play by an infielder, each runner advances two bases from the base occupied when the ball was pitched (batter advances to second base)
 - In all other cases, each runner advances two bases from the position of the runner at the time wild throw was made
- A pitch that goes out of play results in all runners advancing one base, subject to each division's rules on runners advancing
- A runner is out when the runner does not slide or attempt to get around a fielder who has the ball and is waiting to make the tag
 - Runner must try to avoid contact with fielder
 - The runner is not out for not sliding as long as they try to avoid contact
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Pitching Rules

- The calendar week for pitching is Sunday to Saturday. (LL Rule)
- Delivery of a single pitch constitutes having pitched an inning
- Pitchers can pitch a maximum of 9 innings in a 2 game week and 12 innings in a 3 game week
- No player may pitch more than 8 innings in a single game
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- A pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position, can return as a pitcher anytime in the remainder of the game but only once in the same inning she was removed
 - **Exception:** The pitcher cannot return if she has hit 3 batters in an inning or 6 batters in the game
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- Managers may issue an intentional walk verbally, the pitcher need not throw a pitch

Mercy Rules

- The maximum number of batters per inning shall be determined by the team with the most players
 - In the 6th inning of the game, extra innings or playoffs the offensive team shall continue to bat until the defensive team has recorded 3 outs
- If after 5 innings, or four and one-half innings when home team is ahead, the number of runs used to concede via terms of the "Mercy Rule" shall be 12

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JUNIORS/SENIORS

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