

**OFFICIAL RULES METROWEST GIRLS SOFTBALL LEAGUE**

## SENIOR DIVISION

Grades 7 and 8

2016 Season

Last Updated: August 22nd, 2016

If rules are not specifically covered, the rules of the Amateur Softball Association of America shall govern play.

<b>Rule # Reference</b>	<b>Rule</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
B 1	Pitching Distance	43 feet
	Pitching Limit	Unlimited
B3	Pitching Limit Exception	A pitcher who has pitched at least 3 innings and whose team is leading by 10 runs or more cannot continue to pitch. This pitcher may re-enter, but only if her team leads by 8 runs or less.
B 5 & 6	Illegal Pitch	Any illegal pitch will be considered a ball. On an illegal pitch, all base runners advance one base including to home plate.
B 7	Hit By Pitch Limit	3 batters in an inning; 5 in a game
C 4	Ball	12" ,47 core ASA Approved
	Dropped 3 <sup>rd</sup> Strike	ASA rules in effect
	Infield Fly Rule	ASA rules in effect
	Bunting	ASA rules in effect
D 4	Slashing	Is NOT allowed
	Stealing	ASA rules in effect
D 7	Bunting/Stealing Run Limit	Bunting and stealing are NOT allowed when the team at bat is ahead by 8 or more runs. Runners are only allowed to advance on a batted ball.
D 8	Inning Run Limit	5 per half inning
D 9	Inning Run Limit Exception	If the team at bat is behind by 8 or more runs in any inning and there are fewer than 3 outs, they will be allowed to continue to score runs in that inning until their score within 8 runs of the other team. This allows them to exceed the 5 run per inning rule prior to the last inning of the game.
D 10	Inning Run Limit Final Inning	No limit on runs scored in final inning
D 11	Mercy Rule	15 or more runs after team that's behind has batted 5 times

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### A. Scheduling

1. Teams will be allowed a maximum of 5 practice sessions per week during the pre-season and 2 practices per week once the season has begun (no practices for **Fall softball** once the season has begun).
2. A league representative should be consulted to confirm postponement or rescheduling of a game.
3. The visiting coach and the umpire must be notified at least 1.5 hours prior to game time if a game is to be postponed due to weather conditions.
4. The umpire will use his/her discretion in deciding if a game is to be postponed due to weather conditions at the beginning of or during the game.
5. Games must be stopped immediately upon sighting of lightning or upon hearing thunder. Fields must be cleared for at least 30 minutes AFTER the last time thunder is heard or lightning is seen,
6. It is the home team's responsibility to reschedule a spring softball game no more than two weeks after the postponement (there are **no** makeup games for **Fall softball**).
7. Each game is 6 innings long. To be official, 4 innings must be completed (or 3 1/2 innings in the event the home team is ahead).
8. **A new inning starting beyond 1 hour and 30 minutes will be declared the last (tie breaker being the only exception). The game will end at 1 hour and 45 minutes. If there's a batter up at the 1 hour and 45 minute mark, that batter may finish the at bat. If the inning isn't completed, the final score reverts to the previous inning.**
9. **If the score is tied after 6 innings, and the game has lasted less than 1 hour and 45 minutes, a tiebreaker will go into effect.** The player who was the last completed at bat in the 6<sup>th</sup> inning will begin at 2<sup>nd</sup> base with the player batting after her in the order leading off the inning. The teams play subsequent innings using this format until one team wins or the 1 hour and 45 minute time limit expires
10. Any tied games (at the 1 hour and 45 minute mark) **will be declared a tie.**

### .Players

11. Each team will play up to 10 players in the field at a time.
12. Registered players from the same town, but different teams, may be used to play a game only as a last effort to get enough players to prevent forfeiting. Players from lower divisions can be used to prevent a team from forfeiting.
13. Added players must be declared prior to the start of a game, placed at the end of the batting order, and regular team players must get their first choice of field position.
14. Added players are allowed to pitch, if needed, but only 2 innings per game. Added players will **not** pitch the first or last inning..
15. Coaches should do everything they can to play the game as scheduled even if they are short-handed. If one team is short-handed the opposing team is strongly encouraged to send players to the short-handed team to increase opportunities for balanced play and playing time for players.
16. A team expecting to have fewer than 7 players is obligated to contact the opposing coach at least 24 hours before game time to reschedule the game.

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17. All players will be included in a continuous batting order. The initial batting order reflects those players ready to play at game time. Late arrivals must be placed at the end of the batting order, not inserted in the middle of the line-up as they arrive. If an injured player in the continuous batting order is unable to play she will be skipped in the order and the opposing team will not get an automatic out.
18. Each player must play 2 complete innings in the field unless the coach has a valid reason for not playing her.
19. Free defensive substitution rules will be in effect.
20. For Spring playoff games: **(there are no playoffs for Fall softball)**
  - i. If a team is unable to field at least 7 players at any point during the game, that team will forfeit.
  - ii. Players may be promoted from lower divisions only if there are not enough players available from the original roster.
  - iii. Players from other teams within the same division are NOT allowed to play on a playoff team.
  - iv. Players from lower divisions are NOT allowed to pitch.

B. Pitching

1. The pitcher's plate will be 43 feet from the apex (point) of the plate.
2. **ANY player can be re-inserted as a pitcher** during a game.
3. A pitcher who has pitched at least 3 innings and whose team is leading by 10 runs or more cannot continue to pitch. This pitcher may re-enter, but only if her team leads by 8 runs or less.
4. One pitch constitutes an inning pitched.
5. On an illegal pitch, all base runners advance one base including to home plate.
6. If a pitcher hits 3 batters in one inning she will be taken out for the rest of the inning. The pitcher can return to pitch during the game. However, if she hits 2 additional batters (or 5 total for the game) she must be taken out (from the pitcher's position) for the rest of the game.

C. Equipment & Field of Play

1. The bases will be 60 feet apart.
2. Double safety base is required at 1st base.
3. Batting helmets with face masks and chin straps are mandatory for batters, base runners and players waiting on deck.
4. Twelve-inch .47 core softballs will be used.
5. All bats must visibly display an ASA approval stamp.



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D. Game Rules

1. During a game, there will be a maximum of 3 coaches, 1 scorer and the members of the team seated on the bench. All other assistants and visitors must be seated elsewhere.
2. The home team score book shall govern the score of the game.
3. *The look back rule is in effect.* When a pitcher has the ball within a 8-foot radius around the pitcher's rubber, the base runner is obligated to proceed in either direction to a base. If a player stands still or changes direction she will be called out UNLESS the pitcher makes a play for the runner.
4. Slashing (i.e. squaring to bunt then pulling back and swinging away) is not allowed. The ball is dead and the batter is out.
5. **Runners are allowed to tag up on fair and foul balls.**
6. A courtesy runner will be encouraged for the catcher with 1 or more outs to allow for equipment change. The courtesy runner will be the latest recorded out.

Run Limits

7. Bunting and stealing are NOT allowed when the team at bat is ahead by 8 or more runs. Runners are only allowed to advance on a batted ball.
8. There is a 5 run per inning rule. Once a team has scored 5 runs the half inning will be terminated regardless of the number of outs.
9. If the team at bat is behind by 8 or more runs in any inning and there are fewer than 3 outs, they will be allowed to continue to score runs in that inning until their score is within 8 runs of the other team. This allows them to exceed the 5 run per inning rule prior to the last inning of the game.
10. There are no run limits in the last inning of the game.
11. *Mercy rule is in effect once the losing team has batted 5 times and they are down by 15 or more runs..*

E. Safety Rules

1. All players must remove ALL jewelry to be eligible to play. Taping over earrings is not allowed.
2. A batter that throws the bat will be given a warning (the umpire will inform the coaches and the player of the warning). The second time a batter throws the bat the player will be called out.