

## MINOR SOFTBALL RULES

With the creation of Softball's Long-Term Player Development Model\* in 2008, Softball Canada determined that rules unification was a key element of our LTPD implementation plan. The creation of a nationally standardized set of rules for the minor age categories would assist in aligning our competition structures with LTPD principles. The goal was to create a set of rules to be followed by all minor age categories that was based on the latest research on growth and motor development to ensure that the games played by children and youth were age and stage appropriate and met the objectives for those stages of development. The end goal is that more Canadians are enjoying playing softball at the recreational and elite levels.

The rules that follow were developed with the help of experts from across Canada and it is recommended by Softball Canada that all softball governing bodies follow these rules for minors as a supplement to the standard rules found earlier in this document.

\*For more information about LTPD, please visit Softball Canada's web site ([www.softball.ca](http://www.softball.ca)).

RULE	U6	U8	U10	U12
<b>Rule 2-The Playing Field</b>				
<b>Base Path Distance</b>				
• 40' (Softball Canada Standard for U6)	*			
• 45' (Softball Canada Standard for U8 and U10)		*	*	
• 55' (Softball Canada Standard for U12)				*
<b>Pitching Distance</b>				
• 30' (Softball Canada Standard for U8 and U10)		*	*	
• 35' (Softball Canada Standard for U12)				*
• Note: If Coach Pitcher, the defensive pitcher should stand at the minimum pitching distance listed above and no closer.				
<b>Rule 3-Equipment</b>				
<b>Ball</b>				
• 10" Ball - Softball Canada standard for U6 - Recommends a softer "COR" ball.	*			
• 11" Indoor Ball - Softball Canada standard for U8 & U10		*	*	
• 11" Ball - Softball Canada standard for U12 (COR .47)				*

RULE	U6	U8	U10	U12
<b>Helmet</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All batters will wear a batting helmet with cage with strap done up while at bat and on base.</li> <li>Optional for defensive pitchers to wear protective equipment (helmet with cage or face guard).</li> </ul>	*	*	*	*
<b>Mouthguard</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Optional for defensive or offensive players to wear a mouth guard.</li> </ul>				
<b>Homeplate</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>19" or 21" home plate</li> </ul>	*	*	*	
<b>Rule 4-Coaches, Players and Substitutes</b>				
<b>Coaches</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offensive and defensive coaches are permitted on the playing field.</li> </ul>	*	*		
<b>Players-Number of Players</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maximum of 8-9 players on team</li> <li>Maximum of 6 players on field.</li> <li>Minimum of 7 players on team.</li> </ul>	*	*	*	*
				*

RULE	U6	U8	U10	U12
<b>Players-Number of Players (continued)</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum of 7 players and a maximum of 9 players on the field.</li> <li>• When playing with less than the maximum number of players, there are no automatic outs.</li> <li>• If a player arrives late, they may be added to the bottom of the line up.</li> <li>• Each inning rotate who is the first batter.</li> </ul>	*	*	*	*
<b>Substitutes</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unlimited defensive substitutions</li> </ul>	*	*	*	*
<b>Replacement Runner</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Coach may use a courtesy runner for the catcher to allow that catcher to suit up for the next half inning.</li> </ul>	*	*	*	*

RULE	U6	U8	U10	U12
<b>Replacement Runner (continued)</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When the team on offence has two (2) out and the player designated to catch the next half inning is on base or there are only two (2) batters left in the order, the coach is allowed to substitute the last recorded out of the inning in that player's place as a base runner. The designated catcher must then suit up for the next half inning.</li> </ul>				*
<b>Playing Time</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No player is to sit more than 1 consecutive inning. Coaches will ensure that every player sits out one inning before any player sits out two innings.</li> </ul>	*	*	*	*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A player cannot play the same position in consecutive innings.</li> <li>A player cannot play the same position more than three (3) innings per game.</li> </ul>	*	*	*	*

RULE	U6	U8	U10	U12
<b>Playing Time (continued)</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each player must play an infield and outfield position in a game unless safety is an issue.</li> <li>The batting order should be shuffled every inning so a different player leads off each inning.</li> <li>Coaches are encouraged to play all players as equally as possible over the course of the season.</li> </ul>	*	*	*	*
<b>Rule 5-The Game</b>				
<b>Regulation Game</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practices/Modified games do not last for more than 1 hour.</li> <li>A new inning will not start after 1 hour 15 minutes after the scheduled start time.</li> <li>A new inning will not start after 1 hour 30 minutes after the scheduled start time.</li> </ul>	*	*	*	*

RULE	U6	U8	U10	U12
<b>Regulation Game (continued)</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In case of weather or cancellation of a game by an official and when two innings have been completed, the score of the game will revert to the last fully completed inning.</li> </ul>				*
<b>Mercy Rule</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mercy Rule: If any team is ahead by fifteen (15) runs or more after three (3) innings, or any inning thereafter, the game will be called. If any team is ahead by ten (10) runs or more after five (5) innings (4 1/2 if Home Team), or any inning thereafter, the game will be called.</li> </ul>				*
<b>Run Limit Per Inning</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maximum of 5 runs per half inning.</li> </ul>	n/a	n/a	n/a	*

RULE	U6	U8	U10	U12
<p><b>Run Limit – Open/Last Inning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In the last inning:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ if the visiting team is behind by more than 5 (U12) runs, they will be limited to this run differential plus 1 run.</li> <li>○ if the visiting team is behind by less than 5 (U12) runs, they will be allowed to score a maximum of 5 (U12) runs.</li> <li>○ if the visiting team is ahead, they can only score a maximum of 5 (U12) more runs.</li> <li>○ if the home team is behind they will be limited to the run differential at the start of their bat plus 1.</li> <li>○ if the home team is ahead before their bat or at any time during, the game is considered over.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	n/a	n/a	n/a	*
<p><b>Charged Conferences</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A team is permitted unlimited offensive conferences per inning.</li> <li>● A team is permitted two defensive conferences per inning. With the third conference, the pitcher must be removed from the pitcher position for the balance of the inning.</li> </ul>	n/a	n/a	*	*



<b>RULE</b>	<b>U6</b>	<b>U8</b>	<b>U10</b>	<b>U12</b>
<b>Rule 6-Pitching Regulations</b>				
<b>Pitching</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach Pitcher - 5 pitches. If they haven't hit after 5 pitches, if they swung 3 times, they are given 1st base.</li> <li>• Player pitching to opposing team until the batter receives a 4th ball, which would normally result in a walk. This is where the game changes. After the 4th ball, the batter will have a count against him/her. It will either be 4 balls (0 strikes 4-0), 4-1 or 4-2. The hitter's coach or designate for the offensive team, will now come in to pitch to his/her own batter and carry on the count (LTP rules).</li> <li>• Player pitch - normal count. After 3 strikes, batter out.</li> </ul>	n/a	*	*	*
<b>Pitching Limitations</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A pitcher is allowed to pitch to a maximum of 10 batters per game and 20 batters per day. 1 pitch equals one batter. A pitcher is not allowed to pitch consecutive innings.</li> </ul>			*	

RULE	U6	U8	U10	U12
<b>Pitching Limitations (continued)</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A pitcher is allowed to pitch to a maximum of 13 batters and a maximum of 3 innings per game (can be consecutive). They can pitch a maximum of 6 innings per day or a maximum of 26 batters per day. 1 pitch equals one inning.</li> </ul>				*
<b>Hit Batters</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the same pitcher hits two (2) batters in an inning, he/she must be removed for the remainder of that inning.</li> </ul>			*	
<b>Walks</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walks are allowed</li> </ul>				*
<b>Intentional Walks</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are no intentional walks</li> </ul>		*	*	*

RULE	U6	U8	U10	U12
<b>Rule 7-Batting</b>				
<b>Number of Batters</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Players Bat. All eligible players will appear on the batting order (whether they are in the field defensively or not). The Coach must declare the last batter to the umpire before the first pitch and the umpire must inform the opposing team. It is the duty of the Coach to inform the batter. When the last batter has hit, the ball must be returned to the catcher or other defensive player, who must be touching home plate. At that time, play is suspended. All previous runs are counted. If the last batter is put out through normal play, the inning is complete.</li> </ul>	*	*	*	
<b>Late Players</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Players who arrive after the start of the game will be placed last in the batting order and bat their turn.</li> </ul>		*	*	

RULE	U6	U8	U10	U12
<b>Bunting</b>				
• Bunting is not permitted.		*	*	
• Bunting is permitted.				*
<b>Rule 8-Batter-Runner &amp; Runner</b>				
<b>Third Strike Rule</b>				
• Third Strike Rule is not in effect		*	*	*
<b>Infield Fly Rule</b>				
• Infield Fly Rule is not in effect		*	*	*
<b>Stealing</b>				
• Runner cannot steal bases; she/he can only run when the batter makes contact (No Stealing).		*	*	
• Base runners may steal on any legally pitched ball when it has crossed home plate.				*
• A player can only advance one base on a steal attempt.				*

RULE	U6	U8	U10	U12
<b>Stealing (continued)</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Player can not advance to home on a steal, passed ball, or wild pitch – must be batted in or forced home by a walk or is part of a continuation of a play (i.e. overthrow).</li> </ul>				*
<b>Lead Offs</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Runners may leave the base when the ball has crossed the plate.</li> </ul>		*	*	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Runners may leave the base when the ball has crossed the plate. If they leave early, they will be called out.</li> </ul>				*
<b>Sliding</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sliding is allowed</li> </ul>	*	*	*	*
<b>Base Runner Advancement</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following a fairly hit ball, the advancing of runners is considered ‘over’ when the ball is returned to a player in the infield (inside the base paths). Runners may continue to the base they are heading to but the fielders may attempt to throw/tag the runner out.</li> </ul>		*	*	

RULE	U6	U8	U10	U12
<b>Overthrows</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Runners do not advance on an overthrow.</li> <li>• Runners advance 1 base only on an overthrow.</li> </ul>		*	*	*
<b>Rule 9-Dead Ball-Ball In Play</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No walks or free bases awarded for being hit by a pitch from a coach-pitcher.</li> </ul>		*	*	
<b>Rule 11-Protests</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are no protests or appeals</li> </ul>		*	*	
<b>Rule 12-Scoring</b>				
<b>Scores &amp; Standings</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Score and standings will not be kept as the emphasis is on player and team skill development not on winning.</li> </ul>		*	*	