

Lake Shore Athletic Association (LSAA)
GIRLS 8U SOFTBALL RULES
Revised 3/3/2022

LSAA will not discriminate based on Race, Color, Religion, Sex, Handicap, Family Status or National Origin or any intention to make any such preference or limitation.

STATEMENT: LSAA promotes fair play and good sportsmanship. All play will be governed by USSA Rules with the exception to the rules listed below. In case of a rule interpretation, resulting in a formal protest before the end of the game, it will be the discretion of the League Director of Softball or Umpire in charge to rule the incident, and the ruling will be **FINAL**.

LEAGUE AGE

- A) League age is decided by player's age as of January 1 of the current year.
- B) 8 & Under
- C) No player can "play down" into a lower age group.

EMPHASIS ON RULES

A) Equipment

- 1) All bats must be marked "OFFICIAL SOFTBALL" and meet performance standards as regulated by USSSA, or be certified through ASA or NSA.
- 2) Catchers must wear shin guards, chest protector and face mask when warming up a pitcher or catching during a game.
- 3) Shoes- At no time can metal cleats be worn.
- 4) All players must wear team jerseys, and be of the same Color and Type as the remainder of the team. Shorts cannot be cutoffs or designer type.
- 5) **NO JEWELRY OR ANY TYPE MAY BE WORN DURING THE GAME.**

- 6) Face Masks, permanently attached to the helmet, are **Mandatory** for all Fast Pitch Softball Games/Practices.
- 7) Helmet Chin Straps are recommended to be worn
- 8) All Players are required to sit in the dug-out with their team

BLOOD RULE

Coaches are responsible for adhering to the following guidelines:

- A) A player, coach or umpire who is bleeding or who has blood on his or her uniform will be prohibited from participating further in the game until appropriate treatment can be administered. If medical treatment is administered in a reasonable length of time, the individual will not have to leave the game. The length of time considered reasonable is left up to the umpire.
- B) All cuts, abrasions, wounds or broken areas of skin must be covered with a secure dressing before and during participation.
- C) Uniform rules will not be enforced if a uniform change is required. All safety equipment must be worn.
- D) When bleeding occurs, the umpire will immediately stop the game and call a coach or other authorized person to administer aid to the injured person.
- E) If a pitcher is injured and must leave the game for treatment and returns in the same inning, the pitching records will be treated as if she never left the game. The relief pitcher will not be charged with an inning and she will be allowed to enter as pitcher in a later inning.

PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

- A) Players permitted on the Field:
- *Ten* players are to play in the field
 - a) Only *six* players, including pitcher and catcher are allowed in the infield.
 - b) All other players must be outside the natural infield area.
 - c) No infielder can play within 35' of home plate before the ball is hit.
- B) Games cannot start with less than eight (8) players from the official team roster.
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Note: This applies regardless of the reason why there are less than nine (9) players. This can be, but not limited to, a game starts with eight (8) players, a player is ejected, or a player leaves the game for family/emergency reasons, etc.

- C) Every Player will be in the **Batting Lineup** throughout the game.

Exception:

- If any player is **injured** and is unable to play because of that injury, the batting order becomes less that player and **no penalty** is applied as long as the player does not re-enter the game.

Note: If the injured player re-enters the game and misses their at-bat the batter will be called out. The player's ability to re-enter the game will need to be determined prior to the at-bat.

- If the official during a game **ejects a player**, the ejected player's team will take an automatic **out** for that player's place in the batting lineup.
- If any player has to **leave the game** due to School function, Family emergency, Transportation issues, etc., other than ejection, the player shall be removed from the lineup. **No**

penalty, i.e. an “out”, shall be applied, unless it causes the team to play with less than nine (9) players.

- In the event a player has to use the restroom and **misses their turn** at bat an **out** would be recorded for that player. The player will be permitted to re-enter the game in their original place in the lineup.
- D) All players **must** play three (3) innings before the fifth (5) inning.
- E) Uniforms must be worn during all games, and hats and headwear are optional.
- F) A player must be present by the start of the fourth inning to play in that game.
- G) **Runner Substitution:** Runner substitution is **NOT** permitted, except for Catcher when there are two outs and the last batter to make an out must be used as the pinch runner. The other exception for a pinch runner is due to injury. **NO** exceptions made for Pitcher.

THE GAME

- A) Home team will occupy the third base side and only bat in the bottom of the last inning if needed.
- B) Game Duration: 6 innings
- C) Innings:
 - Will consist of three (3) outs or four (4) runs.
 - The last inning will be the **open inning** requiring three (3) outs to end the inning.
 - No new inning can start after **one (1) hour and forty-five (45) minutes** after the start of the game.
 - It is the **responsibility of the Head Coaches** to obtain the official start time from the Umpire.

- The start of a new inning is as follows: “When the third out is called on the previous inning the new inning is started immediately following”.
- D) After play has started it will be the decision of the Umpire, or Softball Director to either suspend or call play due to inclement weather, or call a complete game due to darkness. If you are playing on a lighted field the game will be finished under normal time constraints.
- All players must get off of the playing field to get into their parent’s vehicles if thunder is heard and/or lightning is seen. Must wait 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard and/or lightning is seen before resuming play.
- E) The umpire will serve as the official timekeeper and the head coaches will be responsible for getting the official start time. All games will start promptly at the official start time determined by the official schedule.
- A **forfeit** will be imposed 15 minutes after the official start time.
 - If **weather interferes** with the game at any time the game will be **considered complete** if 4 innings have been completed and/or 1.5 hours.
- F) The Softball Director will determine whether to postpone games due to **Inclement Weather**. Softball Director will conference with field maintenance director on field status and will communicate decisions to the head coaches.
- G) The home team will be responsible for setting up the bases and lining/setting up the field prior to the game.
- H) **Home teams** will be responsible for emptying the trash can(s) on their side of the field. This will be done at the conclusion of the game. **In the event any team does NOT remove trash, a forfeit will be imposed on the game just played (assuming they won the game just played). If they lost that game, then a forfeit will be imposed on the next game played.**
- I) **All teams are required to level the batter’s box, pitching rubber and the fielder position, and sweep off the concrete dug out pad after each game.**

- J) There is no Slaughter rule in 8 & under.
- K) If any game that has started and is suspended due to weather, the game will continue from the point where it was suspended. The lineup will remain the same. Any player who was not at the original game may be entered into the end of the lineup. Any player who cannot attend the game, the team will not be penalized with an out - the player shall be removed from the lineup without penalty.
- L) At the conclusion of a game the **WINNER** has **48 Hours** to e-mail in the game score. Please identify association, age group, team name, coach and dates of games played. (Isaasoftball@gmail.com). Failure to do so within the time specified **will result in a forfeit** for that team.
- M) **Games ending in a Tie:**
International Tie Breaker (ITB) will be used. ITB applies to all games ending in a tie and shall be applied as follows: Starting with the top of the extra inning and each half inning thereafter, the offensive team shall begin its turn at bat with the player who was the last batter in the previous half inning being placed on second base (e.g., if the number five batter is the leadoff batter, then the number four batter in the batting order will be placed on second base.).
- Regular Season: One inning of ITB shall be played if time permitted. If at that point a winner is not determined, then the game shall stand as a tie. If a game is called due to darkness and there is a tie, then no extra inning shall be played and the tie shall stand.
 - Playoffs: A winner is required, so extra innings will continue, applying ITB to each inning, until a winner is determined.
If darkness prevents completion of a game (i.e., playing on an unlighted field), then the game shall be moved to a lighted field and played to conclusion.

BATTING

- A) **THE STRIKE ZONE:** From the knees to the chest.

- B) **THROWING BATS:** All league coaches will stress the dangers of throwing bats.

PENALTY: First offense- Batter receives a warning

Second offense- Batter will be called out

Third offense- Batter will be ejected from the game at Umpires discretion.


- C) No dropped third strike 8 & under.
- D) Bunting and Infield Fly Rule: **Neither is acceptable in 8U play.**
- E) The ball must travel outside the **8' safety** arc after being hit to be considered a fair ball.
- F) No Defensive player can enter the **8' safety** arc to stop the ball. Penalty: Batter awarded first base.
- G) All batters **must** wear batting helmets with face masks while at bat, on base, in the warm up circle, or coaching first or third base.

PLAY

- A) All Batters whom hit a ball which stays in the infield are limited to **first base only** (No Exceptions!) Runners are encouraged to run through 1st base. Fielders are encouraged to throw the ball to first base. A play can be made on the batter/runner, i.e. they can be thrown out by the fielder There is **NO** penalty for an overthrow to first base. Regardless if the ball stays in, or out of play. The infield is defined as the natural dirt playing field. If playing on a larger infield (base distance of 60'), then it's the discretion of the umpire whether it's considered an infield hit.
All runners on base are limited to advance **one base only!**
- B) A throw made to any base/home plate, or pitcher (whom is within the circle) which results in an overthrow and was thrown in close proximity to the fielder/pitcher is considered a dead ball.
○All runners(s) maintain the base they have control of period. They are **NOT** awarded an extra base.

- For a ball to be considered an overthrow it must have been thrown in close proximity to the fielder on the base/pitching rubber/home plate. This is a judgment call of the umpire.
- C) Balls hit in the outfield (grass) result in **NO** base limitations for the runner or runners. Runners may advance until the play is stopped by a throw to the infield that is controlled by either glove or hand at umpire's discretion. Coaches should encourage players to make a play to the base or cut off position, (i.e. catch or overthrow in close proximity), and or to a pitcher (i.e. touch their glove or an overthrow in close proximity)

BASERUNNING:

- A) Runners must remain on the base until the pitched ball has reached home plate.
- B) No stealing. (First violation is a warning; second violation is an out.)
- C) A runner must advance at least to the hash mark before time is called in order to advance to the next base. If not, they must return to the previous base, unless there is a trailing runner occupying the previous base.
- D) **Time** is called when the pitcher's glove **makes contact with the ball** while within the 16-foot diameter circle around pitcher's rubber, or the ball was **thrown to any player in the infield that maintains control of the ball as stated in "Play" section C rule.**
- E) Base Stealing:
 **There is no base stealing or leading off the base.**
- E) If, in judgment of the umpire, the defensive team's coach interferes with a runner, that runner will be awarded one base.

FIELD:

- A) Base Distance is **60 Feet**
- B) 8 Foot Safety Arc is to be lined from each foul line. The radius of the 8' arc is from the apex (point) of home plate
- C) Hash Marks are required between 1st & 2nd, 2nd & 3rd, and 3rd to home
 - 1st & 2nd: Approximately 12 feet from the edge of 2nd base
 - 2nd & 3rd: Approximately 12 feet from the edge of 3rd base
 - 3rd to Home: Approximately 12 feet from the edge of home plate

- D) Batters boxes are to be used at all times

PITCHING DISTANCE

- A) Distance between Home Plate and the Pitching Rubber: 35 Feet

PITCHING

- A) Player/Coach pitch the entire season.
- The first two (2) innings of the game shall be **Coach Pitch**
 - The third and fourth inning are Player/Coach pitch
 - At the **end of the fourth inning**, the game will go entirely all **coach pitch** for the remainder of the game.
- B) **Player/Coach pitch**:
- The batter will either strike out or hit the ball – there are no walks.
 - The Player Pitcher will begin pitching to each batter. The batter will either:
 1. Hit the ball
 2. Strike out
 3. Receive four balls.
 - If three (3) strikes are thrown then the batter is out.
 - If the pitcher pitches four balls before the batter strikes out, then the opposing coach steps in to pitch.
- C) Pitchers will be limited to two (2) innings of pitching per game. Inning limits apply regardless of game duration
- Pitcher is charged a with an inning pitched as soon as they step on the mound, regardless of pitches thrown
- D) Batters **hit by a player pitch** typically are entitled to 1st base. However, in 8 & under this does not mean that every batter will always be awarded 1st base when hit by the pitch.
- Typically, a batter is entitled to 1st base after she is hit by the ball, as long as she has made a reasonable attempt to move out of the way. However, since the players in 8 & under are just learning, they will

not deliberately stand there and be hit by the ball, so this rule will **NOT** apply.

- If a pitch is rolling on the ground, with little to no force when contact is made with the batter, then the pitch shall be called a **ball** and the batter is not entitled 1st base. **This is a judgment call made by the umpire.** (Some pitchers are just learning and the ball rolling on the ground may occur)
- **If a batter** is hit in the **Head, or any part of the Body with a pitch that has reasonable force** and the batter is not injured the coach will immediately take over the count and pitch the rest of the at-bat.
- **If the batter is injured they will be awarded 1st base and can be pinch-ran for.**

E) Pitcher/Batters hit by the Player Pitch:

- If a pitcher **hits two batters** in one inning she must be removed from pitching the remainder of that inning.
- If a Pitcher **hits three batters** in the same game, then she must be **immediately** removed as the pitcher and **cannot** pitch for the remainder of the game.

If the game is suspended, the pitcher that was removed may not pitch the rest of the game when it is made up.

F) **Coach Pitch:**

- Strikes are still in effect. The strike count for the batter remains the same at the start of coach pitch
 - If the batter had two strikes, then the coach may have to pitch only one pitch if that pitch is a strike. In that case the batter is out
- The Batter will either hit the Ball or Strike out.
 - There are NO walks
- The coach is limited to **five pitches**.
 - If the coach throws three strikes and the batter does not swing, they will be called out.
- The first half of the season, (6) games, swinging strikes will only be called during coach pitch. The second half of the season and during playoffs the umpire will additionally call strikes in the strike zone that are not swung at.

- Unless the last pitch is hit foul. In that case the coach/batter may continue beyond 5 pitches if the ball was hit foul on the last pitch.
 - Coach Pitcher must have both feet in **contact with the pitching rubber** at the start of their pitch.
 - One step forward is permitted during their delivery of the pitch.
 - All Pitch Deliveries are Underhand
 - After the pitch has been delivered in an underhand motion, the coach must exit the pitching circle and is **NOT** to verbally instruct the runners and must avoid contact with the ball and the fielders.
 - The pitching coach shall **not** give direction to the batter as to **whether or not** to swing the bat after the pitch has been released from the pitcher's hand. They will receive one warning per inning. If they are warned once and continue to provide direction to the batter then the batter will be called out. This does not mean that you cannot talk to your batter prior to the pitch. Any instruction prior to the pitch will be allowed.
- G) Interference by the coach pitcher, i.e. either with the ball, pitcher, or fielder is considered a dead ball and batter is awarded 1st base and all other runners are awarded one base.
- H) **LIVE BALL:** The ball shall remain live until the ball is returned to the Pitcher in the circle and makes **contact** with the pitcher's glove, or an overthrow in close proximity (control is NOT required).
- I) If a Pitcher fields a short hit and returns to the circle and she **did not** attempt to make a play, or the ball is hit straight back to the pitcher in the circle and she did not attempt to make a play, then the play is considered dead. However, the base runners that were advancing but have not yet reached the hash mark, are entitled to the next base. If a base runner was not attempting to advance to the next base, then they shall remain on that base, unless they are forced to the next base by the trailing runner. **This is a judgment call made by the Umpire.**

COACHING

- A) The defensive team is allowed two coaches in the field. Both coaches must remain outside of the infield area.

- B) The offensive team is allowed one coach at first base and one coach at third base.

BALL

- A) 11” Yellow in color, Leather Cover (Only use balls provided by LSAA)

CONDUCT

- A) It is considered unsportsmanlike conduct to chant against an opposing player or team.

Penalty: EJECTION OR FORFEIT. Managers and coaches are expected to set a good example through proper language and respect for all other players, coaches, and umpires. There is no smoking or consumption of any alcoholic beverages allowed of any kind on Anne Arundel County property. Head Coach's are responsible for their parent's behavior and conduct.

EJECTION

See 2022 Rules Addendum

POSTSEASON (PLAYOFFS)

- A) Team seed is based on win/loss record .
B) Tiebreakers would be head to head, total runs scored against team tied with.
C) Home team will be determined by seeding.

OFFICIATION IS REQUIRED

- A) LSAA will provide umpires. If the umpire does not show the coach's will either umpire or appoint an umpire. Remember that anyone stepping on the field must have had a background check done by Anne Arundel County.

PROTESTS

A) There will be no protests in 8 and Under

UMPIRES ARE REQUIRED

SEE 20022 RULES ADDENDUM

Revision History;

- May 1, 2009 - Page 1, In “Statement” para. – was: “Pony”, Now “USSSA”
- Page 6, “Pitching” section – Added bullet “10U The Coach must pitch from the pitching rubber.”
 - Page 7, “Pitching” section – Added bullet “Only the starting Pitcher may re-enter as pitcher in the game.”
- March 2011
- Page 6,(g) revised to clarify intent if ball hit directly back to pitcher
 - Page 2, Players and Substitutions, Added only 6 players allowed in infield for 10U and outfielder 30 feet away from 2nd base
- March 2012
- Separated 8U Rules from Overall LSAA rules, i.e. created 8U standalone rules
- March 2014
- Restructures format to make rules simpler to understand.
 - Revised Coach pitch rule – Coach must now pitch from the rubber.
 - Integrated 8U rule addendum from 2013 playing season