



## Holland Little League Minors (AAA) Softball Rules

---

### General Rules

- A regulation game consists of six (6) innings.
  - A new inning may not start after 1 hour 30 minutes from the game start time.
  - Game times may be adjusted if there is a game before or after. Time limit will be shared with both coaches prior to the game.
  - A drop-dead time is at 2 hours from the game start time.
  - If the game is tied after 6 or more complete innings, extra innings may be played so long as the time limits are still followed.
- A game becomes official after losing team has had 3 turns at bat, or a time limit is reached regardless of inning.
- A minimum of 8 players are required to start a game. Teams may follow the Sub Policy in situations where the team has less than 9 of their own players.
- 11” softball will be used.
- There is no mercy (10-run) rule.
- At 45 minutes before game time, visiting team gets the cage (if available) and home team the field.
- At 25 minutes before game time, visiting team gets the field, home team the cage (if available).
- Pregame field time is not guaranteed if a game is being played on the field prior to your game. Cage time is shared between baseball and softball and is not guaranteed.

### Offense Rules

- Roster batting rule, everyone bats.
- Offense team ends their 1/2 inning at bat after any of the following occur:
  - 3 outs are made, or 5 runs are scored (innings 1-3)
- 5 run max per inning for innings 1-3. Unlimited runs allowed per inning thereafter.
- A batter cannot be “walked” (see pitching rules)
- In Games 1-5, no stealing is allowed
- In Games 6-10 and Post-season, runners may only steal if the ball gets behind the catcher
  - Runners may only advance one base on a steal
  - Teams may only score 2 runs per inning via advancing home on a wild pitch. Runners will be returned to 3<sup>rd</sup> base if they are the 3<sup>rd</sup> runner to score on a wild pitch that inning.
- “Ball in the circle” rule: following LL Rule 7.08(a)
  - When the pitcher is in possession of the ball in the circle and is not making a play (for purpose of the rule, feinting a throw is considered a play), all runners off their bases must immediately attempt to advance or retreat.

\*\*Immediately is interpreted to mean within a three-second time frame\*\*



- Runners may only advance one base on overthrows that leave field of play.
- Runners may not slide headfirst into any base.
- Bunting is allowed
- Batter is out on a dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike.
- No on deck batters are allowed.
- If the team's catcher is on base with 2 outs, she may be replaced on the bases by the last out in the line-up (Courtesy Runner Rule)

## Defense Rules

- Free substitutions are allowed (meaning players may switch positions in the field and/or go from the bench to the field an unlimited number of times)
- Facemasks are recommended, but not required, for all players playing an infield position.
- Players must have equal playing time in the field and be given the opportunity to play multiple positions.

## Pitching Rules

- The pitcher will pitch from 35 feet.
- A batter will not be "walked" by the pitcher.
  - If a pitcher throws four (4) balls before three (3) strikes, the offensive coach must step in to pitch
  - When the offensive coach steps in, he/she will pitch the remaining allowable strikes to the batter
  - Umpires will still call balls and strikes
  - The coach will continue to pitch to the batter until a ball is put in play or the batter strikes out swinging or on a called 3<sup>rd</sup> strike
- A hit by pitch will award the batter first base. *NOTE – if a ball thrown by the pitcher begins rolling and then hit the batter, it will be counted as a ball. It is umpire's discretion if the ball was rolling.*
- If a pitcher reaches ball 4 to 5 batters in the inning, she must be replaced by a different pitcher for that inning. The walks do NOT have to be consecutive.
  - Teams may use/reenter the same pitcher multiple times
  - This rule is intended to give players opportunities to pitch, but also ensure that games have action for both the offense and defense.

Thank you to Zeeland Little League for allowing the use of most of their rules, with some modifications. In all cases, unless specifically addressed by local rules, Little League International Rules apply.

