



STOW Y.E.S. SOFTBALL

2023 Rules for A League

10 and Under Girls Fast-Pitch

**The National Softball Association rules govern play except as superseded by these rules:
Field & League Rules**

1. The Instructional Girls softball league is reserved for girls with playing ages of 10 or less as of January 1st of the playing year in accordance with NSA.
2. The team roster size shall be limited to 13 unless the League Commissioner determines otherwise
3. The softball utilized for each game shall be an 11” ball issued by Stow Y.E.S.
4. The field dimensions will be as follows: a. 60 feet base path distances. b. 35 feet pitching distance as measured from the front of the pitching rubber to the back point of home plate. c. 84 feet 10 inches is the distance from the back of home plate to the back of second base.
5. Home plate will be 17” wide and the black extension parts will be used for calling balls and strikes.
6. The use of a safety base at 1st is recommended.
7. If a school event (awards ceremony, carnival, etc) conflicts with a scheduled game, the manager must notify the League Commissioner by May 1 . The League Commissioner will then reschedule the game. Once school is out, NO games will be rescheduled due to a school conflict. For games scheduled outside of Stow, the Stow League Commissioner and the assigned community representative from the other community must work together to reschedule the game.
8. If there is a community conflict, you must contact the League Commissioner at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled game time in order for consideration for reschedule of the game. Community representatives cannot reschedule games without the consent of the League Commissioner. For games scheduled outside of Stow, the League Commissioner and the assigned community representative from the other community must work together to reschedule the game.
9. All games that are rained-out or cancelled may ONLY be rescheduled by the League Commissioner.
10. Coaches or community representatives may not reschedule these games. The League Commissioner is in charge of rescheduling these games and copying applicable league officials or team managers through email correspondence and will send a final email seeking confirmation from the managers.
11. In situations where a team has only 7 eligible players and in order only to avoid a forfeit, the team may have one player “play up” from a younger age league so that the team may field 8 players. The player that is playing up must be a rostered Stow YES player who is playing one age bracket below the team that needs the 8th player to avoid a forfeit. In order for a team to qualify to add an 8th player to avoid a forfeiture, the team’s head coach must contact the league commissioner at least 4 hours before the start of the game to review the situation and be considered for approval. Once approval is provided, prior to the game, the player added must be introduced to the umpire and opposing coach and the player that is added must be wearing her own team uniform. If original player from the team shows up to the game at any time, and is physically able to play, she must be immediately inserted into the batting order in place of the player who is playing up and must take a position on defense. The player playing up will then be immediately removed



from the game. There are no outs recorded due to this substitution. This rule is only in effect for teams that know that they only have 7 players at least 4 hours before the start of the game. Any team that places an unauthorized player in the line-up to avoid a forfeiture will be issued with a loss by forfeiture and the manager will receive a warning. If this happens a second time, the manager will be removed from the team.

12. This rule has essentially been developed in the spirit of the game to allow players who report to the game an opportunity to play and enjoy the sport rather than issue forfeitures. It also avoids rescheduling games and other issues that come up each year.
13. The winning manager must report the score of the game to the League Commissioner within 48 hours after the game. If the manager fails to report the score, the winning team will be issued a loss.
14. Violations of any of the Stow YES or National Softball Association rulings shall be subject to discipline up to and including forfeiture of the game.

Length of Game

15. All games will start at 6:15pm whether an umpire is present or not. Please try to get a parent or coach to umpire the game which both managers can agree on. A team needs a minimum of eight (8) players to begin an official game. A 15 minute grace period is afforded a team waiting to reach the minimum number of players. If after the grace period, a team does not have 8 players, the team will have to forfeit.
16. The game shall consist of six (6) innings, unless the time limit is reached. If upon the completion of 6 innings and the score is tied, the game will be considered complete and will end in a tie. A League has no provision to break tie scores. Another example -- if the score is tied and the game has reached its time limit after any number of innings, the game is considered a tie and no additional innings will be played.

NOTE: A new inning begins when the third out of the bottom of an inning is recorded

17. Each game is scheduled with a 1:45 (1 hour 45 minutes) time limit from the actual start of the game. No new inning can begin once the 1:45 (1 hour 45 minutes) mark is reached. The teams are to finish the inning that they are involved in at the 1:45 mark. If there is lightning, rain, or thunder which impedes the safety of the players, the game needs to be immediately stopped and all players need to seek shelter until conditions improve. After the observance of a lightning strike, no game can resume until 30 minutes after the last lightning strike was witnessed.
18. A five (5) run rule per half inning or 3 outs, whichever occurs first.
19. The official time keeper by their watch is the umpire. It is the teams' responsibility to ask the umpire the start time of the game.
20. If either team leads by ten (10) or more runs after five (5) or more innings have been played, the game will be declared over by the umpire. If the home team is leading, they do not have to bat in the 6th inning unless the managers agree otherwise.
21. If a manager, coach, players, or parents attempt to stall a game in any way, the umpire can allow the game to continue without regard to a time limit or if darkness is an issue, the game can be rescheduled by the League Commissioner.
22. Suspended game due to inclement weather or darkness, the following rules applies.
 - a. If the game has completed 5 innings (4 ½ innings with the home team winning) the game is over and constitutes a full and complete game. No innings will be made up at a later date.
 - b. Suspended games will be considered any game that has not completed 5 innings or 4 ½ innings with the home team winning will resume at the exact point that play was halted. Teams will finish



- the next time they meet if they meet during the season. If the teams do not meet, the League Commissioner will reschedule the game.
- c. Players not in original lineup who are present for game's completion are skipped in the batting order – No out is to be taken.
 - d. Players not in original lineup who are present for the game's completion are added to the bottom of the batting order.
23. Pitching limit outs per game pitched in original game do count against a pitcher if game is completed on another day.
24. Unlimited substitutions are permitted.
25. Speed Up Rule – When a catcher is on base or reaches a base with two outs, it is mandatory the catcher be replaced by the player who made the last out. The catcher speed up rule will not be in effect during the last inning. However, the rule will be enforced if the game requires extra inning in tournament play.
26. When the pitcher is on base or reaches base with 2 outs, a manager has the option of replacing the pitcher with the person whom made the last out.

Players

27. A maximum of ten (10) players will be allowed on defense. The outfield is permitted to be positioned 3 full adult strides behind the base paths in the standard outfield positions (right, right-center, left-center, left fields).
28. All team players must play at least 3 innings on defense. All substitutes must be in the game by the third inning.

Pitching

29. The pitcher is required to wear a protective face mask while pitching. While a face mask is not required at 1st or 3rd base it is highly encouraged.
30. A pitcher may pitch at most nine (9) outs during the first six innings of a game. No restrictions exist for any inning after the sixth (6th) – this provision only applies to tournament play. Every time a player makes an appearance as a pitcher and throws a pitch, even if an official out is not recorded, each appearance will count as an out. For example, a pitcher starts the game and walks four batters and no official out is recorded. The pitcher is removed and moved to another position in the first inning. The pitcher is charged with one recorded out for each appearance – one pitch thrown – even though an official out is not recorded. Outs do not have to be consecutive.
31. A maximum of 6 warm-up pitches will be allowed for a new pitcher. A returning pitcher is permitted 3 warm-up pitches - it will be the manager's responsibility to have his pitcher warm up in between innings in a safe and out of play area. Any player warming up a pitcher must wear a catcher's mask.
32. A pitcher replacing a pitcher that has been removed from the mound during an inning shall be given adequate time to warm up at the umpire's discretion.
33. The following rules pertain to pitching:
- a. Both feet must be touching the pitching rubber when starting.
 - b. Pitchers must pause to look for a sign from the catcher to prevent quick pitching. A sign does not have to be given by the catcher.
 - c. The pitcher must present the ball by touching it to the glove once before the delivery.
 - d. No rocking is permitted.
 - e. No crow hopping.



- f. No double windups.
- g. The pitcher's stance must be with the shoulders lined up with 1st and 3rd base.
- h. **NEW IN 2020: It is now permitted to step back off the pitching rubber with a single foot a single step before coming forward.**

34. Illegal Pitch – results in a ball awarded to the batter with no runners being awarded any extra base.

Batting, Base Running & Fielding

- 35. Round robin batting will be employed. Any player arriving after the game begins is to be placed at the end of the batting order.
- 36. If a player must leave for any personal reason, their spot in the batting order is simply bypassed. No automatic outs can occur in the lineup.
- 37. One warning will be issued to a team for throwing the bat. The next occurrence will result in the player being called out.
- 38. The infield fly rule does not apply.
- 39. **Stealing of third base is permitted but NO stealing of home or second base. A player may only advance to second base as a result of a base on balls or a batted ball. No attempted pick off plays by the catcher are permitted for a runner on 1st base.** A runner on third base can advance home if there a pickoff play attempted by any defensive player. A pickoff play is defined as an attempt to get a runner out at the base they occupied when the pitch was thrown. No scoring on passed balls. Only one base at a time may be stolen.
- 40. Leading off – runners may leave the base once the ball is released from the pitcher's hand. If a runner leaves the base before the ball leaves the pitcher's hand, the runner will be called out automatically by the umpire.
- 41. The strike zone shall be considered the area from the shoulders to the top of the knees. Players should be encouraged to swing at reasonable pitches.
- 42. When the pitcher gains possession of the ball in the pitcher's circle, all runners less than half way to the next base must return to the prior base. Look Back Rule - All runners more than half way to the next base may continue at their own risk. Base runners in between bases must immediately (2 seconds or less) advance to the next base at their own risk or retreat back to the original base. If the base runner fails to immediately advance or retreat to a base, the runner will automatically be called out.
- 43. A batter may not advance on a dropped third strike.
- 44. All players are required to wear batting helmets with a protective face guard which must be worn while batting and running the bases. Chinstraps must be worn as well. If the helmet does not have a protective face guard or chin strap, the player will automatically called out. If a base runner intentionally removes her helmet during play, she can be called out at the discretion of the umpire
- 45. **Sliding is NOT mandatory. When a defensive player has the ball and the runner remains upright AND crashes into the defensive player, the runner is out.**
- 46. Hit by Pitch Rule - The rule is 3 hit batters in one inning and 4 overall...if a pitcher hits three batters in one inning, she is removed from pitching and has exhausted her availability to only pitch for that game. The same holds true if a pitcher hits her fourth (4) batter overall during the course of the game. The umpire has some discretion on what is considered a hit batter. For example, a ball rolling in and glancing off the leg of a batter may not be counted.



47. Hit by pitch – when a pitched ball hits a batter, the ball is dead and the batter is awarded first base. Even if the ball bounces on the ground before it hits the batter, the batter is still awarded first base. Batters do not need to make an attempt to avoid being hit by the pitched ball.
48. Overthrows resulting in the ball being out of play – in the event a player throws the ball out of play, the base runner is awarded the base they are running to plus one base from where they were at the time of the throw.
49. Wild Pitch / Pass Ball out of play – in the event a pitched ball gets by the catcher and goes out of play, the ball is dead and all runners are awarded one base. Exception – No runner will be awarded home in A League.
50. Catcher Interference – in the event a batter hits the catcher’s mitt with their bat while swinging at a pitch, the play is a delayed dead ball and the batter is awarded first base. If the ball is hit and all runners are safe and the batter makes it to first the play stands, otherwise the offense gets their option to take the hit or obstruction.
51. Fielder Interference – in the event a fielder gets in the way of a base runner it is considered a delayed dead ball and the runner cannot be put out going to the base. The play continues and the runner can continue to advance to additional bases with liability of being put out.
52. Runner Interference – in the event a runner interferes with the fielder’s ability to make a play on a live ball, the runner is out and the ball is dead. If the interference is intentional to avoid a double play, the umpire can call the lead runner out.
53. Hit by fair ball – in the event a base runner is struck with a fair untouched batted ball while not in contact with a base, while standing in fair territory, before it passes an infielder – excluding the pitcher – or if it passes an infielder and any fielder has an opportunity to make an out, the base runner is out.