

OPYBS 10U Softball Rules Spring 2026

USSSA Rules for 10 and under apply except where modified and for the additional House League Rules available (as of March 2020) at http://usssa.com/docs/2020/FPRB_Online_revised_011620.pdf.

Mission

The purpose of 10U is to establish a competitive league, but one with a primary focus on developing and improving fundamental softball skills.

The League

The number of teams will vary from year to year, based on the number of girls enrolled in the league. Each team will have between 11 and 14 players. All teams compete for the 10U Village Championship in a playoff tournament at the end of the regular season.

As this is an instructional league, coaches are strongly encouraged to reschedule rainouts, etc. to play as many games as possible. However, we recognize the limitations of player and field availability in determining minimum eligibility for the playoffs.

Schedule

Game schedules are created by the league president using the vended league management software.

If games need to be rescheduled due to cancellation or postponement related to weather, darkness, or otherwise directed by the league, teams should work with the league president for another date, time, location, and umpire.

If one or both teams wish to reschedule a game due to any reason OTHER THAN weather, darkness, or as otherwise directed by the league, the head coaches of both teams must agree to an alternate date before working with the league president. If both teams do not agree, the game will proceed at the regularly scheduled date and time. Failure to play on that date will result in a forfeit by the non-attending team(s) and count as a loss.

Lightning Guidelines

Safety is the number one priority. No lightning safety guidelines can guarantee absolute safety. All Coaches, Umpires and Parents must be aware of weather conditions and use common sense and good judgment. The Umpire has absolute authority to call a game due to lightning. The National Lightning Safety Institute's overall recommendation is: "IF YOU CAN SEE IT, FLEE IT; IF YOU CAN HEAR IT, CLEAR IT!"

If lightning is seen, all must wait in a safe area for 30 minutes after the last lightning flash, or for 15 minutes for the sound of thunder before resuming a game. Safe waiting areas include fully enclosed vehicles with windows rolled up. Umpires must seek shelter in a vehicle with a Head Coach or Player's family if they do not have their own vehicle to wait in.

All must stay away from metal objects like fences, equipment boxes and bleachers. Avoid trees and open fields. In the event someone is struck by lightning, call 9-1-1 immediately.

Each time lightning is observed, or thunder is heard, the 30- or 15-minute waiting period starts over. If the lightning has not passed after 45 minutes from the first lightning flash, the Umpire will call the game.

Field Closures

The Park District of Oak Park maintains a hotline for field conditions at 708-524-0273 or <https://www.pdop.org/parks/facility-schedules-conditions/>. Their status supersedes any league decision (e.g. if conditions change after the league has decided). Check it before practices after rain, as well, as fields might remain closed to avoid tearing them up. League president must be informed when a field is unusable due to weather for practice.

Cancellation or Postponement of Games

When there is inclement weather prior to game time, the league president will target 2 hours before scheduled games to communicate a decision to the head coaches. If games are not cancelled by then, expect to play. The league and coaches should both continue to monitor the Park District's field condition hotline after a decision is made.

It is not recommended that any game starts or continues when the temperature falls below 45 degrees F. Decisions at game time and during play are the discretion of umpire or league officials.

If a game is cancelled or if the umpire postpones it during play, coaches should follow the procedures defined under the "Schedule" section above.

The Umpire

The Umpire is the ultimate authority on the field. All decisions by the Umpire are final. Once an umpire makes a call, it cannot be changed.

The umpire should not be pressured into changing his/her call. If a coach disagrees with a call, s/he should demonstrate good sportsmanship and discuss the situation with the league president after the game.

The Umpire's primary objective is to ensure the safety of all players, coaches and spectators. The Umpire's secondary objective is to ensure a fair and evenly called game.

One Umpire will be at each Regular Season game. If possible, two Umpires will be at all Playoff Games. The Home Plate Umpire's decision is final except where the Home Plate Umpire defers to the Second Umpire.

If the league president (LP) or board member receives a complaint regarding a member, manager, coach, player or parent's behavior towards an Umpire, the LP will discuss the encounter with the Umpire and the person against whom the complaint was made. Depending on the situation, the LP may issue a warning to the member, manager, coach, player or parent. Additionally, depending on the nature and severity of the behavior or if a second complaint is made about the same person regarding behavior towards an umpire, the OPYBS Board reserves the right to suspend, discharge, or otherwise discipline the member, manager, coach, player or parent as provided in the OPYBS Bylaws.

House League Rules

- A continuous batting order will be used consisting of all available players.
- An 11" softball will be used.
- No player should sit during two consecutive defensive innings. In a game that completes a full six innings, each player should play at least three defensive innings.
- All players must play a minimum of 2 defensive positions. Because we are an instructional league and want to encourage girls to learn many positions, all players must play at least one infield position prior to the end of the 3rd inning. Infield is defined as P, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, Catcher and SS.
- This is not a "must slide league". We will employ a "Contact Avoidance" policy. The base runner must take reasonable means to avoid a "collision" by utilizing a slide or evasive running within the base path. Similarly, the defender will not be allowed to obstruct a base path or base. To avoid injuries, any defensive player should clear the base path when requested. Violations of either policy will result in the umpire's call favoring the opposite player's team.
- Bases will be set at sixty feet.
- Pitching plate will be set at thirty-five feet.
- Batters MUST wear a helmet with face guard.
- Batter CANNOT continue on to second base or "steal" second on a walk.

- Pitchers MUST wear a face mask (batting helmet with face guard can also be worn).
- Slash bunts are not allowed. In other words, if someone shows bunt they must bunt (without swinging the bat) or pull the bat back. They cannot do a full, partial swing, or check swing once they show bunt. They may drag or push the bunt.
- During the regular season, teams may play with eight players without taking an out in the ninth spot. If fewer than eight players can play, for any reason, the game is a forfeit.
- Regulation Base on Balls, Hit by Pitch, and Strikeout rules shall apply.
- Hit by pitch shall be counted if the ball hits the batter while in flight, or on the bounce. A ball that rolls on the ground that the batter could have avoided will count as a ball.

Regulation Game/Slaughter Rule

- A regulation game will consist of six innings. The home team will not bat if leading after the visiting team bats in the sixth inning.
- There will be a four-run maximum rule per team in each inning.
- Slaughter Rule occurs when the trailing team cannot score enough runs to win or tie after three or more complete innings.
- During the regular season, the time limit for a game is 2 hours. A new inning should not start after playing for 1 hour, 45 minutes (except during playoff, when 6 full innings shall be completed).
- In the event a game is called by the umpire after three complete innings due to darkness other than sunset (see below), weather, imposed time limit, or any other reason; the game is considered a completed regulation game. The score will revert to the last complete inning.
 - o If the score was a tie in the last completed inning, then the game is a tie.
 - o Sunset Rule - 15 minutes after Sundown (use Weather App) is Drop Dead and scores revert to the last complete inning, unless home team has taken the lead.
- If a game is called before three innings are completed, the game will be rescheduled and will resume from the point where it had been called.
- The umpire's call is final. There are no appeals

Pitching Rules

- A player born on or after September 1, 2015 must pitch in one of the first three innings in each game. If this pitcher is replaced part way through the inning, she can only be relieved by another player born on or after September 1, 2015.
- A second pitcher for each team must pitch one of the first three innings.
- A pitcher may pitch a maximum of three innings per game. Any part of an inning that a player pitches in is considered an inning. (see rule exception in playoff rules where pitcher can pitch a third inning in extra innings).
- A pitcher may pitch no more than 2 consecutive innings per game.
- Any pitcher may return to pitch one time during the game. One full inning must pass before a pitcher can return. If a pitcher is replaced part way through an inning, another full inning must pass before she can return. (see rule exception in playoff rules where pitcher can re-enter a third time).
- A pitcher who hits 3 batters in any singular inning shall be replaced in the inning by another player. The pitcher may return to pitching after one complete inning has occurred.
- A pitcher who comes in during an inning to pitch relief shall receive 5 warm up pitches only.

Base Running

- A base runner may leave the base once the ball is released by the pitcher.
- A base runner may only steal one base during any single play.
- A base runner may continue running to third-base on an overthrow to second-base.
- Stealing home will not be permitted.
- There will be no Infield Fly Rule.
- There will be no Dropped Third Strike.
- A base runner may continue running until the ball is secured by the pitcher in the circle.
 - Once a base runner has stopped their momentum toward the next base and the pitcher has secured the ball, the base runner must remain on the base they are at.
- A base runner may not 'steal second' on a walk.
- In the case that the catcher attempts to throw behind a runner already occupying 1st or 3rd base, the runners may advance to the next base including home.

Hurry -Up Rules

- The catcher for the offensive team should be ready in the dugout before the half inning ends.
- The catcher should keep her shin guards on in the On-deck Circle unless she is guaranteed to be a batter that inning.
- If the pitcher or catcher gets on base, a courtesy runner (player that made the last batted out) may be used to not delay the next inning.
- The pitcher gets a maximum of five pitches between innings.

Thrown Bat Rule

- Umpires will immediately issue one "Bench Warning" to the offending team when a bat is accidentally thrown from a swinging batter.
- This will be the only warning to that entire team.
- Subsequent thrown bats by any member of that team will result in the batter being called out.
- If a batter from the opposing team throws a bat, the opposing team will receive its own warning.
- If it is judged that a bat is *intentionally* thrown, the umpire can declare the player out and/or ineligible to continue in the game.

Additional Playoff Rules

- Seeding in the playoff tournament will be determined by winning percentage. Ties will be recorded as a ½ win and a ½ loss for both teams. If tied based on winning percentage, the first tiebreaker will be head-to-head competition. If still tied, the playoff position will be determined by coin flip. There will be no ties in the playoffs.
- The higher seeded team in a playoff game is the home team.
- Playoff games should complete 6 innings or until the trailing team can not mathematically catch up (minimum of 4 innings) i.e. if the home team leads by 9 runs in the bottom of the 4th inning, the game is over, 5 runs in the bottom of the 5th and 1 run in the bottom of the 6th; the visiting team must lead by 13 runs in the top of the 4th, 9 runs in the top of the 5th or 5 runs in the top of the 6th.
- Pitchers may pitch a maximum of 3 innings in the playoffs (2 consecutively) and may pitch a 4th inning if the game goes to 7 innings.
- Games tied after 6 innings revert to OPYBS International tie breaker rules.

- o OPYBS International tiebreaker rule: In the 7th inning and all additional innings, each team starts with the last *batted* out on second base (no count and no outs).
- If game extends past the sixth inning (extra innings), each pitcher may re-enter for a third time in the game and pitch one additional inning.
- Teams may start playing with eight players but an out must be recorded for the ninth spot in the batting order. If fewer than eight players can play, for any reason, the game is a forfeit.

The umpire is an employee of OPYBS and is the authority on the field of play. In the State of Illinois, it is a felony to threaten or accost an umpire in a youth sports game. OPYBS will prosecute to the fullest extent of the law.