

Whitemarsh Girls Softball League

Rookies Division Rules

2016 Season

Revised 4/06/16

1. **Start Time** - All players should arrive at the field at least 15 minutes prior to the start of the game to make sure that the game starts on time. Coaches are duly responsible for pregame maintenance of the field.
2. **Game Length** - Games will last 4 or 5 innings. A game may end after 3 ½ innings if home team is leading. After 3 innings are completed, umpire will meet with coaches and determine if the 4th inning will be the final inning or if there is enough time for 5 innings to be played. Games should be at least 1 hours and 15 minutes long. (Note: *Softball does not have a clock and this is not a perfect science.* The purpose of this rule is to make sure that the girls get enough bats if the first 3 innings are played quickly, but it prevents games from running too long if the game is moving slowly.). No extra innings. A game can end in a tie.
3. **Equipment** - Standard 11 inch balls are used in the Rookies Division. Batters and baserunners must wear helmet with facemask. Player in pitcher position must wear a helmet with facemask in the field.
4. **Inning Length** - Each half inning ends after 3 outs or 5 runs score. This rule applies to every inning, even if a team trails by more than 5 runs in the final inning.
5. **Batting Order** - Every player who shows up to play will be placed in the batting order. The game will be played as long as a minimum of 6 players show up on a team. Players who show up late to the game should be placed at the end of the batting order.
6. **Positions** - There should be a maximum of 9 players in the field at a time. Only 1 player should play in the pitcher's fielding position. Positions are P, C, 1B, 2B, SS, 3B, LF, CF, RF. Outfielders need to stand behind the baselines and are required to be on the grass, but can move in as soon as the ball is hit. Remaining players will sit out an inning in the field. A player should only sit out one inning per game **but may have to sit out more than 1 inning if there are too many players available.** Players should not play the same position more than 1 inning in a game.
7. **Catcher** - Must be in full gear and **wear an approved catcher's helmet and mask.** Catcher is not required to return balls to the mound. To speed the game up, **if possible,** try to have the catcher dressed prior to the start of the inning that she is going to catch.
8. **Safety** - All players who are not in the game must be sitting on the bench. **NO ON DECK BATTERS!** Player can take practice swings outside the box prior to their at bat.
9. **Game balls** – There is a bucket of game balls stored at Miles-Lower. During the game, the bucket should remain behind home plate to collect balls. There will be no bucket at the pitcher's mound during the game.
10. **Pitching** - Coach pitches to his/her own team. The official pitching rubber distance is 35 feet, but coach pitcher may move in as close as necessary (to a realistic distance) to get the ball over the plate.

11. **Strikeouts** - A strikeout is 5 swinging strikes. A foul ball does not count as a strike. To be fair, the 5 strike rule must be enforced. If a player does not swing, it counts as no pitch. There are no walks, and a player cannot take first base on a hit by pitch. Umpire may call a batter out at his/her discretion after several pitches are thrown if the batter is taking too many good pitches and is showing no signs of attempting to swing.
12. **Infield Hits** - Batter and all runners advance one base. Balls that accidentally strike the coach who is pitching are in play.
13. **Outfield Hits (ball reaches outfield grass)** - Batter and runners may advance as many bases as they can at their own risk. Once the ball is returned to the infield, runners may advance to the base(s) that they are heading to at their own risk, and then must stop at the next base.
14. **Coach Pitch Interference** - If contact with the coach /pitcher is clearly incidental, it's a live ball.
15. **Overthrows** - There are no advances on overthrows.
16. **Baserunning and Stealing** - Baserunners may not leave their base until the batter makes contact. Runners will not be called out for leaving early, but baserunners should be warned. Base coaches need to remind runners of this rule. Base stealing is not permitted.
17. **Coaches in the Field** - Up to two coaches for the fielding team may stand in the outfield to assist fielders with decision making. However, he/she may not interfere with a ball in play. If a coach of the fielding team interferes with a ball in play, runners may advance 1 additional base.
18. **No Infield Fly Rule** – There's no such thing as a routine fly ball at this level.
19. **Runner hit by batted ball** - The ball is dead, the runner is out, the batter is credited with a single and only forced runners may advance.
20. **Throwing the bat** – Batter will receive a warning by the umpire. If that batter does it again during that game, the batter will be called out with no baserunner advance.
21. **Touching all bases** - Baserunners must touch all bases. The umpire should keep an eye out to make sure that the runners touch the bases. However, it's not the umpire's job to notify teams or players if a player misses a base. If a runner misses a base, the fielder must appeal by tagging the missed based prior to the next pitch being thrown. If there is no appeal, batter is considered safe.
22. **Scoring** - Each team should keep their own scorebook and keep track of the score. The scorebook can be kept by a coach or a volunteer parent. Scorekeepers should meet with each other and the umpire several times during the game between innings to confirm the accuracy of the score.
23. **Postgame Snack** – Should not be handed out until all equipment is put away first.
24. **Final Score Submission** - A coach from each team should submit the final score to the league commissioner prior to the end of the day of game.