



ELV Softball

Eastern Lehigh Valley Softball League

Minors Playing Rules

General Rules

1. Game Times - weekday game time 6:00 PM, weekend game time will be no earlier than 9:00 AM and no later than 6:00 PM
2. Length of game
 - a. 5 innings or 1hr 15 mins – no new inning shall start after the 1 hr 15 min mark, but once the inning has started it will be played to completion. **Games can be extended to 1 hr 30 minutes on weekends if both coaches agree.**
3. Scoring
 - a. Scores and standings will not be kept and all game scores will be reported as 0-0
 - i. The home team is responsible for submitting the game played to the statistician
 - b. There will be a five (5) run limit per inning. The final play of the inning shall be completed (ball returned to control of the infield) despite additional runs scoring
 - c. The bottom half of the final inning shall be played even if the home team is leading to allow the visiting team additional defensive time and the home team additional at bats.

- d. There will be no mercy rule
 - e. Line ups consisting of players last name and number shall be provided to the opposing team
 - i. Any player playing up shall be clearly identified on the line up card
- 4. Field Dimension
 - a. Base length 55'
 - b. Pitching rubber 35' from the back of home plate
- 5. Equipment
 - a. Game Balls - the home team shall supply 2 new game balls for each game. The ball for this level is an 11" ASA or USSSA approved .47 optic yellow softball with red stitching
 - b. Bats must have one of the 3 ASA or USA Certification marks and not be on the USA Softball Non-Approved Bat List with Certification Marks:
<https://usa.asasoftball.com/e/BB1P2000.asp>
 - c. Helmets – all batters and base runners must wear a protective helmet with an attached facemask. Chin strap is encouraged but not required
 - d. Pitching facemask is required for all pitchers. Each team shall be supplied with a team face mask by their organization
 - e. Jewelry - post earrings are permitted, but no hoop earrings or dangling earrings will be allowed. A simple chain necklace is permitted, but no other jewelry will be allowed. No watches. Cell phones will not be permitted on the field.
 - f. First Aid Kit – each team must have a first aid kit at all practices and games
 - g. Use of a double first base is required
 - h. Metal cleats may not be worn
- 6. Rosters
 - a. Recommended 10-13 players
 - b. Minimum of 8 players required for a game
 - i. No automatic out will be charged at the bottom of the batting order
 - ii. If a team does not have 8 players, they will forfeit the game.
 - c. No player will sit consecutive innings defensively, it is highly recommended that half a player's defensive innings are in the infield. Coaches can use their discretion for safety issues or if the player only wants to play the outfield.
 - d. Bringing up players
 - i. A player shall be brought up from the age level below if a team knows they will have 9 or less players for a game
 - ii. Any player brought up must play in the game and cannot play more than any regularly rostered players
 - iii. Any player brought up CANNOT pitch
 - iv. No player is eligible to be brought up if her regular team has a game scheduled at the same time
- 7. Game Changes
 - a. Cancellation due to weather will be made by the coach of the home team no later than 1 hr 30 mins prior to the start of the game and must be communicated to the opposing coach via phone

- b. Canceled games need to be rescheduled within 3 days. Rescheduled means a new game date must be given to the statistician, the game can be played any time prior to the end of the season.
1. A running batting order including all players shall be used
2. Any player arriving late will be added to the end of the batting order
3. If a team has 8 players at the start of the game, they will not be charged an automatic out at the end of the batting order.
4. If a player leaves the game due to injury or illness the team will not be charged an automatic out when her turn to bat comes up. The player may reenter at any time in her original position in the batting order.
5. The inning will end when 3 outs have been recorded or 5 runs have been scored. The final play will be played until the ball is returned to possession of an infielder even if additional runs score on the play.
6. The strike zone will be from the shoulders to the knees and shall include the white and black portions of the plate.
7. Bunting is permitted. Fake bunt and swing is prohibited and the batter will be declared out and runners will be returned to their original positions.
8. If the batter is struck by a pitch, directly or indirectly (hits ground first), the batter will be awarded first base.
 - a. The batter must make every effort to get out of the way of the pitch. At the discretion of the umpire, if the batter does not make an effort to get out of the way, the pitch will be considered a ball and a base will not be awarded.
 - b. The batter will be given the option to continue the at-bat with the coach coming in to pitch if she is indirectly hit by a pitch – this is completely at the discretion of the batter.
9. One (1) warning per game will be given to each team for throwing the bat. Additional offenses will result in the batter being declared out and runners will be returned to their original positions.

Pitching

1. A pitcher may pitch a maximum of 4 innings per game, no more than 2 consecutively. There are no weekly pitching limits
2. A pitcher may re-enter to pitch once per game
3. One pitch in an inning shall be counted as an inning pitched
4. The pitcher may walk 2 batters in an inning before the coach comes in. A hit batter will count toward the 2 walks for the inning. If 4 balls are thrown to any subsequent batters, the coach will come in to finish the at bat. The count will reset to 1-1 and the batter will receive 2 strikes (called or swinging) to either put the ball in play or strike out. The pitcher will return to pitch to the next batter.
5. A pitcher shall be removed from the circle when she hits 3 batters in an inning. Any pitched ball that hits the ground prior to striking the batter shall not be considered a hit batter for the purpose of removing the pitcher
6. A pitched ball that is thrown out of play from the circle while in the act of pitching to the batter will be considered a ball
7. PIAA pitching rules will be enforced

- a. The pitcher will be removed after two visits by a coach to the circle in an inning – injury checks will not count toward this total
8. Drop 3rd strike rule will not be enforced

Base Running

1. Play concludes when the ball is in possession of the pitcher in the circle
 - a. If an infielder has firm possession of the ball the play will be considered dead and no advancement can be made on return throw to the pitcher
2. Overthrows
 - a. Runners can advance one base on each overthrow at their own risk
 - b. If the ball goes out of play, the runners will be awarded the next base per PIAA rules
 - c. No advancement may take place on throws from the catcher to the pitcher or from an infielder to the pitcher after the infielder had firm possession of the ball
3. There will be unlimited steals of 3rd base only
 - a. There will be no steals of 2nd base or home
 - b. There will be no advancement on throws from the catcher on stolen bases
 - c. Delayed steals are not allowed
 - d. There will be no steals when the coach is pitching
4. Base runners may take a lead at all bases. Base runners may leave the base when the ball leaves the pitcher's hand. Runners must return to the base immediately when the ball is returned to the pitcher.
 - a. If the base runner leaves early, the umpire will issue a warning. There will be 3 warnings issued per team per game. After the third warning, the baserunner will be called out.
5. Collision Rule
 - a. A collision is defined as a violent coming together of two bodies
 - i. Running into the catcher's arm while she is attempting to make a tag or brushing of the catcher by a runner is incidental contact, not a collision
 - b. A deliberate collision shall result in that player being ejected from the game
6. Obstruction Rule
 - a. A fielder may not block the base unless she is in possession of the ball. A runner must slide or give herself up if the fielder is blocking the base while in possession of the ball. If the fielder is blocking the base while not in possession of the ball and any contact, incidental or otherwise occurs, an obstruction shall be declared, and the runner shall be awarded the base
 - b. Plays at the plate – in the event of a play at the plate, the catcher must be positioned in front of the plate when not in possession of the ball and must allow the runner complete access to the plate. If the throw takes the catcher into the path of the base runner and a collision or incidental contact occurs, the runner will be awarded the plate.
 - i. This does not apply to a force play at the plate. In this instance the catcher may place one foot on the plate, but must allow the runner access to the plate

- c. Plays at 2nd and 3rd – the fielder may not stand with her foot on the base while awaiting a throw or making a tag. She must allow direct access to the base.
 - d. The fielder has the right on a batted ball, the runner on a thrown ball.
 - e. Possession is defined as the fielder holding the ball in her hands or glove. A thrown ball on the way to the fielder that has not yet been caught, is not possession
 - f. Sliding is strongly encouraged when the runner is in the act of attempting to achieve a base or when the fielder is in possession of the ball before she gets to the base
7. Double First Base
- a. The defensive team may only retire the batter/runner using the white base when the throw is on or inside the baseline. If the throw is outside fair territory, the fielder may use the orange base
8. Courtesy Runners
- a. Must be used for the catcher when there are 2 outs (may be used when there is 1 out)
 - b. May be used for the pitcher when there are 2 outs
 - c. The courtesy runner will be the last batted-out player

Defense/Fielding

1. There will be 10 defensive players – pitcher, catcher, 1B, 2B, SS, 3B and 4 outfielders
2. The outfielders must be positioned at least 15' behind the baseline at the start of the play
3. Outfielders may not cover a base
4. Infielders must be in their assigned playing position no more than 5' in front of the baseline until the start of the pitch
5. Catcher's interference will be enforced
 - a. The umpire may move the catcher back for safety reasons
 - b. Catchers must attempt to accurately throw the ball back to the pitcher, rolling the ball is not allowed
6. Fielders are not permitted to stand in the baseline at the start of the pitch when there are runners on base advancing to the affected base
7. Infield fly rule does not apply

Game Conduct

1. Cheering
 - a. Players from the offensive team will be allowed to cheer for the batter and the batter only
 - b. Cheering should be positive toward your team, not negative toward the opposing team
 - c. Cheering should cease when the pitcher is pitching and should not be used to distract the opposing pitcher
2. Coach and Player Conduct
 - a. Any coach or player ejected from a game is automatically suspended for their next game. The ejected person will not be allowed to participate, coach or attend the game
3. Parents/Spectators

- a. Any parent or spectator who steps on the field of play for reasons other than injury will be ejected from the game
- b. No one will be permitted behind the backstop. One warning will be issued by the umpire. On the second offense, the offending team will be charged an out.