

SOUTHWESTERN OHIO GIRLS
FASTPITCH SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION
10 & UNDER RULES: 2009 Final

SOGFSA follows the U.S.S.A. rulebook for this division with the following exceptions:

1. Umpires are instructed to be flexible with the pitchers due to the fact that this age group represents the beginning level of instruction. We encourage umpires to discuss technical flaws in pitching mechanics with coaches AFTER the game, rather than holding up the game. Coaches are also advised not to hold up the games by "nit-picking" the technical flaws of the opposing team's pitcher.
2. The home team shall furnish an official scorekeeper, NEW game ball and good used ball for backup.
3. This age group will play 6 inning games.
4. This age group will allow teams to play up to 10 players in the field (6 infielders including pitcher & catcher, and 4 outfielders). Outfielders must maintain a position with a minimum of 20' between them and the infielders until the ball crosses home plate.
5. PER GAME RUN RULE: If the winning team leads by 12 runs after the losing team bats in the 5th inning, the game is over.
6. TIME LIMIT: No new inning shall start after 1 hour and 30 minutes. After completion of 6 innings or time limit has expired and the score is tied the USSSA tiebreaker procedure will begin until a winner is determined. (Exception: If there is a game to follow then the tiebreaker shall be limited to 2 additional innings.)
7. This age bracket will use a RUN LIMIT per inning, instead of a batter limit. When a team scores 5 runs in an inning the inning ends IMMEDIATELY after the 5th run crosses the plate. Example: Team "A" has bases loaded, no outs, and the 5th run will be scored by the girl on third base. Even if batter hit's a grand slam home run, ONLY THE RUN ON THIRD BASE COUNTS. EXCEPTION: THE PER INNING RUN RULE WILL BE LIFTED IN THE 6TH INNING ONLY! It will remain in effect for all prior innings, even if a team is down by more than 5 runs and the game is about to end due to Per Game Run Rule #5, or the Time Limit Rule #6.
8. Batters will be declared out when the catcher drops a third strike. Base runners can still advance in this situation with less than two outs.
9. STEALING: A base runner can attempt a steal of the next base when the ball leaves the pitcher's hand. Base runners are limited to stealing one base per legal delivery. NO STEALING OF HOME IS ALLOWED. After the pitch, a runner on third may advance home if there is an attempt made to pick them off of the base. The runner must still adhere to the one base per legal delivery requirement, meaning that they must have already acquired third base at the time of the pick-off attempt. A runner that steals third base cannot advance to home on an errant throw from the catcher that is an attempt to put them out on the steal.
10. CONTINUOUS BATTING: A continuous batting rule will be used in this age division, allowing managers to bat all of the players in attendance. The number of batters to be used will be based on whichever team has the fewest players available for the game. The manager of the opposing team has the OPTION of batting the same number of girls as the team with the fewest players or batting all of their players. EXAMPLE: Team A has 12 players and Team B has 14. This rule requires Team A to bat all 12 girls in a continuous order. Team B has the option of batting 12 girls and substituting the remaining 2 girls in, or batting all 14 girls in a continuous order. Since this rule is mandatory, umpires are instructed to follow these guidelines: in the event any player suffers an injury or must leave the game for any reason (except ejection) the team involved will not be forced to take an out when that player's turn comes up in the batting order. If a player is EJECTED, the team involved MUST TAKE AN OUT when that spot in the order comes up.

11. FREE SUBSTITUTION: Substitutes may re-enter a game as well as starters, but they must bat in the same spot in the batting order.
12. COURTESY RUNNER: The courtesy runner shall be the player that made the last out, or in the first inning, the last batter in the line-up.
13. MUST PLAY RULE: Every player who is present for a game MUST PLAY AT LEAST 2 INNINGS OF DEFENSE AND BAT ONCE PRIOR TO THE END OF THE FOURTH INNING. Violators will be subject to forfeiture of the game and will face discipline by the SOGFSA Board. EXCEPTION: If a player is present, but is injured or is being disciplined by the coach, and will NOT be playing, the home plate umpire and opposing coach MUST BE NOTIFIED PRIOR TO THE START OF THE GAME. The coach has the option of playing or benching a late arriving player. If the coach decides to play the player, the player must be inserted at the end of the line-up. This must be noted in the score book.
14. Only positive cheering directed at your own team or players is permitted. (No screaming or taunting of the other team or players will be tolerated.)

In addition.....SOGFSA makes these recommendations for individual associations, parents, and umpires:

1. SAFETY: The following items are not mandatory but are strongly suggested to associations and parents.
 - A. In the future, consider purchasing helmets with chin straps. These reduce the risk of serious injury if a child's helmet falls off while running the bases and she is hit by a throw.
 - B. Mouthpieces are strongly suggested for girls playing pitcher, catcher, or the infield positions.
 - C. If your child wears eyeglasses we strongly suggest shatter-proof glasses with a safety strap.
2. UMPIRE DISCRETION: Not every ballpark is the same. Some have on-deck circles for batters, coach's boxes along first and third bases, etc. while other parks do not have them. Safety is a concern for every Umpire. Therefore we ask all coaches, parents and players to abide by the ground rules the umpire establishes regarding placement of on-deck batters, base Coaches, equipment in and around dugouts, all players except the on-deck batter being safely inside dugout, etc.
3. COACHES RESPONSIBILITIES CONCERNING PARENTS AND FANS:

There is a serious shortage of people who are willing to be umpires today, and the mistreatment of the officials is a prime factor. We remind coaches and players of the following things:

 - A. Coaches are held responsible for the conduct of parents, players and fans of their team.
 - B. If an umpire is having a problem with unruly fans, the coach will be asked to take care of the situation. If the problem persists, the umpire has the right to cancel the remainder of the game and declare a forfeit victory for the opposing team.
 - C. The League strongly recommends that a coach consider removing a pitcher that has hit numerous batters and/or displays little or no pitch control during the game.