



Lou Gehrig Softball General Rules

Updated February 2017

Lou Gehrig Softball Rules are a supplement to and/or clarification of the rules stated in the official NSA Rule Book.

General

1. **Zero Tolerance Rules are in effect for all managers, coaches, players, parents and all spectators. Violations may result in ejection from the game or Lou Gehrig complex.**
2. Level Coordinators shall not manage a team in the level for which they are responsible.
3. Games will consist of 6 innings at all levels, except Seniors (7 innings) and Minor B (5 innings). If a scheduled 6 inning game is called due to weather or darkness, it is a regulation game if:
 - a. Four innings have been completed.
 - b. The home team is leading after 3 ½ innings have been completed (home team wins).
 - c. Home team scores one or more runs in the 4th inning to tie the score (game ends in a tie).
4. A proper score book is to be maintained to record players and innings pitched by each pitcher.
5. Each manager shall furnish a game ball to the home plate umpire, prior to the start of the game.
6. Players will wear proper uniforms (i.e. the uniforms provided by the league). Uniforms and equipment must not be altered or modified in any way.
7. Only **3** adults are allowed in the dugout at any time (exception is Minor A allowing no more than 4 adults). Coaches must remain inside the dugout expect when coaching a base or executing a soft toss (when applicable). For safety reasons, **only players and coaches** are allowed in the dugout during the game.
8. Managers will only be allowed to discuss rule interpretations and not judgment calls with umpires. Appeals are not allowed. The manager may discuss the problem with the umpires and the other manager after completion of the ½ inning. Assistant coaches are not allowed to discuss / argue any calls with umpires or the other manager.
9. Managers and coaches are responsible for the condition of their field during and after the game. This includes the clearing of trash and debris from the bench, backstop, and spectator areas. Players need to pick up the dugout and bleacher areas before receiving tokens.
10. Pitching warm-ups are limited to seven pitches or at the discretion of the umpire.
11. Managers must have catchers ready.

Concerns regarding rule interpretations or umpires should be referred to the Level Coordinator, Umpire Coordinator, House Softball Vice President, or Softball President.



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Safety

1. No Jewelry – medical awareness bracelets or necklaces are allowed.
2. Batting Helmets must have an attached, certified protective mask. Chinstraps are not mandatory but are highly recommended.
3. All fielders are encouraged to wear protective fielding/pitching masks. Pitchers in majors and juniors must wear pitching/fielding masks.
4. All players and player coaches must wear proper protective equipment. Catchers, during the game or when warming up pitchers, must wear a catcher's mask with attached throat protector. Batters, runners, base coaches under the age of 18, and Majors or Juniors pitchers taking warm-up pitches on the mound must wear a protective batting helmet.
5. Managers shall insure that equipment is maintained in an orderly fashion and is out of the field of play during the game. Broken or defective equipment shall not be used and should be replaced through the Lou Gehrig equipment manager.
6. In the event of an injury to a player either during a game or at practice, the manager should consult with the player's parents if in attendance. The manager and parents shall determine whether the player shall remain in the game or at practice. If there is any doubt about the seriousness of the injury, the player should not continue. The Safety Coordinator must be notified of injuries requiring medical attention. An Injury Report must also be filled out and returned to the level coordinator, for any injury on the day the injury occurs.
7. Base runners and fielders are expected to avoid contact.
 - a. Sliding is required in a close play at any base except first. If a base runner does not attempt to slide in a close play, they will automatically be called out.
 - b. Fielders who do not have a play on the runner are prohibited from blocking the base path.
 - c. Whenever possible use the safety base to avoid contact.
8. On deck batters must be in the cage next to the dugout. When warming prior to an at bat, a player may only swing a bat in the on deck cage. The on deck batter may not be out in front of the dugout.
9. The throwing of equipment is not to be tolerated.
 - a. 1st time – umpire warns the team
 - b. 2nd time - player is ejected from the game.

The home plate umpire may elect to give the first warning to the managers and captains at the pre-game meeting at home plate. Subsequent incidents will result in player or coach being ejection from the game.



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Time Limits -- Regular Season

1. No new inning shall start after 1:50 minutes into play. All games will end at 2 hours and 15 minutes- from the **scheduled** start time. The exception is evening games played on diamond 3.
2. Night games on lighted fields: 1st game starts at 5:45 P.M. and ends at 7:45 P.M., 2nd game starts at 8:00 P.M. and ends at 10:00 P.M. No new inning shall begin after 1 hour 50 minutes into play - if game started at 8 pm.

Time Limits -- Playoffs

1. **All playoff games at all levels will have a 2-hour 15 minute time limit. No new inning shall begin after 1 hour 50 minutes. After 2 hours and 15 minutes, the score will revert to the last completed inning. It is the managers' responsibility to ask the umpire for the official start time if it is not given. The official start time should be recorded in each scorebook.)**
2. Semi-finals games will be played to completion.
3. All Championship games will be played to completion.

Call-Ups / Borrowed Players

1. Each manager is to submit 3 – 4 names of players and their ages to his/her Level Coordinator. When a manager uses a call-up from a lower level, he/she must inform the Level Coordinator whom the player was and for which game she played. The Level Coordinator is responsible for compiling the list of call-ups and distributing it to the managers. The level coordinator will also monitoring the number of games each call-up plays.
2. Players from the next lowest level may be “called up” when 9 or fewer regular players are anticipated for game. These players must wear their regular team uniform and must bat last in the line-up at the start of the game. Call-ups may play equal to, but **not more than** the least number of innings played by any regular team member.
3. During the regular season, a team may start the game with 9 players, but if a player is injured or must leave before the game is ended, the team may borrow a player from the opposing team, or has 15 minutes to locate an eligible player on the premises (while play continues). Typically, the girl who made the last out will play the field for the opposing team.
4. During the entire playoffs, the call-up must be pre-approved by the Level Coordinator, and a team may not use the same call-up more than once. If a team is short players at game time, they have 15 minutes to locate a call-up before forfeiting a game.
5. In conjunction with this, if a girl is late due to umpiring a game on another field or working in the concession stand, her team will not be penalized if they are short players. The game will be delayed up to 15 minutes and then will begin without her. When she arrives, she will be placed at the bottom of the batting order.



Lou Gehrig Softball

Minor A

Updated March 2016

General

1. Games are 6 innings with a five-run limit in innings 1 - 5. No run limit in inning 6 **ONLY**.
2. A 10-foot arc will be marked from home plate: all batted balls must pass this line to be "fair"; otherwise, it is called "foul."
3. Pitching rubber and pitching machine is 35 feet from home plate.

Hitting / Running

4. Players will hit off the pitching machine the entire season.
5. Teams will use a continuous batting order – everyone bats.
6. No base on balls, 3 (three) strikes, no bunting. The batter is allowed a maximum of 7 (seven) pitches, but if the 7th pitch is a foul ball, dead ball or un-hittable **as declared by the umpires**, the batter will get another pitch.
7. When the ball is hit, the batter may advance (at own risk) a maximum as follows:
 - Infield hit: 1 base
 - Beyond infielder, unlimited
8. A base runner may advance at own risk a maximum of one additional base per overthrow. "Overthrow" is defined as thrown past the base (a ball dropped in the vicinity of the base is not an overthrow). Only one "overthrow" allowed per batted ball.
9. A batted ball hitting the pitching machine is a dead-ball single, with the batter being awarded 1st base. Only base runners with runners behind them will advance. (i.e. runners at 1st and 3rd, batter hits the machine, batter is awarded 1st base, runner from 1st base moves to 2nd. The runner on 3rd base would stay)
10. Stealing is not allowed. No base leadoff; runners must remain on the base until the ball is hit.
11. Runners may advance at their own risk on a base hit; however they must stop at their current base once an infielder has possession of the ball on the dirt infield. If the runner is not at least halfway to the next base when possession is obtained, the runner must return to the previous base.



Lou Gehrig Softball

Minor A

Updated March 2016

Defense

12. Defense will play ten players (four outfielders).
13. Defensive set up
 - a. Outfielders must start no closer than 10 feet from edge of outfield grass and may not be used to play a base. A fielded ball by the outfielder must be thrown, not run back to the infield. If a ground ball gets **past** the infielder, the outfielder can make a play on the ball. The outfielder can make a play on fly ball hit in front of them if the ball travels beyond the infielders.
 - b. For a “skinned” field, infielders must start within 3 – 5 feet of the baseline.
 - c. The girl playing the pitcher's position must wear a helmet. She must remain even or behind the pitching rubber until the ball is hit. She must **not** enter the pitching circle. When fielding a batted ball, the pitcher should throw to the base. She is not allowed to run and tag the base for the out.
 - d. All infielders are required to wear a fielder's mask.

NOTE: THE GIRL'S SAFETY COMES FIRST!

15. Team may put one defensive coach/ parent in the outfield until May 31st.
16. Infield fly rule is waived.
17. **Minor A - Catcher is considered an outfield position and may not be played for more than one inning.**
18. For both regular season and playoffs, every player must play at least four defensive innings. Players must be rotated every 2 innings to a new defensive position. They must play at least 2 innings in the infield and 2 innings in the outfield. Players may only play a maximum of 2 innings at a specific defensive position. This rule also applies to call-ups.



Lou Gehrig Softball Majors

Updated January 2014

General

1. Games are 6 innings with a five-run limit in innings 1 - 5. No run limit in inning 6 **ONLY**.
2. Pitching distance is 35 feet.
3. When warming up between innings, a pitcher must wear a batting helmet.
4. Pitchers and infielders are required to wear a fielding mask during game play.

Hitting / Running

5. Teams will use a continuous batting order – everyone bats.
6. Bunting **is** allowed at this level.
7. Stealing **is not** allowed. Lead-offs after the pitch leaves the pitcher's hand is allowed. A catcher may attempt a pick-off with no penalty for an overthrow. The runner must return to the base after the pitch if it is not hit.

Defense

8. Defense will play ten players (four outfielders).
9. Defensive set up
 - a. Outfielders must be no closer than edge of the outfield grass and may not be used to play a base. A fielded ball by the outfielder must be thrown, not run back to the infield.
 - b. For a “skinned” field, infielders must start within 3 – 5 feet of the baseline.

NOTE: THE GIRL'S SAFETY COMES FIRST!

10. Infield fly rule is waived.
11. For both regular season and playoffs, every player must play at least four defensive innings. Players must be rotated every 2 innings to a new defensive position. They must play at **least 2 innings in the infield** and 2 innings in the outfield. Players may only play a maximum of 2 innings at a specific defensive position (with the exception of the pitching position – see rule 14). This rule also applies to call-ups.
- 12. Catcher is considered an outfield position.**
13. Play is dead when the ball is in the pitching circle.
14. Pitchers may pitch a maximum of two innings per game in the regular season. This will be reevaluated by the Softball committee prior to the playoffs and communicated via the level coordinator. If a girl throws one pitch in an inning, this is considered a full inning pitched. Innings do not have to be consecutive.
15. After a pitcher hits 2 batters in an inning, the managers should call time-out to discuss the pitcher's control and if she must be removed from pitching. If the pitcher hits 3 batters in one inning, she must be removed from this position for the rest of that inning. Please use good judgment before placing this girl at pitcher again in the same game. Remember: Safety First!



Lou Gehrig Softball Majors

Updated January 2014

Lou Gehrig Softball Majors Rules Amendment

In order to facilitate a smoother transition into pitching and to promote more hitting and fielding, from opening day until the conclusion of games on May 31st the following rules will be in effect:

If the level coordinator believes the pitching has advanced to a point where the rules are no longer needed prior to the end of May, the level coordinator, in conjunction with the president of softball, has the right to suspend the addendum and require all teams to revert to standard, non-soft toss rules. If the pitching has not advanced, this rule amendment may be continued through playoffs.

Should a batter have four called balls on her the following will take place:

1. The batter will NOT be awarded a walk.
2. A coach or designated adult for the offensive team shall be used to “soft toss” the ball for the batter.
3. The coach or designated adult must **not** be in front of the batter in the field of play.
4. The soft toss must be “pitched” from the side, facing the batter.
5. The batter shall get as many soft tosses as strikes remaining in the count. For instance if the count is 4 balls and 1 strike, the batter would get two soft toss “pitches” to attempt to hit. If the count were 4-2, the batter would get one soft toss “pitch” to hit.
6. Any soft toss not hit is considered a strike, regardless if the soft toss was hittable or not or whether the batter swung or not.
7. There will be no “do overs” for a poorly executed soft toss “pitch.”
8. Any soft toss “pitch” hit foul shall be treated like any other foul ball. (in the 4 -1 count example, if the batter fouls off the first soft toss ”pitch” the count is then 4-2.)
9. If the batter fails to hit the soft toss “pitch” resulting in a 3rd strike the batter is called out.
10. If there is a foul ball on a third strike, the batter is awarded an additional soft toss “pitch.”
11. Bunting of soft toss “pitches” will not be allowed
12. Runners may not leave the base on a soft toss “pitch” until the ball has left the hand of the coach or designated adult performing the soft toss.
13. On a soft toss “pitch,” the pitcher on the defensive team shall be required to be within three feet in front or behind the pitching rubber when the ball is “pitched.”

The spirit of the rule is to increase the action on the field. Attempting to “game” the rules and instructing batters not to swing in hopes of having the opportunity to hit a soft toss “pitch” will not be tolerated.



Lou Gehrig Softball Juniors

Updated January 2014

General

1. All games are 6 innings with a five-run limit in innings 1 – 5. No run limit in inning 6 **ONLY**.
2. Pitching distance is 40 feet.
3. When warming up between innings or prior to the start of the game, a pitcher must wear a batting helmet.
4. Pitchers are required to wear a fielding mask during game play.

Hitting / Running

5. Teams will use a continuous batting order – everyone bats.
6. Bunting **is** allowed at this level.
7. Stealing **is** allowed at this level. Base runners can leave the bag (to steal or lead-off) when the ball is released from the pitchers' hand. If a runner leaves the base before the pitcher releases the ball, the runner will be called out.

Defense

8. Defense will play ten players (four outfielders).
9. Defensive set up
 - a. All infielders are required to wear a fielder's mask
 - b. Outfielders must be no closer than edge of outfield grass

NOTE: THE GIRL'S SAFETY COMES FIRST

10. Infield fly rule is in effect.
11. For both regular season and playoffs, every player must play at least four defensive innings. Players must be rotated at least every 2 innings to a new defensive position. They must play at least 2 innings in the infield and **2 innings in the outfield**. Players may only play a maximum of 2 innings at a specific defensive position (with the exception of the pitching position – see rule 13). This rule also applies to call-ups.
12. Catcher is considered an infield position.
13. Pitchers may pitch a maximum of three innings per game in the regular season. This will be reevaluated by the Softball committee prior to the playoffs and communicated via the level coordinator. If a girl throws one pitch in an inning, this is considered a full inning pitched. Innings do not have to be consecutive.
14. After a pitcher hits 2 batters in an inning, the managers should call time-out to discuss the pitcher's control and if she should be removed from pitching. If the pitcher hits 3 batters in one inning, she must be removed from this position for the rest of that inning. Please use good judgment before placing this girl at pitcher again in the same game. Remember: Safety First!
15. On a swinging or called third-strike, the batter cannot advance if the catcher does not catch the pitch. (The dropped third strike rule is **NOT** in effect.)



Lou Gehrig Softball Seniors

Updated January 2015

General

1. Games are seven innings with a SIX-run limit in innings 1-6. No run limit in inning 7 **ONLY**.
2. Pitching distance is 43 feet.
3. When warming up between innings, a pitcher is encouraged to wear a batting helmet or fielding mask.
4. Pitchers are strongly encouraged to wear a fielding mask when pitching.

Hitting / Running

5. Teams will use a continuous batting order – everyone bats.
6. Bunting **is** allowed at this level.
7. Stealing **is** allowed at this level. Base runners can leave the bag (to steal or lead-off) when the ball is released from the pitcher's hand. If a runner leaves the base before the pitcher releases the ball, the runner will be called out.
8. Runners may steal home.
9. Call-ups must bat last in the line-up.

Defense

10. Defense will play ten players.
11. Infield fly rule is in effect.
12. Every player must play at least four defensive innings, including playoffs. This rule also applies to call-ups in the regular season and playoffs. A call-up **can** pitch.
13. Pitchers may pitch a maximum of THREE innings per game in the regular season and playoffs. If a girl pitches one pitch in an inning, this is considered a full inning pitched.
14. Dropped Third Strike Rule is in effect. (See NSA rulebook for details)