

2021 Little League Softball Tournament Rule Summary

Updated 22-May-2021

	8/9/10 year old	9/10/11 year old	Little League (10/11/12)	Juniors (12/13/14)	Seniors (13-16)
Pitching Distance	35 feet	40 feet		43 feet	
Softballs	11-inch softball	12-inch softball			
Mandatory Play	13+ players: Minimum of 1 at bat 12 or fewer players: Minimum of 1 at bat and 6 consecutive defensive outs. At-bat is not complete until player is retired, scores, or the inning ends. Substitute entering game for first time may not be removed until this is met.				Does not apply
No New Inning After	Midnight			12:30am	1:00am
Time Limits	If two games are scheduled for the same site, no time limit may be imposed on the first game.				
Pitchers	Innings	Max 12 per day Max 12 per game		No restrictions	
	Rest	Six or fewer innings in a day – none required Seven or more innings in a day – one calendar day		No rest required	
	Consecutive Games	Allowed, subject to rest requirements.		No restrictions	
	Consecutive Days	If six or fewer innings pitched previous day, or if pitcher of record in continuation of suspended game.		No restrictions	
	Returning to Mound	May move to a different position and return once per inning. If withdrawn from the game offensively or defensively for a substitute, may not return as pitcher later in the game.		May move to a different position and return once per inning. May be removed from game and return once per inning if return does not violate substitution, charged conference, or mandatory play rule(s).	
		Special case: See Rule 10.c Note 2			
Intentional Walk	At any time, team may request an "unpitched" intentional walk.				
Re-Entry	Any player who has been removed for a substitute may re-enter the game in the SAME position in the batting order. A substitute entering the game for the first time may not be removed prior to completion of his/her mandatory play requirements.				Starters may re-enter to their original spot <u>once</u> . Subs may not re-enter.
Substitutions	Defensive: Must be made as team takes the field, or while team is in the field. Offensive: Must be made as player comes to bat, or while player is on base.				
Defensive Conferences	Pitcher must be removed on 3rd visit in inning or 4th visit in game.	Pitcher must be removed on 2nd visit in inning or 3rd visit in game.			
Mercy Rule	15 runs after 3 innings, 2 ½ if home team is ahead. 10 runs after 4 innings, 3 ½ if home team is ahead.		15 runs after 4 innings, 3 ½ if home team is ahead. 10 runs after 5 innings, 4 ½ if home team is ahead		
3rd Strike Not Caught	Batter is out	Batter is out if first is occupied with less than two outs. If first is unoccupied or there are two outs, batter becomes runner and defense must put him/her out.			
Leaving Early	Pitch reaches batter	Pitch leaves the pitcher's hand			
On Deck Batters	Not allowed.			Allowed.	
Illegal Bat	Batter is out (unless defense opts for result of play). Batter and manager both ejected.				
Batter's Box	Batters must keep one foot in the batter's box except for certain specified conditions. Penalty: Warning, then strike.				
Illegal Pitch Penalty	Ball awarded to batter				
Multiple Games/Day	Up to two (2) doubleheaders in a seven-day period		Maximum of three games in a day		
Special Pinch Runner	Once per inning, no more than twice per game, any player not currently in the batting order may run. A player may only be removed for a special pinch runner once per game.				
Adults	11 or fewer players: 1 manager and 1 coach. Player must coach one of the bases. 12 or more players: 1 manager and 2 coaches. May use 2 adult base coaches.				
Protests	Playing rule or improper substitution: Must be made before next pitch, play or attempted play. Mandatory play: As soon as the facts become known. Ineligible pitcher or player: As soon as facts become known, but before either teams' next game.				
Unsportsmanlike Conduct	The stealing and relaying of signs to alert the batter of pitch selection and/or location is unsportsmanlike behavior. If, in the judgment of the umpire, this behavior is occurring, both the player and manager shall be ejected from the game.				
Tiebreaker Rule	Starts in 8 th inning			Starts in 9 th inning	

This chart is intended as a reference summary of the various tournament rules. It does not cover every possible circumstance, and is not a substitute for reading and fully understanding the regular season and tournament rules sections of the Official Playing Rules.