12U Softball Rules

* Remember that this league IS FOR LEARNING and we would like all of the players to have a positive experience in softball. Coaches, parents, players, spectators, umpires, and anyone else should be respectful and show good sportsmanship at all times. Please remember that players and the umpires are learning.
* The home team will be decided by a coin toss (or pick a number between 1 and 20) unless the schedule outlines the home and visiting teams. Be ready for a coin toss and captain’s meeting 10 minutes prior to game time. The home team is responsible for keeping the official score.
* A 12-inch softball will be used.
* Helmets are provided and must be worn by all batters and runners until they get back to the dugout. Catcher’s gear is also provided. Those playing in the catcher’s position must wear the full gear at all times while in that position. No one under the age of 18 should warm-up a pitcher without a helmet.
* All players must be on an official roster and registered with the league. The team may use substitute players from another team within the same age group if needed. A team may play with a minimum of 7 players. If there are less than 7 players on a team, we still encourage a scrimmage and the other team may share some players if they want so the girls can still play/develop.
* 5-Run Rule: the inning ends after five runs or three outs, whichever comes first. 5-run max limit for each inning. However, if there are four runs scored and the next batter hits the ball, each base runner (how ever many are on base), including the batter, may try to score before they are tagged or forced out. This is called the “Continuation Rule”. Each run will count before the out occurs. It is possible to score 8 runs in an inning due to the continuation rule.
* Coaches will change the batting order in order for each girl to get approximately the same number of at bats throughout the season. We want to avoid some girls getting many at bats while others get few at bats.
* In order to keep on schedule, games will be played for 75 min; No new inning will begin after 70 min. Drop dead at 85 min. The umpire will start the timer just prior to the first pitch. If the home team is ahead and batting when the clock is at 75 min, the game will be over. \*\*Note: If there is not a game scheduled after your game, your game may be played longer than the allotted time but this must be agreed upon prior to the start of the game by the coaches, umpires, and the league directors.\*\*
* On defense, three of nine players must be in the outfield.
* All players should be in the batting lineup. If a player comes late, they may be added to the bottom of the lineup upon arrival.
* The pitching distance in 12u is 40 feet. The pitching distance in 14u is 43 feet.
* The mercy rule is 15 runs and the game ends.
* If a team is playing up an age division, they may pitch at the distance required for their own age division, but the mound will remain at the distance of the older age division.
* Runners may not leave the base (steal) until the ball leaves the pitcher's hand. There is NO leading off. Players CAN steal home.
* 12u/14u divisions WILL play the dropped 3rd strike rule.
* Any batter throwing the bat will be given a warning. The next offense, the batter will be called out.
* If a ball is thrown out of play then each runner may advance only one base.
* Coaches may not bench a player for more than one inning, and can not bench a player twice in the same game except for injury or player request.
* Infield fly rule is in effect.
* If a player gets hit by a pitch (even balls in the dirt that hit the batter) from the pitcher, the player will be awarded 1st base.
* There is a mandatory slide rule at 2nd, 3rd, and home if there is a play at that base. A runner may be called out for not sliding when there is a potential play at the base.
* If there are two outs and a runner touches home plate before another runner is forced out (for the third out), the run does not count. However, if a runner scores before another runner is tagged out (for the third out), then the run counts at home plate.
* No metal cleats allowed for 12u. 14u may use metal cleats.
* Pitching is in accordance with USA Softball rules.
* No abusive language or behavior will be tolerated from coaches, players, or fans. If the umpires have difficulties, they will immediately stop the game and notify the league director. The director will determine if the game continues or both teams forfeit.