

## NLBSL 10U, 12U, and 14U Softball 2024 Rules Amendments

### 1. **Time Limit:**

Games will consist of 75 minutes or 6 complete innings.

### 2. **Players:**

10U will field ten players or that number less than ten available. When fielding 10 players, defense must use 4 outfielders and, in the umpire's opinion, positioned a minimum of 20 ft from the baseline.

12U and 14U division will field 9 players; defense must use 3 outfielders (if fielding 9 players) and, in the umpire's opinion, positioned a minimum of 20 ft from the baseline.

### 3. **Pitching Distance/Base Path Distance**

10U pitching distance – 35 ft.

12U pitching distance – 40 ft.

14U pitching distance – 43 ft.

All ages will have a base path distance of 60 ft.

### 4. **The Ball:**

All 10 year and younger divisions shall use the 11-inch softball. All other divisions shall use the 12-inch softball. USSSA has approved the optic yellow for all fast pitch play. "Official Fast Pitch softball" must be clearly printed on the ball. The home team will provide the umpire with (2) new game balls (one opened and one unopened).

### 5. **Injured Player(s):**

If an injured player is unable to continue batting, she will be skipped in the batting order without penalty of an out.

### 6. **Free Substitution:**

Players may be freely substituted. Substitutes must be made by the third inning. A courtesy runner may be used anytime for the pitcher and catcher, mandatory with the catcher and two outs.

### 7. **Safety:**

All players must wear batting helmets with face masks. Chin straps are optional. Removal of the batting helmet while on the field will result in a team warning for the first offense and an out thereafter. Facemasks are highly recommended for all infielders but are not required.

### 8. **Look Back Rule:**

This rule is in effect for all age softball age groups.

9. Following a walk the runner must stop at first base and remain on the base until the next pitch leaves the pitcher's hand. Walked batter stays on first even during steal attempts by other runners on any base or by passed ball back to pitcher. A walked batter must remain on first base UNTIL THE NEXT PITCH.

**Additional 10U Rules:**

1. No dropped third strike.
2. Players are allowed to steal second and/or third but may not steal home. 1 stolen base per pitch allowed, even if there is an overthrow on the steal. Runners on third may only score if offensively forced (ball put into play) or walked (bases loaded). They cannot score if there is a pick off attempt at third base or any other base.
3. Strike Zone:  
The strike zone shall be enlarged, when the player is in a natural stance, to include the top of the shoulders to mid-shin. The strike zone shall also be enlarged to include the width of a softball on each side of home plate.
4. Walk Rule:  
Each team will be allowed (3) walks per inning. After each team walks 3 batters, the offensive coach or designated adult will be required to pitch to subsequent batters after (4) balls.

After (4) balls on the third batter walked, the offensive coach or designated adult representative of the offensive team will pitch underhand for the remainder of the count from the rubber. Example: Count equals 4 balls and 1 strike the coach will get 2 pitches, all pitches by the coach will be strikes (even hit by pitch). No bunting or stealing when a coach is pitching. If the batter fouls the third strike she will remain at bat. Delay of game by the pitching coach will result in a strike. The player/pitcher must be parallel to the side of the pitching coach. If the pitching coach is accidentally hit by a batted ball, ball is live. If the pitching coach catches a batted ball, the batter is out and the play is dead.

14U UPDATED RULE – No metal cleats in Plattsburg due to turf field