



Lou Gehrig Softball Majors - Level Rules

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 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 13). Catcher is considered an infield position. This rule also applies to call-ups. A call-up cannot pitch.
12. Play is dead when the ball is in control by the pitcher in the pitching circle.
13. 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.
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 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!



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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.