

Optimist Softball Rules

S% I&I (Gender-Inclusive)

Ages 10 to 13

Stress that this is a developmental program – emphasis should be placed on learning the fundamentals, good sportsmanship, and having fun.

1. Unless otherwise specified, all rules are those recognized by Softball Ontario.
2. There will be 10 players in the field; however, teams can play with 7 – anything less the team must forfeit. In the case of forfeits, a fun game will be played and players will be shared to create equal teams. The umpire is to remain and umpire the game per usual – umpire's cards **MUST** be signed.
3. Calling across other players from teams who are not playing is allowed and that player can wear their own team shirt. Only to a maximum of 10 players.
4. Base runners may steal bases, once the pitched ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
5. Players will pitch to the opposing team from the beginning of the season, following the rule of no pitcher is allowed to pitch more than two consecutive innings – they may resume pitching after one inning off. All players who wish, **MUST** be given a chance to pitch at least once in the season.
6. Pitchers may use windmill or straight underhand style pitching.
7. Pitchers must have both feet together and be facing the home plate at the start of the pitch but are allowed one-step forward during delivery; however, they must keep one foot touching the rubber mound during the duration of pitch.
8. The pitch must be delivered in one revolution of a windmill; no more allowed.
9. The batter is still considered out on strike 3 even if the ball is dropped; base runners still may steal one base to advance.
10. Player can only advance one base on an overthrown ball to 1st or 3rd base that goes out of bounds.
11. Sliding is allowed.
12. If there are two outs with the catcher for the next inning on base, they should switch with the last out OR furthest from batting.
13. All games are 1 hour and 30 minutes long; no new innings may begin after time limit. Every inning has a 6-run limit no exceptions.
14. Only during tournaments are games played out in case of a tie.
15. Batting order must stay the same; any batter out of order or missing is an automatic out.
16. To provide safe playing conditions for the players, a call of safe will be made to the runner coming in from 3rd base IF the catcher is standing on the base line or home plate. The catcher should stand in front of home plate to ensure safety.
17. If the back catcher catches the ball off of a foul tip on the third strike only batter is out. On the first and second strikes only foul tip must be higher than the players' shoulder.
18. No noisemakers are to be used during regular season and/or tournaments. IE, air horn, cow bell, whistles, etc.
19. Bat must be an official softball bat, only 2 ¼" in diameter, CSA & NSF – **No Americal bats**. Wooden bats must be gripped.

Ball: 11" soft core

Pitching Distance: 35 feet

Base Distance: 55 feet