

Optimist Softball Rules

Tim Bit (Co-ed)

Ages 3-7

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

1. Honking bases (pressure activated) will be used.
2. There will be no forfeits – teams will share players to ensure a game.
3. Calling across other players from teams who are not playing is allowed and that player can wear their own team shirt.
4. All players will play offense and defence each inning.
5. All players bat each innings with the batting order being reversed each inning. Beginning with top to bottom in the first inning and going from bottom to top in the second innings and so on until the game is completed.
6. Only base runners may stand on the bases.
7. Only coaches or parent helpers may assist at batting and in the playing field.
8. The use of the tee is not mandatory. A player may receive a max of five pitches and then must use a tee. Balls and strikes will not be called.
9. Walks are not allowed; each player must bat. If the ball is called foul, the player will bat again until a fair ball is called.
10. Stealing bases is not allowed.
11. Base runners and batters may only advance one base on a hit ball, with the exception of the last batter being announced.
12. The last batter of the half inning will be announced to the opposing team. When the ball is put in play, the batter keeps running all the bases until making it home. The defensive team needs to throw the ball home. The play is over when the defensive team has the ball and is standing on home plate.
13. No inning is to begin after 1 hour.
14. Scores will not be kept.
15. All players will receive the same participation award at tournaments and the year-end banquet.
16. When possible, the batting order should be alternating male/female.
17. Batting order should be maintained forward and backward.
18. A 10-foot dead ball zone will be utilized; a ball not clearing or passing through this zone will be considered a dead ball. No fielding players are to enter into this zone for safety reasons.
19. The catcher must wear all protective gear.

Ball: 9' soft core ball

Pitcher: No closer than the 10-foot dead ball zone

Dead Ball Zone: a circular arch measured from home plate to 10 feet out

Base Distance: 45 feet

Rain out games will not be rescheduled, there will not be a rain out week.

Optimist Softball Rules

Atom (Co-ed)

Ages 7 to 10

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.
4. Stealing bases is not allowed.
5. Coaches or an adult will begin pitching the 1st game of the season and all subsequently scheduled games in May. Games scheduled after the first tournament must have a player pitch to their own team. Coaches or an adult are permitted to take the mound in a purely teaching position, no pitching allowed, for the remainder of the season.
6. There is a max of 2 innings for a pitcher to pitch. The other division's players are encouraged to try other positions. Players must alternate positions.
7. There is a five pitch limit; no walking. After the fifth unsuccessful pitch, the player is considered out. Keep in mind there is a three out limit for each inning.
8. Pitchers must use an underhand pitching style, and must pitch from the rubber mound. Coaches and children may move in closer; 5-feet from the rubber mound at max.
9. Pitchers must start with both feet together but may take one-step in delivery.
10. A ball being hit to the outfield will allow the base runners to advance and continue to advance until the ball has reached infield and a defensive player has made an attempt to throw the ball, at which time the base runner must cease further base advancement.
11. A ball hit into infield will allow the base runners to advance until such time that a player has gathered up the ball.
12. A ball overthrown and goes out of play at 1st or 3rd base, the runner must stop – the ball is dead.
13. Sliding into base is allowed.
14. If there are two outs and the catcher for the next inning is on base, they should be switched with the last out OR furthest from batting.
15. All games are limited to 1 hour and 15 minutes; no new innings will begin after that. Every inning has a six-run limit. Max of 7 innings per game.
16. During regular season, tied game stay tied; only during tournaments are games played out.
17. There are to be **NO** noisemakers during regular season and/or tournaments. IE: air horn, whistles, etc.

Ball: 10" soft core

Pitcher Distance: 30 feet for coach/helper, refer to rule #5 and #8.

Base Distance: 50 feet

Optimist Softball Rules

Squirt (Co-ed)

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 **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 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 overthrow.
11. Sliding is allowed.
12. If there are two outs and the catcher for the next inning is on base, they should be switched 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 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. The diamond is set up prior to the game. No infield practices are allowed; all practices are to be in the outfield or off the field.
18. 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.
19. No noisemakers are to be used during regular season and/or tournaments. IE, air horn, cow bell, whistles, etc.
20. Bat must be an official softball bat, only 2 ¼" in diameter, CSA & NSF – **NO** American bats. Wooden bats must be gripped.

Ball: 11" soft core

Pitching Distance: 35 feet

Base Distance: 55 feet

Optimist Softball Rules

Peewee (Co-ed)

Ages 13 to 17

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 should be a min of 7 and a max of 10 players on the field 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 will not stay in the event of a forfeit.
3. Calling across other players from teams who are not playing is allowed and that player can wear their own team shirt to a maximum of 10 players on the bench.
4. Stealing can occur once the ball has left the pitcher's hand.
5. On the 3rd strike, if the catcher drops the ball the player may run to 1st base.
6. 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 MUST be given a chance to pitch at least once in the season.
7. The pitch must be delivered in one revolution of a windmill (no more allowed) or straight underhand.
8. Pitchers must have both feet together 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.
9. Once the pitcher has the ball within the pitcher's circle, the base runner cannot advance a base; batters no stealing bases after the third strike unless the catcher drops the ball (rule 5).
10. Sliding is strongly encouraged.
11. If there are two outs and the catcher for the next inning is on base, they should be switched with the last out OR furthest from batting.
12. All games are 1 hour and 30 minutes long; no new innings may begin after time limit. Every inning has a 6-run limit. Max of 7 innings per game.
13. During regular season, tied game stay tied; only during tournaments are games played out.
14. All safety equipment must be worn and helmet must be strapped on. Tucked in shirts are required due to safety reasons.
15. The diamond is set up prior to the game. No infield practices are allowed; all practices are to be in the outfield or off the field.
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. Encourage the catcher to stand in front of home plate.
17. The infield fly rule will apply.
18. There are to be NO noisemakers at regular season and/or tournaments. IE: air horn, cow bell, whistle, etc.
19. Bat must be an official softball bat, only 2 ¼" in diameter, CSA & NSF – **NO** American bats. Wooden bats must be gripped.
20. There will be NO MERCY RULE.

Ball: 12" official softball (soft-core ball)

Pitcher Distance: 40 feet

Base Distance: 60 feet

Optimist Softball Rules

Bantam (Co-ed)

Ages 18 to 25

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 should be a min of 7 and a max of 10 players on the field 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 will not stay in the event of a forfeit.
3. Calling across other players from teams who are not playing is allowed and that player can wear their own team shirt to a maximum of 10 players on the bench.
4. Stealing can occur once the ball has left the pitcher's hand.
5. On the 3rd strike, if the catcher drops the ball the player may run to 1st base.
6. 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 **MUST** be given a chance to pitch at least once in the season.
7. The pitch must be delivered in one revolution of a windmill (no more allowed) or straight underhand.
8. Pitchers must have both feet together 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.
9. Once the pitcher has the ball within the pitcher's circle, the base runner cannot advance a base; batters no stealing bases after the third strike unless the catcher drops the ball (rule 5).
10. Sliding is strongly encouraged.
11. If there are two outs and the catcher for the next inning is on base, they should be switched with the last out OR furthest from batting.
12. All games are 1 hour and 30 minutes long; no new innings may begin after time limit. Every inning has a 6-run limit. Max of 7 innings per game.
13. During regular season, tied game stay tied; only during tournaments are games played out.
14. All safety equipment must be worn and helmet must be strapped on. Tucked in shirts are required due to safety reasons.
15. The diamond is set up prior to the game. No infield practices are allowed; all practices are to be in the outfield or off the field.
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. Encourage the catcher to stand in front of home plate.
17. The infield fly rule will apply.
18. There are to be **NO** noisemakers at regular season and/or tournaments. IE: air horn, cow bell, whistle, etc.
19. Bat must be an official softball bat, only 2 ¼" in diameter, CSA & NSF – **NO** American bats. Wooden bats must be gripped.
20. There will be **NO MERCY RULE**.

Ball: 12" official softball (soft-core ball)

Pitcher Distance: 60 feet

Base Distance: 90 feet