

2024 IOWA VALLEY LEAGUE RULES – LITTLE LEAGUE SOFTBALL

1. Rules follow IGHS AU softball rules except for league rule exceptions listed below.
2. Games are 5 innings in length with no new inning after **75 minutes**.
 - Umpire starts the timer on first warm-up pitch.
 - The umpire can allow 3-5 warm-up pitches starting in the 2nd inning.
3. Pitching distance is 35 feet. The distance between the bases is 60 feet.
4. Each half inning will consist of five runs scored or three outs.
5. After 3 innings, if a team is ahead by 10 runs, the game will be considered complete. This would also be applicable after 2 ½ innings if the home team is ahead by 10 runs.
 - Teams are encouraged to play the full 75 minutes, so all players have an opportunity for additional game time.
6. In case of rain or lightning and game is called:
 - Three innings completed is considered a complete game.
 - Less than three innings completed would require a reschedule.
7. Players are eligible to steal 2nd and 3rd bases only – and only one base per batter. Players **cannot** steal home plate.
 - For example, if they steal 2nd, they can't steal 3rd until the next batter is up.
8. Batters cannot advance on a dropped third strike.
9. No infield fly rule. No bunting.
10. Facemasks for infielders required.
11. Helmets **with masks** for batters, catchers, and all base runners are mandatory.
12. Catcher gear needs to include hockey style headgear/throat protector.
13. Coaches have the option to have continuous batting order and free substitution. Must follow throughout game.
14. Coach may meet with pitcher once, the second time the pitcher must be pulled.
15. LL is child pitch, but after 4 balls pitched, the offensive coach (11th grade or older) will pitch from the rubber.
 - When the coach is pitching:
 - If the coach interferes with the play (hit by a ball or interferes with the defensive player), it is a LIVE ball. Coaches who are pitching are considered part of the field.
 - No stealing allowed. The runner may lead off once the ball is out of the coach's hand.
 - The umpire will call Strikes/Balls as they are pitched by the coach. Once a 3rd strike is called, the batter is out.
 - The strike count stands, and the coach will get up to 3 pitches for the batter to hit. After the 3rd pitch, if the batter hasn't hit the ball, the batter is out. The batter is not required to swing at the ball, but the coach will only get a maximum of 3 pitches total.
 - If the batter fouls off the 3rd pitch, then they will get another pitch. This will continue until they don't swing, swing and miss, or hit the ball fair.
 - Examples:
 - Count is 4 balls / 2 strikes. The batter gets a total of 3 pitches until they either strike out or hit the ball.
 - Count is 4 balls / 0 strikes. The batter gets a total of 3 pitches until they either strike out or hit the ball.
16. Runner **MUST** slide at any base (other than 1st) to avoid a collision when there is a play at the base. Runner will be called out if there is no attempt to slide.
17. Hit by pitch: Batter is awarded a base per the softball rule.
 - **Special Note:** If the ball hits the ground and then the batter, they are awarded 1st base **IF** the batter attempts to get out of the way of the ball at umpire's discretion.
18. May play ten girls – 6 infielders, 3 outfielders, 1 rover - with no placement rule. The rover can be placed anywhere on the field.
19. When the offensive team has two outs and catcher is on base – replace catcher with last batter out to keep the game moving.
20. No steel/metal spikes on cleats are allowed.

21. **Defensive replacements from the opposing team:** All teams must field a minimum of nine defensive players every inning.
- If a team has only seven (7) or eight (8) players, the opposing team will supply one (or two) defensive substitutes.
 - For the first inning, they will supply the last player (or last two players) in their batting lineup or other players on their bench. After the first inning, they will supply the last batter (or two batters) from the previous inning, or other player(s) on their bench.
 - **Under no circumstance should a team be penalized with an out due to the number of players in their batting lineup.**
 - The defensive substitutes will only bat for their own team.
 - The team receiving the defensive substitute(s) will only bat players from their own team.
 - A team with less than 7 players at the beginning of the game will forfeit the game but are encouraged to still play the game for experience.
22. All non-adult person(s) warming up a pitcher must wear a facemask.
23. **Tiebreaker or Time Limit**
- If a game is tied after the last inning or after the time limit, teams will play an extra inning by placing the last batter from the previous inning on second base - the extra inning will begin with one out.
 - If the game is still tied after the first extra inning, there will be a second extra inning with the last two batters from the previous inning placed on 2nd base (the last batter) and 3rd base (the next to last batter) - this extra inning will begin with one out.
 - If after the second extra inning the game is still tied, the game will officially end in a tie. Both teams will be awarded ½ win.
24. NO CHANTING will be allowed in the dugout or field.

2024 IOWA VALLEY LEAGUE RULES – PONY LEAGUE SOFTBALL

1. Rules follow IGHS AU softball rules except for league rule exceptions listed below.
2. Games are 6 innings in length with no new inning after **90 minutes**.
 - Umpire starts the timer on first warm-up pitch.
 - The umpire can allow 3-5 warm-up pitches starting in the 2nd inning.
3. Pitching distance is 40 feet. The distance between the bases is 60 feet.
4. Mandatory eight-foot radius pitching circle.
 - ****See “Coaches Notes” for “look-back” rule definition.**
5. Each half inning will consist of six runs scored or three outs.
6. After 4 innings, if a team is ahead by 10 runs, the game will be considered complete. This would also be applicable after 3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead by 10 runs.
 - Teams are encouraged to play the full 90 minutes, so all players have an opportunity for additional game time.
7. In case of rain or lightning:
 - Four innings completed is considered a complete game.
 - Less than four innings completed would require a reschedule.
8. Facemasks for infielders required.
9. Helmets **with masks** for batters, catchers, and all base runners are mandatory.
10. Catcher gear needs to include hockey style headgear/throat protector.
11. Coach may meet with pitcher once, the second time the pitcher must be pulled.
12. Runner **MUST** slide at any base (other than 1st) to avoid a collision when there is a play at the base. Runner will be called out if there is no attempt to slide.
13. Hit by pitch: Batter is awarded a base per the softball rule.
 - **Special Note:** If the ball hits the ground and then the batter, they are awarded 1st base **IF** the batter attempts to get out of the way of the ball at umpire’s discretion.
14. Ten players are eligible to be in the batting order at one time. If a team has enough players, an extra hitter **must** be used.
 - **Special Note:** If a team wants to bat their entire team which is more than 10, that is acceptable as well. If someone gets hurt or needs to leave, you won’t be forced to take an out when their spot in the line-up is reached. **Under no circumstance should a team be penalized with an out due to the number of players in their batting lineup.**
15. When the offensive team has two outs and catcher is on base – replace catcher with last batter out to keep the game moving.
16. The Infield Fly rule is in effect.
 - See “Coaches Notes” for infield fly rule definition.
17. No steel/metal spikes on cleats are allowed.
18. **Defensive replacements from the opposing team:** All teams must field a minimum of nine defensive players every inning.
 - If a team has only seven (7) or eight (8) players, the opposing team will supply one (or two) defensive substitutes.
 - i. For the first inning, they will supply the last player (or last two players) in their batting lineup or other players on their bench. After the first inning, they will supply the last batter (or two batters) from the previous inning, or other player(s) on their bench.
 - **Under no circumstance should a team be penalized with an out due to the number of players in their batting lineup.**
 - The defensive substitutes will only bat for their own team.
 - The team receiving the defensive substitute(s) will only bat players from their own team.
 - A team with less than 7 players at the beginning of the game will forfeit the game but are encouraged to still play the game for experience.
19. All non-adult person(s) warming up a pitcher must wear a facemask.

20. **Tiebreaker or Time Limit**

- If a game is tied after the last inning or after the time limit, teams will play an extra inning by placing the last batter from the previous inning on second base - the extra inning will begin with one out.
- If the game is still tied after the first extra inning, there will be a second extra inning with the last two batters from the previous inning placed on 2nd base (the last batter) and 3rd base (the next to last batter) - this extra inning will begin with one out.
- If after the second extra inning the game is still tied, the game will officially end in a tie. Both teams will be awarded $\frac{1}{2}$ win.

21. There is a two-inning pitching limit on a pitcher who is pitching at high school varsity level. Any appearance in a varsity inning is considered varsity pitcher.

22. NO CHANTING will be allowed in the dugout or field.

IOWA VALLEY LEAGUE SOFTBALL BY-LAWS

1. Iowa Valley League - 2024 Softball Commissioner: Melissa Werner
2. Who is eligible:
 - Girls who have just finished 3rd, 4th, or 5th grade will be eligible for Little League.
 - i. Second grade girls can be added if needed, but no eligible 3rd, 4th or 5th grade girl shall sit out.
 - Girls who have just finished 6th, 7th, or 8th grade will be eligible for Pony League.
 - i. Fifth grade girls can be added if needed, but no eligible 6th, 7th, or 8th grade girl shall sit out.
 - Each player **must be a resident**, or a summer resident, of the community they are representing.
 - i. Players must first sign-up in their home community before appealing to the League to play elsewhere for whatever reason(s). Their Rec Board should initiate the appeal. Appeals will be decided on a case-by-case basis. The deadline for appeals is May 1, 2024.
3. Team rosters must be submitted electronically by May 1st to the League Commissioner on the approved template. Combined rosters of all teams will be redistributed electronically to all LL and PL coaches for their respective leagues.
 - Failure to turn in a roster will result in a forfeit of each game until a roster is turned in. There will be no exceptions.
 - **Special Note:** The games should still be played! The players should not be denied playing time for a coaches' mistake!!!
4. For a new player moving into the community during the season to be eligible:
 - Regular season – Rec Board from the town must notify the Softball Commissioner before the player is eligible to play.
 - Postseason tournament – To be eligible for the postseason tournament, a player must be on the roster by the 5th game and must have participated in at least 50% of all the regular season games.
5. There will be an **entry fee of \$80.00 per team payable to postseason host town prior to the 1st game.**
6. Regular season and tournament rankings go by win percentage followed by head-to-head competition. If necessary, a coin flip.
7. Post season host town will provide medals for 1st and 2nd place regular season champs and 1st and 2nd post season tournament champs for both LL and PL.
8. Post season host town provides umpires and game balls for post season tournament.
9. For regular season games, the home team provides umpires, game balls and is required to submit game scores.
10. All umpires should be familiar with HS softball/baseball rules, as well as IVL rules.
11. League Tournaments:
 - The Iowa Valley softball postseason tournaments shall be rotated from town to town alphabetically. To keep the league alive, each town is encouraged to take their turn. Early rounds may be played at the home of the highest seed, when possible, with the host town holding the semi-final and championship games on their fields(s).
 - In lieu of a preseason tournament, teams will be scheduled 2 “spring training” games the week of May 14, 2024. These games will be played by league rules but will not count towards regular season standings. If a game is canceled for any reason, it will not need to be made up. The regular season will start on Tuesday, May 21, 2023.

IOWA VALLEY LEAGUE COACHES GUIDE

1. POSTSEASON TOURNAMENT HOST FOR 2024 is Shellsburg. Each community will send \$80.00 **per team** League Fee to the host community to help with medals and umpires.
2. All teams will be scheduled two (2) “spring training” games the week of May 14th.
 - These games will be played by league rules but will not count towards regular season standings.
 - If a “spring training” game is cancelled for any reason, it will not need to be made up.
3. The regular season will start on Tuesday, May 23, 2024.
4. A single-elimination Post Season Tournament will start on Sunday, June 26th. Brackets will be determined by league standings and distributed by the league commissioner.
5. **Weather**
 - The Home team is responsible for notifying the Visiting team as soon as possible.
 - Check the [IVL 2024 - LL & PL Softball Master](#) for contact information.
6. **Makeup Games**
 - Please work hard to have your makeup games completed within 2 weeks.
 - If a game does not get made up during the regular season, it is considered a loss for both teams.
7. **Weekly Standings**
 - Current standings will be viewable on Gamechanger but will also be sent out weekly on Mondays. One representative from the home team should report results in the Gamechanger event for league visibility within 24 hours.
 - If Gamechanger is unavailable, you may email results to MelissaL.Werner@gmail.com or via text to 319.360.8915.
8. **Less Than 7 Players**
 - If a team knows they will have less than 7 players for a game in advance, please try to reschedule the game before game start time. Once it is game time, the team without enough players will be required to forfeit the game.
 - If your team shows up to play and you have less than 7 players (see rule above), you will need to forfeit the game due to low numbers. Coaches are encouraged to still play the game for experience.
 - **Special Note:** If the game is rescheduled the game and it doesn't get played - the team that had the original low roster will take a loss and the other team will be awarded the win.
9. **PONY LEAGUE ONLY:** The pitcher's circle exists as a basis for the "look-back" rule.
 - The look-back rule refers to the requirement that a runner on base does not "dance around" while the pitcher is inside the circle, has control of the ball and in no way is attempting to make a play on a runner.
 - For example, when a batter gets a hit or a walk and rounds first base, if the pitcher is in possession of the ball within the circle and is not attempting a throw or faking a throw attempt, the runner must either advance towards second base or immediately return to first. She cannot juke back and forth in order to draw a throw. If the runner continues to change direction towards first, then second, the umpire may call her out. Likewise, if she stops between bases waiting for the pitcher to throw to a fielder, as sometimes happens between pitches, and the pitcher is in possession of the ball within the circle and not attempting a throw, the runner may be called out by the umpire.
10. **PONY LEAGUE ONLY:** Infield Fly rule definition.
 - An Infield Fly is a fair fly ball (not a line drive or bunt) that, in the judgment of the umpire, can be caught by an infielder, pitcher, or catcher with ordinary effort and when there are runners on first and second or first, second, and third and less than two outs. When the umpire calls "infield fly" the batter is out, regardless of whether the ball is subsequently caught or dropped. The ball is live, and runners already on base may advance (at their own risk) if the ball is not caught or tag up and advance if it is caught.
11. 2022 All Star game will be held on **Friday, July 12th** hosted by Blairstown. More information will come as it is available.
12. The official Iowa Valley League 11” and 12” yellow softballs are the Dudley Balls with the Red raised laces.
 - LL ball is Dudley SBC-11 Y FP
 - PL ball is Dudley SB 12L Y RF FP
 - Pete Wilson at Decker Sports:

- Email: pwilson@deckersports.biz. Order at iowavalleyyouthbbalandsballleague22.itemorder.com
- Cell Phone: (319) 400-1240
- Team Line: (800) 728-7423

13. Where others have bought medals:

- M&H Advertising: Mike Hatcher: 533-3811
- Crown Trophy: (319) 294-0002
- Crown Awards: www.crownawards.com
 - To give an idea, with shipping, around \$4.00 each.
- Vinton Trophy & Awards: 319-214-1042 or Ashley@VintonTrophy.com