



The NWSL U12 Competition is for players who are (generally) between 8 and 11 years of age as December 31st, in the year the season commences, noting exemptions as granted by the NWSL committee.

Rules

- All games shall be played under the current Official Rules of Softball Australia unless otherwise stated in these rules.
- To ensure the games are played in a timely manner and the spirit of the tournament any apparent time wasting or breaches by teams is to be reported by the time keeper to the NWSL committee for review/sanctions (not expected).
- All Softball Victoria and NSWL policies which include but are not limited to the Zero Tolerance and the Members Protection Policy will be enforced.

Teams

- Players must be registered with Softball Victoria and one of the NSWL Associations/clubs either directly or on permit.
- Teams should have a minimum of nine (9) players
- Teams may be mixed gender
- Players can be substituted at change of innings only unless there is an injury.
- Teams may borrow players from the opposition or other teams to equal playing numbers as required to facilitate games
- A Designated Player (DP) shall NOT be permitted.
- ALL players must bat and field in every game, except when subject to illness or injury.

Pre-Game Rules

- First named team to take third base and field first.

Time Rules

- Games are 3 completed innings, with in the 1h15m timeslot allocated. All games must finish at the scheduled finish time even if they start late.
- Each team bats for ten (10) minutes per inning – regardless of the number of outs.
- The batter in the Box when 10 mins is called completes their turn at bat.
- Teams have 1 (one) minute for change over. Any team taking longer than this will have the time deducted from their next batting innings.
- The game consists of three (3) complete innings (each team bats and fields 3x per game)
- Time is taken by the official clock, which is held by an allocated time keeper.
- Pitchers may warm up during the 1-minute changeover but must be ready to play at recommencement of time.

Batting Order

- All players' names are to appear on the scoresheet in batting order.
- If any player is removed from the game, the batting sequence continues to the next batter.
- Each team continues to bat for ten (10) minutes regardless of the number of outs (continue to play as if always less than 2 out).
- All players must bat throughout the game.



- Batting line up continues (return to top) to bat until the full 10 minutes is completed.

Batting

- No intentional bunting
- After three (3) balls on the batter the coach (or nominated other) is called in to pitch.

Batting off Coach pitcher

- While the coach is pitching, the junior player pitcher shall remain behind the pitching plate and off to the side of the coach pitcher.
- No balls or strikes will be called from the coach pitcher. 3 pitches only to the batter. Common sense should be applied when the coach player is pitching to the batter; if one pitch is wayward, another should be permitted.
- While batting off the coach pitcher, a batter can only go out from hitting the ball and the ball being played out. If they do not hit the ball after 3 pitches they are considered retired (not out) for scoring purposes.
- Where a player needs, a coach may pitch without player pitcher first. Tee is permissible also where required.

Base Running

- Batters and runners may only run maximum of two (2) bases on a ball hit from the pitching of an coach pitcher (Note: this is to encourage players to hit the ball pitched by the opposition player and not the easier pitch delivered by the coach).
- Runners may not run home from 3rd base on a pitched ball not stopped by the catcher. (Note: this is to eliminate contact at home plate and to encourage teams to bat their runners in). ie. A runner must be batted home.
- Stealing is allowed, except where the Coach is pitching.

Scoring of Runs

- Any runs that cross home plate count.
- If the ten (10) minute timeframe has elapsed and there are any runners on base, those runners do not count.
- There is no need for the runners to run around the diamond and touch each base.

Game Management Rules

- There is NO intentional walk.
- There is NO DR permitted.
- The run ahead rule does NOT apply.
- Teams CANNOT declare their innings closed.
- If the ball is blocked outside 220 feet on an open field, it is three (3) bases (unless the runner has made it home prior to the ball becoming blocked – at which point they will be awarded home).
- There IS a Catcher Speed-up rule.
- The dropped third strike rule DOES apply – which for the purposes of clarity means a batter can run on a dropped 3rd strike, however batter is automatically out if there was a runner one first at the time of the pitch.
- The Infield Fly rule does NOT apply.
- Fielding changes AND substitutions are prohibited during the fielding inning (unless for illness or injury).
- The 'Hit by Pitched Ball' rule does NOT generally apply. Instead, it will be considered a ball on the batter. (However, if the batter is hurt they can be permitted to occupy 1st base)



Fielding

- A pitcher cannot pitch 2 innings in a row.
- A catcher cannot catch 2 innings in a row.
- A player should not field in the same position for 2 consecutive innings.
- No player, unless injured or unwell, can sit on the bench for the entire game.

Playing Field and Equipment (relates to t-ball also)

- The base paths shall be 60 feet.
- The pitching distance shall be 35 feet.
- A soft core 11" ball will be used, and is to be supplied by teams.
- Batting helmets must be worn by all batters, runners and on-deck batters and must fit properly. It is preferable for batting helmets to have chin straps and face guards.
- Fielding masks are allowed.

Coaches

- A maximum of two (2) coaches from the defensive team are permitted on the field to guide their players. They MUST be positioned behind the base lines.
- Coaches are only permitted on the field to verbally assist their players in defence. They must not physically assist their players.
- Coaches must wear the club shirt and be neatly attired.
- All officials must wear enclosed shoes.
- Any coach under 18 must wear a helmet with ear pieces while on the diamond.
- Coaches are not to approach the junior umpires during the game under any circumstance. All queries should be directed to the senior umpire.

Notes to Teams who play U12 Rules during their season.

Associations should be flexible in applying the competition rules and work within the intent of junior softball. Namely, the intent is to encourage maximum participation within a flexible environment for the enjoyment of all players. Thus, there will be NO forfeits in regards to lack of players. Teams will be permitted to play with fewer players or borrow without restriction from other teams. Moreover, the main consideration is to determine the most suitable game for each individual and to play them in a game that best meets their level of competence. While always adhering to the duty of care owed to young people, opportunities should be provided for the self-improvement and appropriate development of participants.
