

York North Loop House League Softball Rules

Version: 5-1-23

The following rules apply to **ALL YORK NORTH LOOP HOUSE LEAGUE SOFTBALL GAMES** unless otherwise specified.

The York North Loop is a unique relationship between 4 York Region Softball Associations who are unified in their goal to provide fun, safe, inclusive, and competitive, House League Girls Softball programming. The York North Loop consists of the Stouffville Softball Association, Richmond Hill Minor Softball Association, Aurora Diggers Softball Association, and Markham District Softball Association. A House League schedule is created each season for girl's age divisions U11, U13, U15, U17, U19 and U21, and home and away games are played at the respective Associations' permitted diamonds. The following House League set of rules will apply for each age division as shown. The Board of Directors of each association will review and update, if necessary, these rules on an annual basis.

All Softball Canada Rules (2022 version) are posted online here
(as of May 2023) -

<https://softball.ca/resources/2022rulebook/?section=19>

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Field Setup

Rule	U11	U13	U15	U17	U19	U21
Pitcher's rubber	35' (10.67m)	38' (11.58m)	40' (12.2m)	43' (13.1m)	43' (13.1m)	43' (13.1m)
Baselines	45' (13.7m)	55' (16.76m)	60' (18.3m)	60' (18.3m)	60' (18.3m)	60' (18.3m)
All foul lines, batter's boxes & pitching circle to be properly chalked	X	X	X	X	X	X
"Commit Line", five feet from 3rd base, between 3rd and Home Plate, perpendicular to the foul line, 1 foot long to be chalked	X					

Equipment

Rule	U11	U13	U15	U17	U19	U21
Ball Compression (max)/COR (min) shall be	375/.52	375/.52	375/.52	375/.52	375/.52	375/.52
Bats shall be of aluminium or composite construction	X	X				
Bats shall be approved per Softball Canada: any bat that has a current ISF, WBSC, ASA 2000/2004/2013 or USA Softball Certification Stamp.			X	X	X	X
Catchers must wear shin pads, chest protectors, face masks with throat guard, and catchers' helmets. All catchers are recommended to wear the appropriate athletic pelvic protector	X	X	X	X	X	X
Pitchers must wear defensive face masks while pitching.	X	X	X	X	X	X
All infielders are recommended to wear defensive masks.	X	X	X	X	X	X
Proper footwear must be worn during all games by players and coaches. No sandals, crocs or metal cleated shoes.	X	X	X	X	X	X
Batters/base runners must wear a batting helmet with cage and chin strap fastened under the chin	X	X	X	X	X	X
Blood Rule: All cuts must be covered and a change of clothes must be made if necessary. Reasonable time will be allowed.	X	X	X	X	X	X

Clothing & Jewelry

Rule	U11	U13	U15	U17	U19	U21
Player jerseys are provided by each Association and numbered shirts should be visible when batting. All players should wear their team shirts tucked in. Coaches can wear Association shirts as provided. Any player or coach wearing a sweater that has been defaced or altered may not be allowed to play. Players are encouraged to wear ball pants or acceptable athletic shorts.	X	X	X	X	X	X
It is recommended exposed jewellery such as wrist watches, bracelets, any type of earrings, and neck chains should not be worn due to potential injury. (NB Medical alert bracelets or necklaces are not considered jewellery)	X	X	X	X	X	X

Coach / Player Eligibility

Rule	U11	U13	U15	U17	U19	U21
Players must be registered with their home organization	X	X	X	X	X	X
Call-ups shall be drawn from the IMMEDIATE LOWER DIVISION from the team's host association within a maximum complement of nine players. Should a tenth player arrive during the game, they will be added to the bottom of the batting order and the game will continue with ten players. Call Ups must be designated on the score sheet. Once a player is called up, the call up must play, and play equally with the rest of the players on the team.	X	X	X	X	X	X
All coaches 18+ are encouraged to have a recent (within 2 yrs) VSC Police Check	X	X	X	X	X	X

Game Play

Rule	U11	U13	U15	U17	U19	U21
Teams are to be ready to play 15 minutes before scheduled start time with completed player lineups.	X	X	X	X	X	X
"First pitch" to be at designated start time. No forfeits will be granted unless to play would be considered unsafe.	X	X	X	X	X	X
Max number of Innings within time limits	5	5	7	7	7	7
Max runs per inning	5	5	5 (innings 1-4) & 7 (innings 5-7)			
No new inning to start after indicated number of minutes from the scheduled start time	75	75	90	90	90	90
Players may be added to the batting line up if they arrive late, at any time during the game	X	X				
Players who have not arrived by 1st pitch, will be added to the bottom of the lineup. If a player still has not arrived when it is their turn to bat, the coach can take an "out" or remove the player from the lineup.			X	X	X	X
Minimum number of players required to play	6	7	7	7	7	7
A 10th fielder may be added to outfield only	X	X				
NO INFIELD warm up before the game. Outfield or outside field of play only.	X	X	X	X	X	X

Completed Game

Rule	U11	U13	U15	U17	U19	U21
The home team will assign an official scorekeeper who will keep score for both teams. The visiting team's scorekeeper shall verify the score.	X	X	X	X	X	X
Maximum number of innings for completed game	5		7			
Minimum number of innings if called by umpire due to unsafe weather or lack of light	3 (2.5 if home team winning)		4 (3.5 if home team winning)			
In case of a tie in the standings at the end of the Regular Season, the tie will be broken as follows: 1. The record between the two teams including a. The team with the most wins, in head to head play. b. Total runs scored in all games, between both teams. 2. The most wins in league play. 3. Coin toss.			X	X	X	X
In the event of a rained out game, a reasonable attempt will be made to reschedule the game. After the game has started and it rains, it is up to the umpire's discretion whether the game is continued. If a game has not been cancelled by the convener by 5:00 pm (7:00 pm for late games) your team must show at the diamond or risk forfeiting the game. If games cannot be rescheduled, teams will be notified by the convener.	X	X	X	X	X	X
In order to ensure continued updates to divisional standings, the winning team must send the score sheet to the division convener or upload the score online within 48 hours after the finish of the game. Games sheets may also be scanned/photographed and sent to the division convener. Failure to remit game scores may result in a tie awarded instead of the actual score.	X	X	X	X	X	X

Offence

Rule	U11	U13	U15	U17	U19	U21
All team members present for the game shall bat. A batting order consisting of the first and last names, and numbers shall be entered on the official score sheet. Any players who arrive late (after their first turn at bat) MUST be added to the end of the batting order when they arrive.	X	X	X	X	X	X
Bunting is permitted	X	X	X	X	X	X
No bat throwing - it is an automatic out and the ball is dead. 1 warning per game per team will be given before the player is automatically called out and the play is dead.	X	X	X	X	X	X
Lead-offs are allowed after the ball:	Crosses home plate		Leaves the pitcher's hand			
If a runner is on 3rd, she cannot steal home. A lead off is allowed to allow the skill to develop. If a play is made on the runner at 3rd base (throw or intent to throw - "fake throw") the runner may attempt to steal home. If the runner passes the Commit Line, five feet from the third base bag towards home plate, she is committed to continue to home plate. If she passes the Commit Line without a throw (or attempt to throw), Base Runner is out for a Lead-Off.	X					

Dropped Third Strike

Rule	U11	U13	U15	U17	U19	U21
Batters can run on a dropped 3rd strike, if 1st base is unoccupied and less than 2 out, or at any time once there are 2 out. If there is a dropped 3rd strike behind the 1st base line, the runner may touch the white base and the 1st baseman may play the orange base to reduce injury.			X	X	X	X
On a dropped 3rd strike, the batter is automatically out and the ball remains alive	X	X				
Once the defensive pitcher gains control of the ball in the 8-foot circle, runners must commit themselves to whichever base they are going and continue directly to that base. If the runner stops, breaks stride or changes direction, this will be considered a lead off and the runner will be called out. If the pitcher throws or threatens to throw towards a base then this is considered a play on the runner and the runner cannot be called out for "leadoff" .	X	X	X	X	X	X
The fourth pitch to a batter with a count of 3 balls and 0 strikes shall be a strike. Any other count on the batter of balls and strikes, this rule does not apply. REASONING - To promote batters to swing instead of accepting a walk. Instil confidence in new pitchers.	X					
With 2 out and catcher on base, coaches may (are encouraged to) replace catcher with the last out runner/batter.	X	X	X	X	X	X

Pinch Runners and Sliding

Rule	U11	U13	U15	U17	U19	U21
With 2 out and catcher on base, coaches may (are encouraged to) replace catcher with the last out runner/batter.	X	X	X	X	X	X
A pinch runner is permitted for an injured player and should be the last out or furthest in the batting order. If the coach is aware that a pinch runner is required at the beginning of the game, they must make the umpires & opposing coaches aware before the game begins.	X	X	X	X	X	X
An injured batter must successfully reach base prior to a pinch runner being substituted.	X	X	X	X	X	X
For plays at all bases, the runner should slide if the defensive player has the ball or is about to receive the ball. If the runner remains on their feet and deliberately, with great force, crashes into the defensive player the runner shall be declared out. The ball is dead and all other runners must return to the last base touched at the time of the collision. If the act is determined by the umpire to be flagrant, the offender (runner) may be ejected from the game.	X	X	X	X	X	X

Defence

Rule	U11	U13	U15	U17	U19	U21
A pitcher will be allowed 5 warm-up pitches initially and 3 warm-up pitches for each reappearance.	X	X	X	X	X	X
No hop/jump pitches permitted	X	X	X	X	X	X
Pitchers may use the "Step Back" or "Start Back" start method. Pivot or Push-Off Foot must remain in contact with the pitching rubber throughout the start motion.	X	X	X	X	X	X
A pitcher's pivot foot must remain in contact with the ground (or even with the plane of the ground if there is a hole in front of the pitcher's plate).	X	X	X	X	X	X
A pitcher may pitch a maximum of 3 innings per game but no more than 2 consecutive innings. After 6 innings of play, the pitching rule is reset.		X	X	X	X	X
A pitcher may only make two (2) appearances pitching in the same inning. This constitutes one (1) inning pitched	X	X	X	X	X	X
Call ups may pitch 1 inning if they are of lower division age group.	X	X	X	X	X	X
No intentional walks permitted, otherwise all runners awarded one extra base.	X	X	X	X	X	X
On any overthrow that leaves the field of play*, or is a blocked ball, the runner will be awarded 2 bases from the time of the fielder's throw. From Softball Canada (5.11) - When the ball is thrown and leaves the playing field or is blocked, the award is from the time the ball left the fielder's hand. If two runners are between the same two bases, the award is based on the position of the lead runner. If a runner touches the next base and returns to their original base, the original base they left is considered the "last base touched" for the purposes of an overthrow award. *"Field of play", on most diamonds, is the area bounded by the fencing. If a diamond does not have full fencing, this area is the extension of the backstop fencing, parallel to the first base and third base foul lines.	X	X	X	X	X	X

Infield Fly Rule

Rule	U11	U13	U15	U17	U19	U21
Infield fly* rule is in effect for all divisions unless otherwise specified.	X	X	X	X	X	X

*Softball Canada: Sec. 5.1.26

INFIELD FLY

1. Is a fair fly ball (not including a line drive or a bunt):
 - a. When first and second, or first, second, and third bases are occupied.
 - b. That can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort.
 - c. Before two are out.
2. The pitcher, catcher, and any outfielder that positions himself in the infield on the play shall be considered infielders for the purpose of this rule.

NOTE:

1. When it becomes apparent that a batted ball will be an infield fly, either umpire shall immediately declare, "INFIELD FLY, IF FAIR-THE BATTER IS OUT," for the benefit of the runners.
2. The ball is live and runners may advance at the risk of the ball being caught, or retouch and advance after the ball is touched, the same as on any fly ball.
3. If the hit becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul.
4. If a declared infield fly is allowed to fall untouched to the ground, and bounces foul before passing first or third base, it is a foul ball.
5. If a declared infield fly falls untouched to the ground outside the baseline, and bounces fair before passing first or third base, it is an infield fly.

Fielder Positions and Lineup

Rule	U11	U13	U15	U17	U19	U21
All players must be played equally and fairly in the field. Over the course of a game, each player must play at least one inning on the infield and one inning in the outfield.	X	X	X	X	X	X
No player can sit a second inning until every player has sat out 1 inning.	X	X	X	X	X	X
Coaches must use the official lineup sheet provided by their Association. The lineup sheet indicates scheduled positional play for all players and it must be presented to the home plate umpire if requested. The lineup sheet and the score sheet must be signed by both umpires.	X	X	X	X	X	X
A minimum of two players should rotate the catcher's position during each game. Each player, with the exception of the pitcher, shall play in their assigned infield position for at least 1 complete inning in the infield within the first 3 innings. With the exception of the pitcher, no player shall play any position more than 2 innings in a row.			X	X	X	X
Defensive OBSTRUCTION shall be applied per softball Canada rules (ref 5.10.2). Where a collision occurs between a batter base runner or base runner and a defensive player due to obstruction, the batter/runner shall be awarded a base and shall not be subject to penalty (i.e. ejection). Example: Defensive players standing on or near a base or basepath, such that the base runner or batter base runner is impeded (even if no contact occurs), on a ball hit to the outfield, are committing OBSTRUCTION.	X	X	X	X	X	X

Playoffs

Rule	U11	U13	U15	U17	U19	U21
Should the game end in a tie, the next inning and subsequent innings will be played according to international tie breaking rules. The last batter in the order will begin the inning on 2nd base. The maximum runs per inning will be 5. At the end of each inning (both top and bottom must be played) the score will be examined and the team scoring the most runs will be determined as the winner of the game . The game ends once one team scores more runs than the other	X	X	X	X	X	X
Any player who plays less than 3 games of the regular season will not be eligible to play in the playoffs. Any medical exceptions must be applied for and approved by three members of the Board of Directors plus the applicable division convenor one week prior to the playoffs.	X	X	X	X	X	X

Call-Ups

Rule	U11	U13	U15	U17	U19	U21
A team may call up a maximum of 2 players from the immediate lower division, and must be called from an eliminated team first. If 7 regular players are present at the beginning of the game, the callup may not play. Call-ups must be designated on the game sheet prior to the start of the game. Call-ups not designated at the start of the game cannot be added once the game has started. If a regular team member arrives after the start of the game, they may be added to the bottom of the batting order until a complement of nine players is reached. Should a tenth player arrive after the start of the game they will be substituted in where the first call-up was and the call-up shall be removed from the game and may not re-enter. Call -ups must wear their own respective jerseys.	X	X	X	X	X	X
The Home Team throughout the entire playoff series will be the team that finishes higher in the regular season schedule.	X	X	X	X	X	X

Umpires

Rule	U11	U13	U15	U17	U19	U21
Umpires are provided by the host association, and they must be used. Face masks, chest protectors and chin pads to be supplied and worn by all plate umpires.	X	X	X	X	X	X
The Home team is to supply the plate umpire if an umpire has not been provided. The Visiting team may supply the base umpire if an umpire has not been provided. If umpires are provided by the association, they must be used. Face masks to be supplied and worn by all plate umpires. If necessary, a coach may umpire.	X	X	X	X	X	X
In the event of a game being cancelled due to an umpire not being available, and a makeup game can not be scheduled, each team will be awarded a tie (a single point).	X	X	X	X	X	X
ALL UMPIRES' DECISIONS ARE FINAL.	X	X	X	X	X	X

Disputes and Unruly Behaviour

Rule	U11	U13	U15	U17	U19	U21
<p>Other than asking for a check swing if a base umpire is present, there are only 4 situations that warrant an appeal. A single coach must initiate the appeal & only one appeal per game per team.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Missing a base, or touching the white portion or first base when a play is being made at that base, 2. Leaving a base early when a fly ball is caught, 3. Attempting to advance to second base after making a turn at first* 4. Batting out of order. <p>*"Attempting" means it must be a clear intention to try to run to 2nd base. Overrunning 1st Base into <i>Fair</i> Territory is allowed, assuming a prompt return to the white side of 1st base.</p>						
NO RULE BOOKS ALLOWED ON THE FIELD of play DURING A GAME.	X	X	X	X	X	X
Only one (1) designated coach from each team may discuss any problems with the umpire(s) throughout the course of the game, i.e. no parents. The coach must be identified prior to the start of the game. It is the coach's responsibility to control the parents of their team and ask them to abide by the rules and respect the umpires. EFFECT: The coach and or parent may be ejected from the park by the umpire.	X	X	X	X	X	X
Coaches cannot enter the field of play unless time is called & permission granted by the umpire.	X	X	X	X	X	X
Official team coaches and players are allowed in the dugout. Spectators & parents are not allowed.	X	X	X	X	X	X