

WHITBY GIRLS SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION
2017 House League & Playoff Rules
(Last Revised on February 8, 2017)

Rule 1. Jewellery

1.1

No jewellery may be worn by players or officials during warm-ups, practices and games. A Medic Alert bracelet/necklace is the only exception. Note: Metal hairclips are considered jewellery.

Rule 2. Playing Field

The following pitching and base length distances apply:

Division	Ball Size	Pitching (ft.)	Bases (ft.)
Mite (U10)	11"	30'	45'
Squirt (U12)	11"	35'	55'
Novice (U14)	12"	38'	60'
Bantam (U16)	12"	40'	60'
Midget (U18)	12"	43'	60'

2.2

It is the responsibility of the home team coach to declare a rain out, or a field unfit to play, until 90 minutes prior to the scheduled game. At this time, the home team Coach/Convenor or Scheduler is to advise the visiting team Coach, the Convenor, and the Umpire Scheduler of the decision to cancel. After this time, the decision to cancel rests with the umpire at the diamond.

In 2016, the Umpire Scheduler is **Al Betts – contact at 905-809-6201**

2.3

Double Bag - Where a double bag is used at first base the batter-runner shall be declared safe if she contacts the orange part of the bag before a defensive player successfully completes an out by tagging the batter-runner with the ball or by contacting the white part of the bag. On balls hit to the outfield, when no play is being made at the double bag, the batter/runner may touch either portion of the base. The batter/runner, progressing through first base, shall not be declared safe until she has legally obtained a base and the umpire has called time. A batter/runner who contacts the orange part of the bag may progress to second base on her own initiative, and at her own risk, when a defensive player over-throws the base at first. It shall not be necessary for the batter-runner to tag the white part of the bag in the latter circumstance.

2.4

In Mite and Squirt divisions, outfielders must not be on the skinned portion of the infield before the pitcher has released the ball. Infractions will be ruled as a "No Pitch".

2.5

In Mite and Squirt divisions, outfielders must throw the ball to an infielder to make a play, they can not make a play at a base on their own.

Rule 3 Equipment & Uniforms

3.1

Equipment supplied by the WGSA is official. Substitute equipment that is "Softball Canada, ASA and or NSA Approved" may be used. Hardball, Baseball, Little League and T-Ball bats may not be used.

3.2

A player must be wearing their House League Team sweater and long pants or ball shorts to participate in any game. The only hats/visors permitted are WGSA issued.

Note: Jeans, Capri's or other pants with snaps or any metal adornments (e.g. tearaways, track pants with zippered legs, etc.), that could cause injury, are NOT permitted.

3.3

Team sweaters must be visible and tucked in or tied at the hip at all times during the game.

Exception 1: At the discretion of the umpire sweaters or light jackets may be worn in inclement weather, but may / should be removed for batting.

3.4

Players in all divisions must provide their own, CSA Approved, batting helmets with face mask and chin straps.

3.5

As per Softball Canada Rule 3 Section 6, all catchers must wear a mask, helmet, throat protector, shin pads and chest protector. A pelvic protector is strongly recommended for all players. Anyone catching for a pitcher warming up **MUST** wear an approved face mask.

3.6

On field coaches, players and volunteers must wear fully enclosed shoes.

Rule 4A. Players

4.1

Only players registered with the WGSA may play. There is no exception under any circumstances.

4.2

All players who are present at the start of the game will be included in the batting order. Players arriving late will be added to the bottom of the batting order provided their team has not started through the batting order a second (2nd) time. Players arriving after any of their team mates have had a second at-bat may not play that game.

4.3

During the course of each game no player will sit a second inning until every player has sat at least one inning, no player shall sit a third inning until all players have sat a second inning, etc. Where it may be necessary for a player to sit more than 2 innings per game, due to the size of the team, the coach will distribute such requirements equally among players from game to game.

4.4

Fair play (up to and including Squirt Novice): Coaches will alternate players between infield and outfield positions on an equitable basis throughout the game. No player will play the outfield a second time before all the other players have played in the outfield at least once, subsequently no player will play outfield a third time until all players have played outfield a second time. No player will play the same position more than twice in a game. Note: Pitcher and Catcher are considered infield positions.

Exception: Novice division – pitchers and catchers can play 2 innings in row, but then must play outfield on their next rotation on defense. Novice catchers may also make a third appearance as a catcher, but not before the 6th inning.

4.5

Coaches will keep line-up sheets for every game, including any revisions, in order to verify compliance with 4.3 and 4.4 above. In the event that the above rules 4.3 or 4.4 are abused it shall be brought to the attention of the Division Convenor for further action. Failure of a coach to comply with fair play rules may result in forfeiture of the game and/or suspension of the coach as determined by the Protest Committee. In the event of a breach of the fair-play rules, time will be called and an opportunity to rectify the breach will be permitted, at that time. In the event that a resolution is not reached, the game is to be continued with the coach who initiated the complaint having the option to protest to the convener. During the play-offs, coaches must be prepared to submit and or exchange line-up sheets before, during and at the end of each playoff game.

4.5a

All coaches will use a standard line up form. Sample provided at the beginning of the season and will be made available on the website. This form must be available for the convenor to review at each game.

4.6

If a player is sick or injured and cannot play a defensive or offensive position she must be removed from the game and is not considered an "out". The Player may re-enter provided they do so before a complete inning has passed. (ie: if injured in the middle of the 3rd inning they must return before the beginning of the 5th inning or they will not be eligible to play.)

Rule 4B. Call-ups

4.7

All player call-ups must be approved by the convenor. The coach is responsible for notifying the convenor of their need for call-ups at the earliest opportunity.

4.8

A maximum of 3 players may be called-up for any game.

Exception: Bantam and Midget divisions may use 4 call-ups.

4.9

A player may only be called-up if her regular team is not playing.

4.10

A call-up is not allowed to pitch the first inning.

Exception: Midget division.

4.11

Call-ups may only come from the division immediately below and must be played. In order to avoid a default, if one team has sufficient players and additional call-ups, that coach will designate call-ups that are to be transferred to the opposing team. This is the essence of good sportsmanship.

Any abuse of the call-up rule as deemed by the Convenor may result in forfeiture or the game may be replayed with board approval.

4.13

All Call-ups must use their regular team jersey from their own division.

Rule 5. The Game

5.1

For the Squirt division and below, if no umpire is available, volunteers may be used if both teams agree. For Novice through Midget divisions games will be rescheduled.

5.2

Only the players, 3 Coaches and 1 Scorekeeper are allowed on the bench or in the dugout. All coaches must adhere to the WGSAs Police Check Policy. The scorekeeper and any other adult volunteer must also adhere to the policy if they are to reside in the dugout during the game or assist with the team on the field on a regular or consistent basis. Only a WGSAs coach may address an Umpire.

5.3

A team must start and finish a game with a minimum of 8 players.

Exception: Mite teams may start with 7 players and in case of injury finish with 6 players.

Exception: In case of injury during the game a team may finish with 7 players.

5.4

In the event of a default, and upon the desire of the teams, an exhibition game will be played to normal game time limit. A minimum of 16 registered players must be available to play. A score of 7-0 will be recorded against the defaulting team.

Note: If both teams have insufficient players (including call-ups), then both teams are considered in default and will be charged with a loss. This game will not be rescheduled.

5.5

Mite through Novice divisions must play with ten (10) defensive players (if available). The extra position shall be assigned to the outfield.

5.6

Unlimited defensive substitution, including the pitcher, is allowed.

5.7

The game must start with a minimum of 6 assigned players plus call-ups.

5.8

The game will be played to a maximum of 7 innings or the time limit, whichever is reached first.

Exception: Mite division games will be played to a maximum of 5 innings.

5.9

All Game times are as per the schedule below. No new inning is to start after curfew. The Scheduler, Division Convenor, Umpire/s, The Board or it's assignee/s may adjust these times as required (eg: environmental conditions).

	Mite	Squirt	Novice	Bantam Early	Bantam Late	Midget Early	Midget Late
Start	6:30pm	6:30pm	6:30pm	7:00pm	9:00pm	7:00pm	9:00pm
Curfew	7:45pm	8:00pm	8:00pm	8:30pm	10:30pm	8:30pm	10:30pm
Minutes	75	90	90	90	90	90	90
Min. Reg. game	2 innings	3 innings	4 innings	4 innings	4 innings	4 innings	4 innings

5.10

A "5-run per inning" mercy rule will apply.

5.11

A suspended or called game shall be considered regulation and complete as per the schedule in rule 5.9. If the Home team is ahead, the last half of the inning need not be played.

5.12

Base stealing is not allowed in the Mite divisions. In the Mite division, a player may not leave the bag until the ball is hit. In Squirt, runners may not steal until the ball crosses Home Plate or into foul territory. In Squirt a called "Ball 4" will be a 1 base award for the Batter-runner who may not steal another base on that play. All other players advance at their own risk.

5.13

The infield fly rule is not applicable to the Mite division.

5.14

In order to expedite play, if the catcher is on base with two out or 4 runs in, the coach may ask for time out to replace her with pinch runner. The pinch runner must be the player furthest from batting in the order.

Exception: At the Squirt division, catcher pinch runner is mandatory with 2 out or 4 runs in.

Exception: At the Mite division, catcher pinch runner is mandatory with 1 out or 3 runs in.

5.15

In the Mite division, one defensive coach is permitted in the outfield (behind the players) during the game.

Rule 6. Pitching

6.1

A pitcher may only pitch according to the following rules:
(One (1) pitch is considered as an inning pitched or appearance)

Mite and Squirt Divisions

A maximum of two (2) appearances per game per pitcher.

The appearances may not occur in consecutive innings.

In the first 3 innings, the team must use 3 different pitchers.

The earliest that a pitcher of the 1st or 2nd inning can make her 2nd appearance is the 4th inning. The earliest that a pitcher of the 3rd inning can make her 2nd appearance is the 5th inning

Note: Mite – the pitchers only get 3 warm up pitches per inning

Novice Division

A maximum of three (3) appearances per game per pitcher.

A pitcher cannot pitch more than two consecutive (2) innings.

The earliest that a pitcher can make her 3rd appearance is the 6th inning.

Note: Appearance guidelines apply to the catcher position as well.

Bantam Division

A maximum of four (4) appearances per game per pitcher.

A pitcher cannot pitch more than three consecutive (3) innings.

The earliest that a pitcher can make her 4th appearance is the 6th inning.

Midget Division - no restrictions

Exception: Mite - the following shall apply.

For the first 4 weeks of the season, coaches will pitch (5 pitch, as outlined below) to their own team for the first 2 innings of the game. In the 3rd inning, players will pitch to their own team. If a 4th inning is necessary, the coach will pitch to their own team.

For the final Eight weeks of the season, it will be regular play.

Five Pitch - Batters will be granted 5 pitches or 3 swings to hit a fair ball or will be declared out. A foul tip is considered a pitch not a swing. NO WALKS will be issued. The defensive player in the pitching position must stand on either side of the offensive pitcher until the pitch is released. If the Coach is hit with a batted ball it will immediately be called dead and will be count as a pitch or swing against the batter

In the Mite, Squirt and Novice divisions, if the pitcher hits **3** batters in one inning, they are replaced for that inning. In the event (likely at Mite level) a ball rolls slowly in and hits a batter, this does not warrant a base for the batter.

Rule 7. Batting

7.1

In Mite and Squirt divisions the dropped 3rd strike rule is not in effect. Whether the ball is caught or not the batter is out.

7.2

In Mite division, beginning with week 5 and continuing until the end of the season, a fairly hit ball for a single will receive a one (1) base award (batter-runner may advance to 2nd) provided no outs were made on the play. At the time of the hit, runners move at their own risk and only advance without risk of being put out on the award when forced.

7.2a

In Mite division, at week 5 the ball count will start at 0 balls and 1 strike.

Rule 8. Scoring

8.1

All score sheets are to be signed by the umpire.

8.2

The home team score sheet is the official record of the game.

8.3

Both teams are to report the score to the statistics sheet on the website within 24 hours of completion of the game.

Rule 9. Playoffs

All the aforementioned rules are in effect except as follows;

9.1

The team finishing lower in the division standings will set up the diamond. "Home Team" will be decided prior to the start of the game by a coin toss.

9.2

If two teams finish the regular season in a tie for 1st or 2nd place a tiebreaker game will be played. Any other ties will be resolved 1st by head to head play and 2nd by defensive runs allowed. Any other ties will be settled with a coin toss.

9.3

If a playoff game is tied after regulation or the time limit the game will continue inning by inning until the tie is broken subject to the umpire's decision. A tiebreaker rule will be used where a team's last out in the previous inning will start as a runner on 2nd base.

9.4

All championship games are to be played to completion (i.e. 5 or 7 innings) up to a maximum of two (2) hours. After regulation innings, or time limit, the above tiebreaker rule will be used (rule 9.3). The mercy rule is still in effect.

Rule 10. General

10.1

All coaches are accountable to the Division Convenor and the Protest Committee. Any controversy regarding the application or interpretation of these rules must be announced in the form of a protest to the game umpire before the next pitch occurs and then referred to the Protest Committee, whose decision shall be final. Referral must be made through the Division Convenor in writing following the game in question.

10.2

A coach who fails to complete team evaluation forms and deliver them to the Division Convenor by season end will not be eligible to coach the following season.

10.3

The Umpire shall have complete discretion and decision concerning the conduct of any game and shall be given a copy of these rules by the umpire in chief prior to the commencement of the game. The coaches have a responsibility to remind the umpire of any division specific rules prior to the start of the game and may not be ejected for showing league rules to the Umpire.

10.4

Softball Canada rules shall govern the conduct of any game except where house league rules, as per above, have amended Softball Canada rules. One copy of the Softball Canada Rule Book shall be provided to the Division Convenor.

10.5

In an effort to ensure that Select players honour their house league commitments Select players who miss a house league game may be ineligible for their next select team tournament unless and until the player receives permission from their House League Division Convenor to participate.