

West Alabama Girls Fastpitch Softball



LEAGUE RULES 2021

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League Wide Rules – Updated Spring 2012;2015;2016;2020;2021

West Alabama Girls Fastpitch Softball 2021

REGISTRATION & PRE-SEASON

- 1) All coaches are required to attend the coach's clinic before the beginning of the season or forfeit their right to coach. ARPA / Coach Safely Initiative Training online must be completed by park directors and by ALL coaches. The Coach Safely Initiative completion form must be kept on file.
- 2) All rosters have to be signed, with birthdates, before the start of the season.
- 3) All time lines have to be met and fees paid before a schedule is handed out.
- 4) Parks that have more than ONE team in any age group must conduct a team draft by the coaches of each team. Either the park president or a member of the park board should be present to ensure team drafts are equal and fair. A head coach may reserve no more than 3 players (this includes their own child) prior to starting the team drafts.
- 5) Only 3 players from a travel ball team can play on the same WAGFS team.
- 6) All girls have to be on a league roster before the start of the season. The rosters for each team you will be playing will be distributed prior to your first game. There are no late additions to the rosters allowed.
- 7) Any girls that are active players on their middle school team roster are not eligible for league ball whatsoever. Once a girl plays on a middle school roster, she is not eligible for league play, even if the middle school season is over. "Active" does not include middle school managers.
- 8) **Age:** The date that determines the cutoff for ages for WAGFS is January 1st. As an example, if a child was 6, 8, 10 or 13 on January 1st, she would be eligible for play in 6u if 6 years old, 8u if 8 years old, 10u if 10 years old or 13u if 13 years old regardless of their age during the actual season.
- 9) ALL Parks participating in WAGFS shall sanction each team in their prospective park thru USA. Any rule not covered in this document shall revert to USA rules during league regular season and league tournament play. Any rules pertaining to ALL-STAR play shall revert to USA rules.

REGULAR SEASON

- 1) **Equipment:**
 - a. Each team will provide an approved ball for any scheduled regular season or tournament game.
 - b. Bats for USA & USSSA are legal for WAGFS league play. *During All-Stars only USA bats are legal.
 - c. Each batter must have a helmet with a facemask and chin strap.
 - d. Each infield defensive player including the pitcher must wear a defensive facemask
 - e. The catcher will be in full catchers gear. The catcher shall wear a NOCSAE approved head protector, and approved mask with throat protector, a body chest protector and shin guards.
- 2) **Minimum number of players:** The minimum number of players required to play without incurring a penalty in any age group is nine players. A team can play with eight players, but there will be a one out penalty in any inning where the ninth spot in the batting order is reached. The out will not be called until the ninth spot in the order is reached. If a team cannot field at least eight players, then they must forfeit the game. 6u, 8u & 10u age groups may field bonus defensive players but that does not change the league minimum players rule. Example: If a 10u team only fields eight players for a game, then there would only be one out penalized at the ninth spot in the batting order and then they would go back to the top of the batting order.
- 3) **Pick up Players:**
 - a. A team can pick up as many as two players to make the minimum number required for that age group, but not more than the minimum. For example, in the 13u or 10u age division you can pick up one or two players to make the no penalty minimum of nine players, but you cannot pick up one or two players to make ten total players.
 - b. All pick-up players MUST bat last in your batting line up and play in the outfield. Roster players arriving late to the game must immediately replace pick-up players at the pick-up player's spot in the batter order and the pick-up player must leave the game, they are free to play anywhere the coach designates (keeping in mind rules of pitching rotation).

West Alabama Girls Fastpitch Softball 2021

- c. All pick-up players MUST be an active player in the West Alabama Girls' Fastpitch league (WAGFS) for the season they are being picked up.
For example: it is not okay to pick up a player not on a roster in the fall, just because she was on a roster in the spring.
- d. The pick-up player must also be from the same age division or a younger age division.
For example – if your pick up player plays 13u but is still age eligible to play 10u – she cannot be picked up for the 10u team. There are no exceptions to this rule.

4) Player Participation:

- a. The entire roster of the team will make up the batting order. Each player on the roster must participate in the game defensively.
Example: If a team has thirteen players, then they will have a thirteen player batting order and all of the girls must play defensively in the game. This rule applies to every age group of the league. Each age group has free substitution.
- b. Because every child must be in the batting line-up and proper substitutions are not possible, the following rules will govern changes to the batting order during a game:
 - i. Between innings, a child may be pulled from the batting order without penalty to the team but that child may not re-enter the game. This includes injury, illness or necessity to leave the ballpark.
 - ii. Once an offensive inning has begun (the first pitch of the inning has been thrown), any player who cannot make their at-bat shall be declared out and play will proceed to the next batter or the next inning whichever is appropriate. A child who misses an at-bat due to injury and is penalized with an out for that at-bat may re-enter the game at a later at-bat without further penalty. If the child does not return to the game, there is no further penalty at her next at-bat.

5) Complete games:

- a. Regular season games can end in a tie. Regular season games that end in a tie will not be played-off or extra innings provided. Regular season games that are interrupted after they have started because of weather or other issues that may arise do not have to be rescheduled for completion.
- b. If two-thirds of a scheduled games time or innings are played, based on Table 1, and the game has to be interrupted based on the umpire's decision or league director's decision due to weather or some other issue such as field malfunction, then the game shall be deemed as a complete game. If the game is called in the middle of an inning past the two thirds point of the game, then the winner is determined by going back to the last completed inning. A completed inning is one where the home team batted.

Age Group	Scheduled Time Limit	Scheduled Innings	Complete After (see 5-b)	Complete After (see 5-b)	Mercy Rule
6u	1:00	6	40 minutes	4 innings	21 Runs after 3 innings 11 Runs after 4 innings
8u	1:15	6	50 minutes	4 innings	21 Runs after 4 innings 11 Runs after 5 innings
10u	1:15	6	50 minutes	4 innings	21 Runs after 4 innings 11 Runs after 5 innings
13u	1:20	6	54 minutes	4 innings	21 Runs after 4 innings 11 Runs after 5 innings

- 6) **Conduct:** A team, a coach, or a parent can and will be penalized for unsportsmanlike conduct or creating a problem in or for the WAGFS. This includes cursing, refusal to shake hands, cheating, verbal or physical abuse of umpires, and/or the verbal or physical abuse of girl's participating within WAGFS. Punishments range from being barred from regular season games, being barred from tournament games, and in severe cases being removed from your coaching duties.

West Alabama Girls Fastpitch Softball 2021

- 7) **Protests:** Protests of West Alabama Girls Fastpitch Softball Games will be governed by USA Rule 9: Protests with the following exceptions:
- a. The fee to protest a game will be \$100 cash to be delivered to a League Director or WAGFS tournament director or official.
 - b. A protesting team losing the protest forfeits the \$100 protest fee to WAGFS.
 - c. At least one League Director of a league not directly involved the protest will hear the protest. That Director may decide the protest or confer with other Directors before making a decision.
 - d. WAGFS may designate a Protest Committee for the hearing of protests.
 - e. The most current published rules of WAGFS will be the first resource for guidance on protest issues followed by the current published rules of USA.

End of Season Tournament

- 1) Tournament will be blind draw for seeding.
- 2) Tournament Games: Tournament games should be played to a conclusion. If the game is tied and time becomes a factor or the game is tied and is interrupted, then the game should be suspended, rescheduled and restarted until a conclusion is reached. Suspended games are picked up exactly at the point they were paused. International tie breaker rule is in effect for tournament games. (At the start of each extra inning, a runner/last out is placed on second base.)

ALL-STAR SELECTION

- 1) WAGFS shall send up to two (2) teams to play in USA sub district, district, and possibly state tournament play. The number of teams will be determined by the winning coach of the league tournament.
- 2) The head coach of the all-star team from each age group will be the coach whose team wins the season ending tournament. If that coach chooses not to coach the team the option will go down the line to coaches in the order of how their team finished in the WAGFS season ending tournament.
- 3) ALL AGES GROUPS will conduct a tryout, which will be eligible to all girls on WAGFS rosters during the current spring season as long as they were on the proper USA rosters also. All WAGFS eligible girls are encouraged to try out. USA has rules that are specific pertaining to all-star rosters. For example, the child's name cannot be on two rosters during the all-star period. Also, players must play all stars in the age group that they played regular season ball (must play in age group that their name is on roster with USA during regular season).
- 4) Each park, may decide to field their own all-star team consisting of players not selected in the above tryouts, but they must play any tournaments thru USA.

*****If a rule is not covered in the League Rules, then it defaults back to USA Rules.*****

West Alabama Girls Fastpitch Softball 2021

6 & UNDER RULES SPECIFIC FOR AGE GROUP

THE GAME:

- 1 hour or six innings, whichever comes first.

THE BALL:

- 10", Yellow-Optic, Worth Sof-Dot RIF Level 1 (SR10RYSA) or USA 10" RIF level 5 will be used

INNINGS / PLAYING TIME:

- A maximum of Ten (10) batters may bat per half inning or until the defense records three (3) outs, whichever occurs first.
- There are no automatic two outs with the last batter. There must be an out on the lead runner. Touching home plate constitutes getting the lead runner out.
- No new innings will start after 1 hour or six innings, whichever comes first.
- An inning in progress must be finished unless the game is called due to weather. The home team must get to bat, unless there is no possibility that they could win the game numerically.

LAY-OUT OF THE FIELD:

- 30' Pitching distance, front of rubber to back of home plate.
- 50' Base paths, there will be a half-way mark between bases.
 - A player between bases when the ball becomes dead will either advance to the next base or return to the previous base depending on which side of the half-way mark she is on.
- To signify outfield positions, measure off 10' from the back of each base and draw a line that runs parallel to the base.
- A 16' (8' radius) circle will be drawn around the pitcher's rubber using the center of the front edge as the axis. A player inside the circle must have control of the ball or a player must have control of the ball in front of the lead runner for a play to end.
- 6' Arch from front of plate should be drawn for dead balls. A dead ball is still counted as one of the players 5 swings.

PLACEMENT OF THE TEE:

- The Tee should be placed at the front of home plate. Half of the base of the tee should be on home plate and the other half should be on the ground in front of home plate facing the pitcher.

NUMBER OF DEFENSIVE PLAYERS:

- The defensive team shall have no more than 6 infielders. Up to (4) players shall be positioned in the outfield at least 10 feet behind the baselines until the ball is batted. Only 10 players will play on defense at one time, however, each team may substitute freely at any time.

STEALING / SLIDING:

- No head first sliding.
- No stealing. If a player leaves the base before the ball reaches home plate when coach is pitching or before the ball is hit while the batter is hitting off the tee, the player will be called out.

PITCHING RULES FOR 6U:

- Each batter will get three pitches from a coach. If the batter does not hit the ball on the 3 pitches then she will be given two swings at the ball from a tee. No bunting in this age group. A total of five (5) swings for each batter. If ball is not put into play on the five (5) swings an out is recorded (The batter does not strike out if she swings and misses on the pitches from the coach). When using a tee for the batter, if the bat touches any part of the ball and the ball rolls in fair ground then it is a fair ball, if it does not pass the 6 foot arc or goes into foul ground it is a dead ball. Touching any part of the ball could mean that the bat touches the tee also. If the bat never touches the ball and only hits the tee, it is a dead ball and the swing counts.
- Each coach pitches to their own batters and the coach must have at least one foot in contact with the pitching rubber until they release the ball.
- Each player that plays the position of pitcher must stay completely in the 16' circle around the pitching

West Alabama Girls Fastpitch Softball 2021

mound with both feet in the circle until the ball is hit.

- The child playing defensive pitcher must not interfere with coach-pitcher's ability to pitch to the batter and must stand to the left or the right of the coach-pitcher.
- The defensive pitcher may not stand behind the coach-pitcher.
- If a batted ball strikes a coach-pitcher or the coach-pitcher otherwise touches the ball after it has been batted, the ball shall be dead, the batter is awarded first and any runner forced to move to the next base may advance. Runners not forced to advance must return to the same base they were at when the ball was pitched.

THROWS/OVERTHROWS

- There will be no underhand rolling of the ball. Throws on defense must be attempted to be made overhand. If an out is made by rolling the ball the batter/runner or the base runner will be called safe.
- A ball thrown from an infield position towards first base in an attempt to get the batter out that is overthrown to the first baseman and goes past the 3 foot running lane is considered a dead ball at this point. All runners will be allowed one additional base. The ball must go past the 3 foot running lane line to be considered an overthrow.
- Play shall stop when any defensive player has possession AND control of the ball in front of the lead runner AND time is awarded by the umpire. The ball is dead and all base runners must stop at the base that the umpire rules they are entitled. If the defensive player has possession AND control inside the pitchers circle and time is awarded, the ball is dead. If the base-runner has started advancing toward the next base and is past the half way mark, then the next base shall be awarded to the base runner.

COACHING:

- Each team is allowed one offensive coach on the first base side line, one on the third base side line, one coach that pitches (as needed) and one at home plate to return pitched balls to the pitching coach or to set the ball on the tee.

ON DECK BATTER:

- The on deck batter will stand in the on deck circle behind the batter at the plate.

*****If a rule is not on this sheet, it defaults back to USA Rules.*****

West Alabama Girls Fastpitch Softball 2021

RULES SPECIFIC FOR AGE GROUP

8 & UNDER

THE GAME:

- 1 hour and 15 min., or six innings whichever comes first.

THE BALL:

- ANY 11" Yellow-optic ball with a 375# compression and a .47 CORE

Innings / Playing Time:

- A maximum of Ten (10) batters may bat per half inning or until the defense records three (3) outs, whichever occurs first.
- There are no automatic two outs with the last batter. There must be an out on the lead runner. Touching home plate constitutes getting the lead runner out.
- No new inning will start after 1 hour and 15 minutes, or 6 innings whichever comes first.
- An inning in progress must be finished unless the game is called due to weather. The home team must get to bat, unless there is no possibility that they could win the game numerically.

Lay-out of field:

- 30' pitching distance, front of rubber to back of plate.
- 60' base paths: There will be a half-way mark between bases.
 - A player between bases when the ball becomes dead will either advance to the next base or return to the previous base depending on which side of the half-way mark she is on.
- To signify outfield positions, measure off 10' from the back of each base and draw a line that runs parallel to the base. Have outfielders stand behind the line.
- A 16' (8' radius) circle will be drawn around the pitcher's rubber using the center of the front edge as the axis.

Number of Defensive Players:

- The defensive team shall have no more than 6 infielders. Up to (4) players shall be positioned in the outfield at least 10 feet behind the baselines until the ball is batted. Only 10 players will play on defense at one time, however, each team may substitute freely at any time.

The catcher:

- The catcher must be in the catchers box when contact is made with ball in order for a caught ball to be called an out. The catcher may squat or stand but must be in the box upon contact. The catchers box is considered 8.5' wide (outside to outside of batters boxes and 10' deep from the back of batters boxes towards backstop.

Pitching Rules for 8/Under:

- The pitcher may throw up to 4 pitches. A batter may strike out, but cannot be walked.
- If a batter is hit by a child's pitch, she may be awarded first base.
- Once a child is struck by a child-pitcher and chooses to continue the at-bat, the coach-pitcher will immediately come on to finish the at-bat.
- A child may not be awarded first by being struck by the coach-pitcher.
- After four pitches the count on the batter is no longer a factor. A coach will then throw three pitches from the pitching rubber.
- Once a two ball count is reached on a child pitcher, the coach will come on to pitch their three pitches.
- Batter cannot foul out on third pitch. Batter will continue to until swing/miss or ball in play.
- A batter cannot walk on a coach pitch.
- The pitching coach must make every effort not to interfere with a hit ball or the defensive players on the field.
- If you throw a pitch in the 1st or 2nd inning of a game, you cannot come into the next game to pitch until the 3rd inning.

West Alabama Girls Fastpitch Softball 2021

- Each player that plays the position of pitcher must stay completely in the 16' circle around the pitching mound with both feet in the circle until the ball is hit.
- The child playing defensive pitcher must not interfere with coach-pitcher's ability to pitch to the batter and must stand to the left or the right of the coach-pitcher.
- The defensive pitcher may not stand behind the coach-pitcher.
- If a batted ball strikes a coach-pitcher or the coach-pitcher otherwise touches the ball after it has been batted, the ball shall be dead, the batter is awarded first and any runner forced to move to the next base may advance. Runners not forced to advance must return to the same base they were at when the ball was pitched.

Coaches:

- When playing defense, there will be 1 defensive coach allowed behind the plate umpire to retrieve missed balls by the catcher. The defensive team may also have two coaches on the field, one down the 1st base foul line and the second one down the 3rd foul line in foul territory.
- When playing offense, teams are allowed to have 3 offensive coaches on the field. One coach as the first base coach, on the first base side line, one coach as the third base coach, on the third base side line, and one as the pitching coach, who is allowed on the field only when it is his or her turn to throw the three coach pitches.

Stealing/Sliding/Base runners

- No head first sliding.
- No stealing in the 8/Under age group.
- A base runner that leaves the base before ball reaches the plate or is hit by the batter will be called out.
- Play shall stop when any defensive player has possession AND control of the ball in front of the lead runner AND time is awarded by the umpire. The ball is dead and all base runners must stop at the base that the umpire rules they are entitled. If the defensive player has possession AND control inside the pitchers circle and time is awarded, the ball is dead. If the base-runner has started advancing toward the next base and is past the half way mark, then the next base shall be awarded to the base runner.

Overthrow to First:

- If a ball is overthrown to first base – the batter en route to first can advance to second at their own risk.
- If the batter advances beyond second safely and the play ends – the runner will be placed back on second base.
- If runners are on a base at the start of the play – they are free to advance with no restrictions.

Miscellaneous Rules:

- If there is a rule question, and the rule is not addressed on this sheet, the ruling defaults back to official USA rules.
- Each age group has free substitution.
- INFIELD FLY RULE DOES NOT APPLY TO 8U (Amended 1/2016)
- Bunting is allowed for 8u, but only off the child pitcher. All regular bunt rules would apply. A bunt attempt off the coach will result in a dead ball. All base runners must return to the base they were at when the play began and the pitch is counted against the coach's count of three pitches. (A DRAG BUNT is a BUNT). Slapping is NOT a BUNT.

On deck batter:

- The on deck batter will stand in the on deck circle behind the batter at the plate.

*****If a rule is not on this sheet, it defaults back to USA Rules.*****

West Alabama Girls Fastpitch Softball 2021

10 & UNDERS - RULES SPECIFIC FOR AGE GROUP

GAME TIME:

- 1 hour and 15 min., or six innings whichever comes first.

THE BALL:

- ANY 11" Yellow-optic ball with a 375# compression and a .47 CORE

INNINGS / PLAYING TIME:

- An inning will consist of 3 outs or (6) runs, whichever comes first.
- No new innings will start after 1 hour; 15 min., or six innings whichever comes first.
- An inning in progress must be finished unless the game is called due to weather. The home team must get to bat, unless there is no possibility that they could win the game numerically.

LAY-OUT OF THE FIELD:

- 35' Pitching distance, front of rubber to back of home plate.
- 60' Base paths.
- A 16' (8' radius) circle will be drawn around the pitcher's rubber using the center of the front edge as the axis.
- A player inside the circle must have control of the ball or a player must have control of the ball in front of the lead runner for a play to end.

NUMBER OF DEFENSIVE PLAYERS:

- Ten defensive players will be used. The 10th player will be an extra outfielder.

PITCHING RULES FOR 10U:

- If you throw a pitch in the 1st or 2nd inning of a game you cannot come in to the next game to pitch until the 3rd inning.

STEALING / SLIDING:

- Stealing is allowed... A player may advance (steal) one base per pitch when the ball leaves the pitcher's hand. If a batter walks, first base is considered her one base for that pitch.
- A player may steal home.
- A player is liable to be put out if she comes off the base.
- Bunting and Slap Hitting is allowed.
- The pitcher or catcher may be replaced as a base-runner without penalty by the last player in the batting order that had a complete at-bat. A complete at-bat is either a score or an out whichever was more recent.

OVERTHROW TO FIRST:

- If a ball is overthrown to first base – the batter en route to first can advance to second at their own risk.
- If the batter advances beyond second safely and the play ends – the runner will be placed back on second base.
- If runners are on a base at the start of the play – they are free to advance with no restrictions.

LOOK BACK RULE:(to wait, to be uncertain, to hesitate)

- LOOK BACK RULE IS IN EFFECT.
- The pitcher must have possession of the ball in the circle and NOT attempting to make a play on any base runner.
 - When the act of any base runner is to challenge the pitcher intentionally or unintentionally.
 - Where the base runner stops, changes directions and stops again.
 - Where the base runner stops and waits.
- Rule violation is an automatic dead ball, the offending player will be called out, and the other runners must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the "dead ball".

West Alabama Girls Fastpitch Softball 2021

DROPPED THIRD STRIKE:

- Dropped third strike will be enforced as follows: When the catcher fails to catch the third strike before the ball touches the ground and there are 1) Fewer than two outs and first base is not occupied at the time of the pitch or 2) any time there are two outs. The batter/runner may attempt to safely reach first. The batter/runner may be put out by tagging the batter/runner before they reach first, by executing a force play (at first with less than two outs or at any possible base with two outs) or when the batter/runner gives herself up by leaving the playing area and entering the dugout.
- In WAGFS play, this will be treated as a stolen base and the one stolen base per pitch will apply to the batter/runner and any runner already on base. Runners may not move up more than one base on a pitch even in the case of an overthrow or error by the defense.

COACHES, ADULTS, NON-PLAYING CHILDREN ON THE FIELD

- When playing offense, you are allowed to have 2 Offensive Coaches on the field. One as a first base coach, on the first base side line, and one (1) as a third base coach, on the third base side line.
- No Defensive Coaches allowed on the field.

PICK UP PLAYERS:

- A team can pick up 2 pick-up players within the West Alabama Girls Fastpitch League, that are in the same age group or a younger age group, to fill out the required number of players.

*****If rule is not on this sheet, it defaults back to USA Rules.*****

West Alabama Girls Fastpitch Softball 2021

RULES SPECIFIC FOR AGE GROUP

13 & UNDER

GAME TIME:

- 1 hour and 20 min., or six innings whichever comes first.

THE BALL:

- ANY 12" Yellow-optic ball with a 375# compression and a .47 CORE

INNINGS / PLAYING TIME:

- An inning will consist of three outs or six (6) runs, whichever comes first.
- No new innings will start after 1 hour, 20 minutes or six innings of play whichever comes first.
- An inning in progress must be finished unless the game is called due to weather. The home team must get to bat, unless there is no possibility that they could win the game numerically..

LAY-OUT OF THE FIELD:

- 40' Pitching distance, front of rubber to back of home plate.
- 60' Base paths.
- A 16' (8' radius) circle will be drawn around the pitcher's rubber using the center of the front edge the pitching rubber as the axis.

NUMBER OF DEFENSIVE PLAYERS:

- Nine defensive players will be used.

PITCHING RULES FOR 12/U:

- If you throw a pitch in the 1st or 2nd inning of a game, you cannot come into the next game to pitch until the 3rd inning.

STEALING / SLIDING:

- Stealing, bunting, slap-hitting techniques are allowed.
- The pitcher or catcher may be replaced as a base-runner without penalty by the last player in the batting order that had a complete at-bat. A complete at-bat is either a score or an out whichever was more recent.

ON DECK BATTER:

- The on deck batter will stand in the on deck circle behind the batter at the plate.

LOOK BACK RULE: (to wait, to be uncertain, to hesitate)

- LOOK BACK RULE IS IN EFFECT.
- The pitcher must have possession of the ball in the circle and NOT attempting to make a play on any base runner.
 - When the act of any base runner is to challenge the pitcher intentionally or unintentionally.
 - Where the base runner stops, changes directions and stops again.
 - Where the base runner stops and waits.
- Rule violation is an automatic dead ball, the offending player will be called out, and the other runners must return to the last base legally touched at the time of the "dead ball".

DROPPED THIRD STRIKE:

- Dropped third strike will be enforced as follows: When the catcher fails to catch the third strike before the ball touches the ground and there are 1) Fewer than two outs and first base is not occupied at the time of the pitch or 2) any time there are two outs. The batter/runner may attempt to safely reach first. The batter/runner may be put out by tagging the batter/runner before they reach first, by executing a force play (at first with less than two outs or at any possible base with two outs) or when the batter/runner gives herself up by leaving the playing area and entering the dugout.

COACHES, ADULTS, NON-PLAYING CHILDREN ON THE FIELD:

- When playing offense you are allowed to have 2 Offensive Coaches on the field. One (1) as a first base coach, on the first base side line, and one (1) as a third base coach, on the third base side line.

If is not on this sheet, it defaults back to USA Rules