

2026 Westfield Recreational Softball Rules

8U

(as of 5/18/2026)

A. The Playing Field/Equipment

1. 60' between bases with 30' baseline hash marks
2. 35' to pitcher's plate with 8' radius pitching circle
3. Foul lines, batter's box and base coach boxes per IHSAA Rulebook
4. 11" optic yellow ball with red stitching required
5. Batting helmet with faceguard is required, chin straps are strongly recommended.
6. Facemasks are required for **all players** in the field

B. Pitching Regulations

1. Player Pitch: 8U players may pitch the first two (2) pitches to each batter during the first two (2) innings of the game. (Maximum two pitches per hitter.) *This is not required for the first two (2) weeks of the season, but after that, coaches must encourage players to pitch.*
 - a. A player may only pitch a maximum of one (1) inning per game, to encourage each team to allow multiple girls to pitch.
 - b. While the player is pitching, strikes **will not count**.
 - i. Batters should be encouraged to swing at the player's pitch if it is close (i.e., not rolling on the ground or way too high).
 - ii. Umpires should acknowledge if a player's pitch is a strike as they would in a normal game, to encourage confidence in the player.
 - c. If the hitter hits off a player pitcher and it is fair, it is considered a live ball.
 - d. After the first two pitches, the remaining pitches will be coach pitch (for the batting team) for that hitter.
2. Coach Pitch: The coach has five (5) remaining pitches.
3. **Strike Zone:** From the top of the batter's shoulder to the bottom of the batter's knees.
 - a. **In Coach Pitch, strikes are called only on swings, unless the maximum number of pitches is reached.**
4. A pitcher will be allowed three (3) warm-up pitches when the game starts and when a new pitcher enters the game.
5. The 8U Pitcher's wind-up must start with both feet in contact with the rubber, facing the batter.
6. The Coach-Pitcher will remain off the field while the 8U player pitches.
7. The Coach-Pitcher must start from the pitching rubber, and the ball must be released towards the batter while within the 8' pitching circle.
 - a. *The Coach-Pitcher does not have to maintain contact with the pitching rubber while in pitching motion.*

- a. All players must play at least three (3) defensive innings per game.
 - b. Players must also play at least one inning in the infield and one inning in the outfield.
 - c. Rotation of players to all positions is strongly encouraged in 8U.
7. Teams may use up to 10 defensive players.
8. Outfielders must have a **starting** position in the outfield (grass area) before the ball is pitched.
9. Two defensive coaches are allowed on the field and must be positioned in the outfield— with their feet in the grass.
 - a. Coaches cannot encroach on the infield during play.
 - b. Coaches may run into the infield to coach up a player after a play, but the coach must return to the outfield (quickly) before the next pitch. We encourage coaches to provide players with positive, constructive feedback to support learning the game.
10. **Bat Throwing:** First and second time = a warning is issued to the coach and player.
 - a. Subsequent throws are up to the umpire's discretion but can include the player being called out.
11. A maximum of five (5) pitches, with unlimited fouls on the last pitch, or three (3) strikes shall count as an out.
 - a. There will be **NO WALKS**.
12. There is no infield fly rule, no bunting, no stealing and no dropped third strike rule.
13. An umpire will call time when the ball is held by a defensive player, stopping the lead runner or no further play is being made (*Umpire's judgement*).
14. An umpire will call time when the ball is in control by any defensive player with both feet within the pitcher's circle, intentionally or unintentionally.
15. After a ball is hit into play, if there is an overthrow to first base, the (hitting) runner may advance only one base.
 - a. If there are other runners on the field, they may only advance one base as well.
 - b. Runners may **not** advance if a second overthrow occurs during the same play that is directed at the pitcher.
 - c. **Overthrow** - any throw that sends a ball untouched past its intended recipient or target
16. Coaches are asked to ensure that catchers are ready to go at the beginning of each inning.
17. Each team should have someone (16 and older) behind the catcher/umpire to catch passed balls to throw back to the pitcher. (This will help speed up the game.)

D. Batting & Running

1. Runners may leave the base after the ball crosses home plate, anticipating a hit ball but must return if the ball is not hit.
 - a. Runners may be called out for leaving early. (*At the discretion of the umpire*)
2. Any hit ball that lands in either batter's box is a foul ball.
3. A player removed from the game due to injury will **NOT** be allowed to return to the game unless agreed upon by both coaches. The injured player will be skipped in the batting order without penalty.
4. **Sliding:** Head-first slides are not allowed and will result in an out. Diving back to base is not considered a head-first slide.

E. Other Rules

1. All other softball rules will be in accordance with IHSAA Rules, and the Umpire's call will be final.
2. All safety and conduct rules will be in accordance with WYSI and will be enforced by the Umpires and the Commissioner.
3. **Rainouts/Suspended Play:** Will be determined 30 minutes prior to the first game time by the League Commissioner. During game times, Coaches and Umpires will determine this.
 - a. Lightning Policy will be in accordance with WYSI Lightning Policy
 - b. In the event the game is called before the fourth inning, for whatever reason, the game will resume at a later date and will continue just as the game never stopped (runners will return to bases, the pitcher will have the same pitch count and the outs will continue, etc.).
 - c. In the event the game is called after the beginning of the 4th inning, for whatever reason, the winner will be determined by going back to the last full inning and the team with the highest score wins (unless the home team is batting and is winning at the time the game is suspended, then the home team would be the winner.
 - d. In the event the game was tied, the game will be considered a tie.
 - e. In the event of a rainout needs to be made up, the Recreational Softball Commissioner will coordinate the make-up dates.

F. Tournament Seeding

1. The 8U tournament seeding is determined by a random draw. (All teams make the tournament.) However, all regular season scores must be reported to the WYSI Recreational Softball Commissioner.

G. Umpire Requirements

1. All umpires on the field must be at least 16 years of age.
2. All 8U games will have one (1) umpire only.
 - a. Exception: 8U Championship will have two (2) umpires.
3. Only Head Coaches may privately and respectfully discuss calls that are made on the field of play.
 - a. Head Coaches are responsible for the actions of the Assistant Coaches, players and fans.
 - b. All issues with any umpire must be directed to the Umpire Director and the WYSI Recreational Softball Commissioner.