

# *Vienna (VGSL) Girls Softball League*

## *10U Division Rules*

*(last updated Spring 2011)*

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**The Official ASA rules as modified by these rules shall govern in all other situations.**

### **General Rules and Guidelines**

1. Arrive at the game at least 30 minutes prior to its start.
2. Home team must call the teen ump coordinator if games are rained out, if possible, at least 2 hours before game time. This is to eliminate an umpire fee.
3. Field preparation responsibilities - Home team is responsible for grooming the field beforehand, including raking, and lining the field. The home team is also responsible for dragging the infield after the game. Coaches should designate field prep coordinators for each home game who would perform those duties so coaches are free to conduct their business.
4. The home team should supply a new 11-inch softball; the visiting team should supply a ball of the same size in good condition.
5. Teen umpires shall be provided by the league when possible. In the absence of available umpires, both coaches should mutually agree on a person to handle the position of substitute umpire and be prepared to start the game on time. All substitute umpires behind home plate must wear protective gear. Otherwise, the umpire should stand behind the pitcher.
6. So that we do not lose our umpires, coaches are strongly cautioned to refrain from arguing with the umpire. Coaches should also caution parents and girls to refrain from commenting out loud regarding any calls made by the umps.
7. **Proper procedure for clarifying umpire calls** – Only the Head Coach (or the acting Head Coach) of each team may ask for clarification of an umpire's call (whether the ump is a teen or a substitute). Head coaches may approach the umpire prior to the start of the next pitch for clarification. The decision of the ump is final. Coaches should explain to their assistant coaches and parents that both the teen umps and are parent umps are doing their best. No umpire should ever be made to feel uncomfortable by someone who disagrees with a call. Equally important is that we all set good sportsmanship examples to our children on how to act when we disagree with a call.
8. The game is to begin once each team has at least 7 players. Less than the minimum and the game is forfeited. In this case, both coaches make adjustments to rosters and play a practice game to give the participants a chance to play.

9. **No new inning will start after 1:45 minutes from the game start time.** All games **MUST** end within 2:00 hours of the start time. A new inning begins when the home team makes its last out.

**8- run inning(s)** – Are based on time. Our time limits are: any inning beginning after 1:30 is 8 run limit; no new inning after 1:45; drop dead at 2:00. This eliminates any dispute about when an inning might be extended to an 8 run limit and provides for at least one (and sometimes 2) 8-run innings. (Meaning that if on or at 1 hour 30 minutes it is ruled "8-run" and an inning is finished quickly and time indicates that it has not reached 1 hour and 45 minutes, you may start another 8-run inning. However, if that inning cannot be completed, then the final score reverts back to the last completed inning (see revert rule below)).

**Revert back rule (See pg. 81 ASA rulebook, section 6, paragraph A) -** An inning must be complete by 2:00, or that inning is voided and the score reverts back to the score at the completion of the last complete inning.

10. Each game shall consist of 6 innings. An official game consists of at least 3 innings. Incomplete games of less than 3 innings that have to be called are considered suspended and are picked up where they left off – same score, same base runners, lineups, etc. However, if an incomplete game is due to time constraints (as opposed, say, to weather), the game shall be considered official.
11. If lightning is seen and thunder heard in the area, the game is to stop immediately and the field cleared. Game is not to resume until at least 30 minutes have passed from the last sighting of lightening. Refusal to follow these strict rules is grounds for suspension of a coach(es) at the discretion of the division's director or VGSL's Board of Directors.

### **Participation Rules and Guidelines**

12. Up to 11 players can be on the field at once: pitcher, catcher, four infielders and five outfielders. Outfielders are to be on the grass at least 10 feet beyond the baseline until the ball is hit or passes the batter. If a team is missing players, then both teams should field the same number of girls. The coach with fewer players may offer to let the opposing team field more players (up to 11) so that girls are not sitting on the bench. Teams with more than 11 players may play the extra girls in the outfield without requiring them to sit on the bench.
13. Lineups are to include every girl present. Girls who show up late are to be added to the bottom of the lineup after the opposing coach and official scorekeeper are notified. Each player shall bat in order whether or not they are playing in the field.
14. Baserunners are not to be substituted except for injury. An exception may be made in the case where there are two outs and the runner is scheduled to play catcher the next inning. If a pinch runner is used, it can only be the girl who made the most recent out.

15. Play girls at various positions throughout the game while taking into consideration their safety (e.g., it could be hazardous for a less-skilled girl to play first base). Coaches are strongly encouraged to equalize playing opportunities and positions assigned. Don't restrict girls only to the outfield. **No girl shall sit two consecutive innings unless injured (opposing coach and umpire must be informed in this case).**
16. Free substitutions are allowed defensively during a dead ball, following proper notification to the umpire by the coach at any time during the game.

### **Pitching Rules**

17. The pitcher's rubber shall be 35 feet from home plate.
18. Both feet of the pitcher must remain in contact with the pitching rubber at all times prior to the forward step.
19. To keep the game moving, coaches should ensure that catchers are dressed before the start of an inning; pitchers are limited to 5 warm-up pitches; eight if replacing a pitcher; but none if it is the second time in an inning for the girl to pitch.
20. Keep visits to the mound to a minimum. On the third visit, the pitcher must be replaced.
21. Pitchers are limited to 2 innings of the first four innings and unlimited thereafter. Although, a pitcher may not pitch the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, & 5<sup>th</sup> innings in succession. Any pitch during an inning shall constitute a full inning of pitching (e.g., a pitcher who faces one batter in an inning has pitched one inning). However, a pitcher may pitch, be replaced, and return *the same inning* and have that count as one inning of pitching.

### **Batting, Running, Scoring Rules**

22. Players at bat, on the bases, and on deck must wear helmets WITH ASA APPROVED CHIN STRAPS AND FACE GUARDS. HELMETS SHOULD BE REMOVED ONLY AFTER ENTERING THE DUGOUT. All jewelry (including post earrings) should be removed prior to games. Umpires may stop play and ask a player to remove jewelry so coaches should have players comply with this rule before the game starts. Medic alert necklaces may be worn but should be taped down under the jersey.
23. Bunting is permitted.
24. **Teams are restricted to 5 runs per inning but 8 run limit in a called last inning (see 8-run rule and revert back rule for further clarification).** Play, however, should continue if there is a live ball situation after the fifth run has scored (e.g., if a batter has hit a ball into the outfield with runners on base, the batter could conceivably circle the bases for a 'home run.' However, only the maximum allowed runs for that inning shall be entered into the scorebook.)
25. **Batters shall make every effort to move out of batters box if there is a play on a runner at home plate.** Umpires have the discretion to call the runner out if it is

determined that the batter interfered with the play at the plate, whether inadvertent or on purpose.

26. Bases shall be 60 feet apart.
27. Batter-Runners are to tag the ORANGE bag (where available) located in foul territory at first base, while the fielder makes contact with the white base.
28. The No-Walk Rule will be in place at the start of the season. This works as follows: after 4 balls, the batter's coach/assistant coach comes in to pitch to the batter. The strike count remains the same (if there are 2 strikes when the coach comes in to pitch, the coach is now pitching with 2 strikes). The batter either strikes out or hits the ball. Coaches should discourage girls from not swinging in hopes of getting 4 balls. If the pitch looks close, it is to the girl's advantage to swing. Girls are not going to learn how to hit a girl-pitched ball by waiting only for coach's pitches. At a time determined by the 10U Director, regular pitching rules will go into effect to prepare players for All Stars, summer league and 12U. At this time, walks will be allowed and there is no coach pitching after 4 balls.
29. If a batter is hit by a pitch, the girl has the choice of taking first base or continuing to hit.
30. The NEW 10U Rule pertaining to a hit batter is as follows:
  1. When a pitcher hits a batter, if the batter elects to continue hitting, at that point the coach comes in to pitch. In essence a hit batter is the same as a ball 4.
  2. Hit batter means Coach comes in to Pitch. Whichever Coach was already scheduled to pitch that inning.
31. Batters cannot advance to first base on a dropped third strike.
32. Runners are permitted to advance as many bases as possible on any over thrown ball as long as the ball is still in play prior to it being returned to the pitching circle.
33. There is no infield fly rule.
34. Runners are *encouraged* to slide on any 'plays' at *every* base. However, runners are not forced to slide. If the runner chooses NOT slide at home plate, they MUST avoid contact with the Defensive player. Runners may not run into the defensive player at home plate. If a runner chooses to slide then contact with the Defensive player is permissible as long as it is done in the natural course of trying to safely reach home plate.
35. Runners are permitted to leave their base only after a pitched ball has left the pitchers hand. Players who leave the base early shall be returned to their base after the first infraction. A second infraction is cause for the runner being called out.
36. Stealing of 2<sup>nd</sup> base and home is not permitted. As catchers become more skilled at throwing to second, the division director may amend the rule and allow stealing of second base midway through the season.
37. Once a runner reaches a base and then steps off the base, as to advance to the next base, the runner may continue to the next base until the ball is in the pitching circle. Once the ball is in the pitching circle, the runner must either return to the prior base or continue to the next base. If the ball is not yet back in the Pitching

Circle and the runner returns and touches the previous base, the runner is stuck on that base and can no longer advance. Runner can not advance on the throw back to the pitcher.. HOWEVER, if the throw is missed or goes outside the pitching circle then the ball is live and the runner can advance at their own risk. Ball has to be outside the circle. If dropped inside circle runner can not advance. If wild throw or throw where hits pitcher and then rolls outside circle, then runner can try to advance if they want to. Runner can not leave the base until the ball is thrown and subsequently missed or leaves circle.

## **Other Rules**

1. Bats----Double Wall and 100% Pure composite bats are not permitted. Metal bats, as well as hybrid bats are acceptable as long as on the ASA approved list.
2. Coaches should remain in Dugout or just outside the Dugout (in the field of play) as long as they are up against the fence or the fence is within reaching distance. Coaches should not be in the stands or sitting/standing behind home plate.
3. A post-season tournament shall be held in the Spring season. There is not a Fall Tournament in 10U.
  1. Tournament Rules

The following are a few rules and guidelines that we will follow for the Tournament:

All normal 10U Rules apply.

Following changes will be in effect:

### **Time Limit**

If an inning is started by 1:45 (no new inning rule), that inning will be played out with no drop dead at 2:00.

### **Tie Games**

In the event of a tie after six innings, we will go to International Tie-Breaker rule. Under this rule, at the beginning of each team's at-bat the last batter from the previous inning is placed on 2nd base. It is not sudden death. Each team has an opportunity to bat each inning. The game ends when one team is ahead at the end of an inning.

We still have the time limit. **If an inning is started by 1:45, that inning will be played out with no drop dead at 2:00. If the game is tied at the completion of the inning that started by 1:45 and 2:00 has passed, the next inning will be ITB, regardless of whether six innings have been played.**

4. The two coaches should endeavor to play games as scheduled. Should a large number of players be gone because of school holidays or widely reported illnesses, the division director should be consulted so that a game can be rescheduled. However, lack of one or two players being available is not cause for postponing or canceling a game.
5. The winning coach is responsible for reporting game scores to the 10U Division Director within 24 hours of the game.