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# AAA Softball Rules

## Falmouth, ME Little League - 11U

### Age Eligibility

- A player's age as of December 31 determines the age in which the player is eligible to play the following year.
  - Players must be no older than 11 years of age on December 31st of the previous year to be eligible to play Falmouth's AA Softball.
  - Players 10 and older may try out for Majors teams.
  - Players who turned 12 before Dec 31st of the previous year will not be eligible for AAA.

### General

- Games shall start no later than 15 minutes after scheduled start time.
- No half-inning shall start later than 1hr 45 minutes after the scheduled start time.
- Coaches should rotate positions equitably. The only exception is for players who are not able to safely play positions like Pitcher, 1st, or 3rd bases.
  - All players must play each position at least once per season.
  - No player may sit out more than 1 inning in a 3 inning game, or 2 innings in a 5+ inning game.
  - Coaches may decide based on the most effective method, whether to rotate player positions per inning or per game.
- The score may be kept by the coaches. Score books are not required.
- Batting helmets must be worn and must have a face cage.
- Face masks must be worn by pitchers and catchers.
  - Masks at 3rd and first aren't mandatory, but encouraged.

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## Offense

- Batters will play by the normal 3 strikes and 4 balls rule.
- If the pitcher pitches 4 balls, the coach will step in to pitch, re-starting the ball count, but maintaining the existing strike count. Players may walk if the coach pitches 4 balls.
- Strike zone is shoulder to knees, and 3" on either side of the plate.
- 3 outs and the inning is over.
  - Alternatively, the inning is over if the entire roster has been at bat in the inning.
  - Alternatively, the inning is over after 5 runs have been scored in the inning.
- A continuous batting order will be used regardless of whether a player has sat out the inning.
- No on deck batting is permitted unless there is a fenced-in, on-deck area and a coach, or parent designated by the coach, is instructing the player from outside of the fenced-in area.
- Runners observe normal rules with regards to running bases.
- Stealing, subject to limitations mentioned below, is allowed.
  - Stealing is not permitted on 1st (no dropped 3rd strike rule).
  - Stealing is NOT permitted on a wild pitch, but is permitted on a caught ball and passed ball. A Wild Pitch is one that the catcher cannot reasonably catch. A Passed Ball is where the catcher should have caught the ball, but did not. The Umpire, or the head coach of the defending team will call these if a controversy arises. Stealing is NOT allowed on wild pitches.
  - A runner may only steal one base at a time and may not advance on an overthrow that resulted from their attempted steal.
  - Runners may not lead off of the base, they must remain on the base until the pitch has crossed home plate.
    - A player first receives a warning for leading off and must return to the original base, and is out the second time it happens.
  - Runners may steal home, but there may be no collisions.
    - Catchers may not intentionally block the plate but may try to catch throws in an appropriate manner.
      - In such a case, the runner must slide.

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- No sliding into first base. If so, the runner is out.
  - Runners MUST slide leg-first into other bases if the defensive player is making a play at that base.

## Defense

- All players are allowed and encouraged to pitch.
  - A player may elect not to pitch.
  - Coaches may require pitchers demonstrate the ability to get the ball over the plate before being permitted to pitch in a game.
- If the pitcher pitches 4 balls, the coach will step in to pitch, re-starting the ball count, but maintaining the existing strike count. Players may walk if the coach pitches 4 balls.
- Players are permitted to pitch a maximum of 4 balls before the coach steps in to pitch.
  - Players who have pitched 4 walks (or coach step-ins), or 4 hit batters, will be retired for the game.
- A maximum of 9 players play the field.
  - Outfielders shall be positioned in the grass.

## Miscellaneous

- **CONFLICT RESOLUTION:** There should be no conflicts between coaches, parents, spectators etc. If you witness an unruly or aggressive person or potentially volatile situation (coach, parent, spectator, etc.) the head coach of the team with the unruly person should take charge and ask that person to stop or leave. If the unruly person is a head coach, then the umpire should ask the coach to stop and calm down. If that fails, end the game and report it to the Little League Board immediately. NO ONE should get into any type of conflict in front of the kids. STOP THE GAME.

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- **FIELD AND DUGOUT SAFETY:** While in the dugout, no climbing on the benches or fences AND no player may have a bat in their hand at any time except when preparing to leave the dugout for their turn at bat, or except in a fenced-in on-deck area under the supervision of a coach or an assigned parent. This is a real safety issue and must be constantly monitored by coaches. No one is allowed outside the dugout during the inning other than the defensive team, the base coaches, the hitter and baserunners, and a coach pitcher if necessary.
  - **CLOSED FIELDS:** When the fields are closed, the fields are closed. This decision will be made by the Town of Falmouth or Little League Board and must be adhered to by the coaches. The decision to close the fields will be posted on the town website and communicated via email whenever possible.
  - **UMPIRES:** Umpires are generally coaches or parents. The league does attempt to get certified umpires but they are in high demand. There should be NO complaining to umpires. They are volunteering their time and we need to respect that. Umpires can stand behind the plate or behind the pitcher (wherever they feel most comfortable).

All other rules follow USA Softball Rules: <https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Softball>

