

CORTLAND SOFTBALL LEAGUE  
**8U FARM DIVISION RULES**

## Goal

To teach the fundamentals of softball and to develop a positive attitude towards sports and team play. **OUR MOST IMPORTANT GOAL IS TO HAVE FUN!**

## Conduct Rules

1. The goal of the Cortland Softball League is to teach the fundamentals of softball and to develop positive attitudes towards sports and team play. Most importantly, we want to foster a playing environment where everyone has fun.
2. Teamwork and building an enjoyable experience for all the girls in the league is our desired goal.
3. Coaches are expected to know and abide by all rules.
4. Coaches are responsible for the safety and conduct of their team.
5. Good sportsmanship and good behavior are expected from all players, coaches, and spectators, always.
6. Cheering for your own team is highly encouraged, but cheers against the other team will not be tolerated.
7. Sudden noises (shouts, horns, foot-stomping, yelling "swing", or other chants or noise-making devices) will not be tolerated.
8. Players and coaches should not purposely distract the other team's pitcher.
9. There will be no arguing with umpires. Inquiries and discussions about calls (other than balls and strikes) are okay, but arguments will not be tolerated.
10. Coaches are responsible for adherence to these conduct rules for themselves, their players, and the spectators.

## Player Eligibility

1. All players must be in 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, or 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.
2. A player must play for the town they reside in unless they qualify for one of the three exceptions listed below:
  - a. A town is unable to field a team for the player to play on.
  - b. A player "school choices" into another town, then they can play for that town. Documentation of school enrollment would be required.
  - c. Priority is given to town players before non-resident players can be registered.
3. If a player's parents each live in two different towns, the player can choose to play for either town.
4. Both Cortland town league reps and Cortland League Steward must approve the player transfer to the other town.

## General Game Preliminaries

1. This is a developmental level and competition should not even be an aspect at this level. The goal is to make sure players have a great time, learn the basics, good sportsmanship, and want to continue to the competitive divisions in the future.

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2. The home team head coach is responsible for postponing a game due to weather/field conditions and contacting the opposing coach.
3. Home team supplies game balls. Game balls may be 11" optic yellow traditional or safety softballs. If the teams prefer to field opposite types of softballs, the visiting team will supply their preferred balls to be used when they are fielding.
4. If playing an opposing town, confer with the opposing manager on any field rules.
5. Teams should be ready to play at the scheduled time.
6. A game may start and continue with any number of players, but the ideal number is seven. Towns should split 13+ player registrations into two teams.
7. Players arriving late are placed at bottom of the batting order.

### **Safety Rules**

1. No jewelry, metal cleats, or casts. If a player cannot remove her jewelry, she must cover it with a bandage or athletic tape.
2. Catchers must wear full protective league approved equipment during games (and while warming up).
3. All infielders including the pitcher, are required to wear a fielding mask. It is strongly recommended that the entire outfield wear one as well.
4. All batters and base runners must always wear a league-approved helmet. Helmets must contain a face mask.
5. No "on-deck" batters are allowed. Only the batter may handle a bat in their designated areas-Under no circumstance is another player to have a bat in a non-designated area.
6. Players from the team batting must be in the dugout when not hitting. Players are not allowed to play catch on the sidelines during the game.
7. All batters should have on helmets & be ready to go to keep the game moving.
8. Runners must use the safety bag (colored bag in foul territory) at first base. Fielder must use white base in fair territory. Once on base, the runner uses the white bag
9. Players without the ball may not impede the runner's progress.

### **Game Rules**

1. Games are approximately 75 minutes long or typically 4 innings. You may play extra innings if time permits. If another game is scheduled after your game, please finish before their scheduled time.
2. Every player will bat in the line-up (continuous batting order). You may rotate your leadoff hitter every inning. This allows a different batter to be the "last batter" each inning.
3. Each team bats once around the order in the first, second, and third innings. The defensive team is encouraged to try to make as many outs as they can. Coaches should discuss an even batter order before the game (for instance if one team has 5 players and the other team has 10 players, the team with 5 should bat through twice in one turn).
4. Managers/Coaches should try to have a player at every position (including a pitcher who fields for the coach and a catcher wearing the appropriate equipment and catching for their team). Coach will use discretion to place as many infielders on the field as safely

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possible. If all infield positions are covered remaining players will play outfield. In this league players should not be sitting on the bench.

5. Every player must play in the infield at some point-the best bet is to come up with a good rotation so that you know everyone gets an opportunity at each position. No player should play the same infield position for more than two innings in one game unless necessary. Use your best judgment, however, with pitcher & first base since those positions will have the most activity & the player should be able to pay attention.
6. Coaches are encouraged to take the field with their team and coach fielders from the field, but they should not make a play on a batted ball.
7. For the first half of the season, coaches pitch to their own teams. They should pitch from the pitching circle or mound area. Pitches should be thrown on a line as a fast pitch softball pitch not in an arc as a slow pitch softball pitch.
8. For the second half of the season, players will be introduced to the basic slingshot pitching style and will be allowed to throw four pitches per batter with the coach throwing four pitches. Coaches should evaluate pitchers prior to games and only allow players who they have evaluated to pitch. When players are pitching, coaches will act as the catcher to keep the game moving.
9. Each batter gets eight pitches. If the batter hits a pitch in play, they attempt to advance to 1<sup>st</sup> base. After eight pitches pitch attempts, if the batter has not put a ball in play, they will get one swing at a ball on the batting tee. If they do not put the ball in play, they are out and the at bat ends.
10. If a batter puts a ball in play, the defense will try to make an out. If an out is made, the runner that is out will return to the bench. The number of outs per inning will not be recorded and the inning will not end after three outs.
11. No intentional bunting.
12. A batter or baserunner may take a maximum of one base on an infield hit and a maximum of two bases on a hit to the outfield.
13. Runners CAN lead off the base, but no stealing is allowed. Runners can take their lead after the ball crosses home plate during a pitch.
14. Runners cannot advance until the ball is put in play by the batter.
15. Base runners may NOT advance on any overthrows.
16. The coach who is pitching should announce "last batter" when the final batter of the inning is up. All base runners may run all the way home after the ball is hit. Fielders should try to make a play, but once they have made a play they will remain on the field as the offensive team clears the bases. Players will return the ball to the pitcher (or coach in the pitchers' circle), to be taught how to end a play.
17. At the conclusion of the game teams will say "good game" to and shake the hands of the opposing team.