

# MP Softball Interleague Rules



Approved for Play  
01/11/2026

**2026**

Machine Pitch Softball  
Interleague and Special Games  
Tournament Rules



# MP Softball Interleague Rules

## I. Purpose

Interleague play provides teams the opportunity to play regular season games against other teams within the district. These interleague rules afford teams from different leagues to play by the same general guidelines which will apply to all fields of play. These rules differ from “ground rules”, whereas a ground rule is a specific issue associated with the local playing field. For example, at Rarick Field in Niceville, there is a tree that overhangs the center field fence. If a batted ball hits the tree, the ensuing action is dictated by the ground rules of Rarick Field. These ground rules shall be identified and discussed during the pre-game plate conference between the game UIC and Managers of both teams.

## II. Age Specific Regulations for Special Games

The machine pitch division will consist of players league age 6-8. Any player who is league age 9 shall not be allowed to participate in the machine pitch division during special games tournaments. Each team shall submit an affidavit verifying each player’s league age before being allowed to participate in the special game tournament. Any team found to have a player that is not of the correct league age will be disqualified from the tournament and the manager shall not be permitted to manage or coach in any additional tournaments to include Sanctioned International tournament games.

## III. Approval

These 2026 Florida District 1 Little League supplemental regulations and playing rules were developed by league and district officials to clarify and/or expand regulations and playing rules not otherwise addressed in the 2026 Little League official regulations and playing rules. These supplemental regulations and rules are not intended to and shall not supersede official Little League regulations and playing rules. The layout and format mirror the parent document for convenient cross reference. This supplement shall not duplicate or conflict with existing regulations and playing rules and therefore is not a stand-alone document. This supplement must be used in conjunction with the 2026 Little League official regulations and playing rules and available for reference at each game. These supplemental regulations and playing rules were approved by each leagues President of the Board of Directors and signed by the District Administrator on 01/11/2026.

## IV. Playing Regulations

### 1. Regulation III (The Teams):

Only teams from the same division shall participate in interleague games. The teams will be from chartered Little League programs, unless otherwise approved under special games provisions by the District Administrator.

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Each team shall maintain a complete and accurate scorebook throughout the season. The scorebooks will be made available for review by opposing managers prior to each game if requested.

Each team will play with 10 players on the field. The defensive team will have 4 outfielders all playing at outfield depth (no closer than 8-10' from the infield dirt on a normally skinned infield. No short fielder or extra fielder will be allowed. If a team cannot field 10 players, they may play with 9 or 8 players. No game shall be allowed to continue with less than 8 players on each team. Borrowing players from the other team for defense will not be allowed.

## **2. Time Limits:**

- a. Regular Season Games: no new inning shall begin after 1 hour and 30 minutes.
- b. Park Day Special Games: a drop-dead time limit may be imposed to allow for multiple game scheduling. The President from both parks must agree to the drop-dead time and be approved by the District Administrator one week before the park day. This drop-dead time shall not be less than 1 hour and 20 minutes.
- c. Special Games Tournaments: time limits may be set during the special games tournament. If a time limit is set, it shall not be less than 1 hour and 45 minutes to start a new inning. No drop-dead time limit will be allowed for any special game tournament.

## **3. Safety:**

- a. No fielder shall be closer than 30 feet away from the batter's box until the ball crosses the plate or is hit. A solid or dashed 30' arc will be striped for reference. Unintentional violation by a fielder will be ruled a no pitch to the batter. At the Umpire's discretion, bases may be awarded to the batter/runner(s) for any intentional or repeated violations of the 30' arc by a fielder.
- b. The player pitcher on the team in the field does not pitch; he/she is a fielder only. The player pitcher must begin each pitch at a distance from the plate even with the pitching machine. For clarity, a 3-foot foot line extending from the edge of the safety circle shall be drawn on both sides of the pitching machine. The foot closest to the "**safety circle**" must be touching, but not on top of or inside the circle. For safety reasons, he/she cannot leave this position, even on an attempted bunt, until the ball exits

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the pitching machine. The player pitcher must wear an approved device consistent with protecting the face. This can be a NOCSAE approved batting helmet with a full wire faceguard, a single piece catcher's helmet or an approved softball face mask. Pursuant to rule 1.17; Skull Caps are not permitted for use.

- c. Any defensive player may wear an approved softball facemask if desired.  
**Exception:** the catcher must wear an approved single piece catcher's helmet.

### V. **Playing Rules**

#### **1. Placement of the Machine (see attachment 1):**

- a. Games will be played with a pitching machine placed at **35 feet** from the front edge of home plate.
- b. An 8-foot radius circle (pitching circle) will be drawn around the center of the pitching mound. Refer to rule 1.07 in the LL Softball Rulebook.
- c. A 4-foot radius circle (safety circle) shall be drawn round the center of the pitching machine. This is the safety area around the pitching mound and machine, which fielders may not enter.
- d. The machine must be set up on short legs **ONLY**.

#### **2. Adjustment of the Machine:**

- a. The machine shall be set at **33 MPH** (typically 36% with a variable speed switch).
- b. The machine may be adjusted for accuracy at the beginning of a team's half inning at bat before the 1<sup>st</sup> batter. Each team shall have no more than 5 pitches to adjust the machine.
- c. The machine may be adjusted for accuracy during an inning at the umpire's discretion.
- d. The ball must be pitched from the **top of the machine – no exceptions.**

#### **3. Adult Placement:**

- a. During **regular season play only**; there will be one manager and not more than three coaches allowed per team and will be utilized in the following positions as described below in sections b. and c. Managers and coaches

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must be legal adults and/or approved volunteers with an up-to-date background check.

- b. When a team is batting, **two base coaches** are permitted to be on the field. These base coaches must remain in the coaches' boxes during play. **One adult coach shall remain in the dugout** to maintain order.
- c. **An adult coach/manager will pitch to the offensive team's batters** by feeding baseballs into the pitching machine from within the safety circle. This adult shall be one of the following;
  - i. An approved volunteer with a background check on file with the local league.
  - ii. A coach/manager from the offensive team.
- d. The adult feeding the machine must remain within the safety circle during play **unless** it is to prevent being hit by a batted or thrown ball.
- e. The adult feeding the machine will place the ball into the machine immediately after presenting it to the batter.
- f. The adult feeding the machine shall not coach in any manner during this half of the inning. **Penalty:** immediate ejection of the adult pitcher from the game.
- g. If, in the umpire's judgement, any action by the adult pitcher interferes with a play in progress, the umpire shall declare a "dead ball" and will take such action, as the umpire deems appropriate to nullify the act of the interference.

**NOTE: During special games tournament play, a designated person from the tournament committee will feed the pitching machine. No exceptions to this rule will be permitted.**

#### **4. Fielder Safety Circle**

If any player crosses the safety circle during play or deflects or throws a live ball into the circle, the umpire shall halt play and award the runner(s) the next base to which the base runner was advancing. Entering the safety circle includes stepping into, falling into and/or placing any part of the player inside the circle. Additional bases may be awarded, per the umpire's judgement, for extra-base hits or intentional safety circle violations.

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## 5. Rules Involving the Machine and Safety Circle

- a. If a batted ball hits the pitching machine, associated equipment (power box, cord, etc.) or the coach feeding the machine.

**Ruling:** Batter is awarded 1<sup>st</sup> base. Any runners will advance only if forced.

- b. If a batted ball is popped up, lands in the safety circle and comes to rest without touching anything.

**Ruling:** Dead ball, and batter continues the at bat (do-over)

- c. If a batted ball is popped up between home and the safety circle and is untouched as it hits the ground and rolls into the circle where it comes to rest.

**Ruling:** Batter will be awarded 1<sup>st</sup> base. Any runner(s) will be allowed to advance to the next base, which in the judgement of the umpire, the runner(s) would have advanced to if a play could have been made on the ball.

- d. If a batted ball is popped up, lands in the safety circle, does not touch anything and then rolls out of the circle.

**Ruling:** Ball is live and in play

- e. A batted ball rolls or passes directly through the safety circle without touching anything.

**Ruling:** Ball is live and in play

## 6. Infield Fly (rule 2):

Infield fly rule is not in effect for this division of play.

## 7. The Batter (rule 6):

- a. Continuous batting order shall be followed for all games – no exceptions.
- b. The batting team will be retired when they have accumulated three outs of five runs in the offensive half-inning (whichever comes first). **During special games tournament play, the five-run limit will be suspended for the 6<sup>th</sup> inning and any subsequent inning as needed.**
- c. Each batter will receive 4 pitches or 3 strikes to successfully put the ball in play. There will be no called balls or walks. If it is obvious to the umpire, that a ball cannot be hit, the umpire will call “no pitch” and award the batter an additional pitch. A “no pitch” is a dead ball situation.

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- d. There will be no called strikes. Missed swings and foul balls count as strikes just as in Little League Softball. Foul balls on the 3<sup>rd</sup> strike or 4<sup>th</sup> pitch do not count against the batter, just as in Little League Softball.
- e. Bunting will be allowed. If a 3<sup>rd</sup> strike or 4<sup>th</sup> pitch is bunted foul, the batter is out.

### **8. The Runner (rule 7):**

- a. All base runners will not be allowed to advance unless the ball is put into play by the batter.
- b. To stop play the defense must stop the advancement of the lead runner and all trailing runners or throw the ball to the pitcher. When forward progress is stopped or once the pitcher has control of the ball and is in the pitching circle (the 8' radius circle, not the 4' safety circle), time will be called, and play will be stopped.
- c. Runners that are between bases, less than halfway, when the umpire calls time must be returned to the previous base, if vacant. This is a judgment call by the umpire and cannot be questioned by the manager, coaches, or spectators. If questioned, the manager, coach or spectator will be warned. For the second offense, the offender will be ejected from the game. If a spectator, they will be removed from the stands.
- d. Special pinch runners are not allowed due to the continuous batting order. A courtesy runner will be permitted for the catcher of record (only) when there are two outs to allow the catcher time to prepare for the next half inning.
- e. Pursuant to rule 7.10; all appeals shall be made while the ball is live. Once the ball is handed to the adult pitcher (or any other dead ball situation), the following procedure shall be followed of the defense to request an appeal for a failure to retouch or missed base:
  - a. The defensive coach shall request time to talk to the umpire and explain that he wants to make an appeal.
  - b. The umpire shall instruct the coach pitcher to hand the ball to the player pitcher. The player pitcher must be positioned as outlined in section 3(b) of these supplemental rules. Once the player

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pitcher has possession of the ball, and is in the proper position, the umpire shall signal “play”.

- c. The defense must then make a proper appeal in accordance with rule 7.10.

**Approved By:**

**//Signed//**

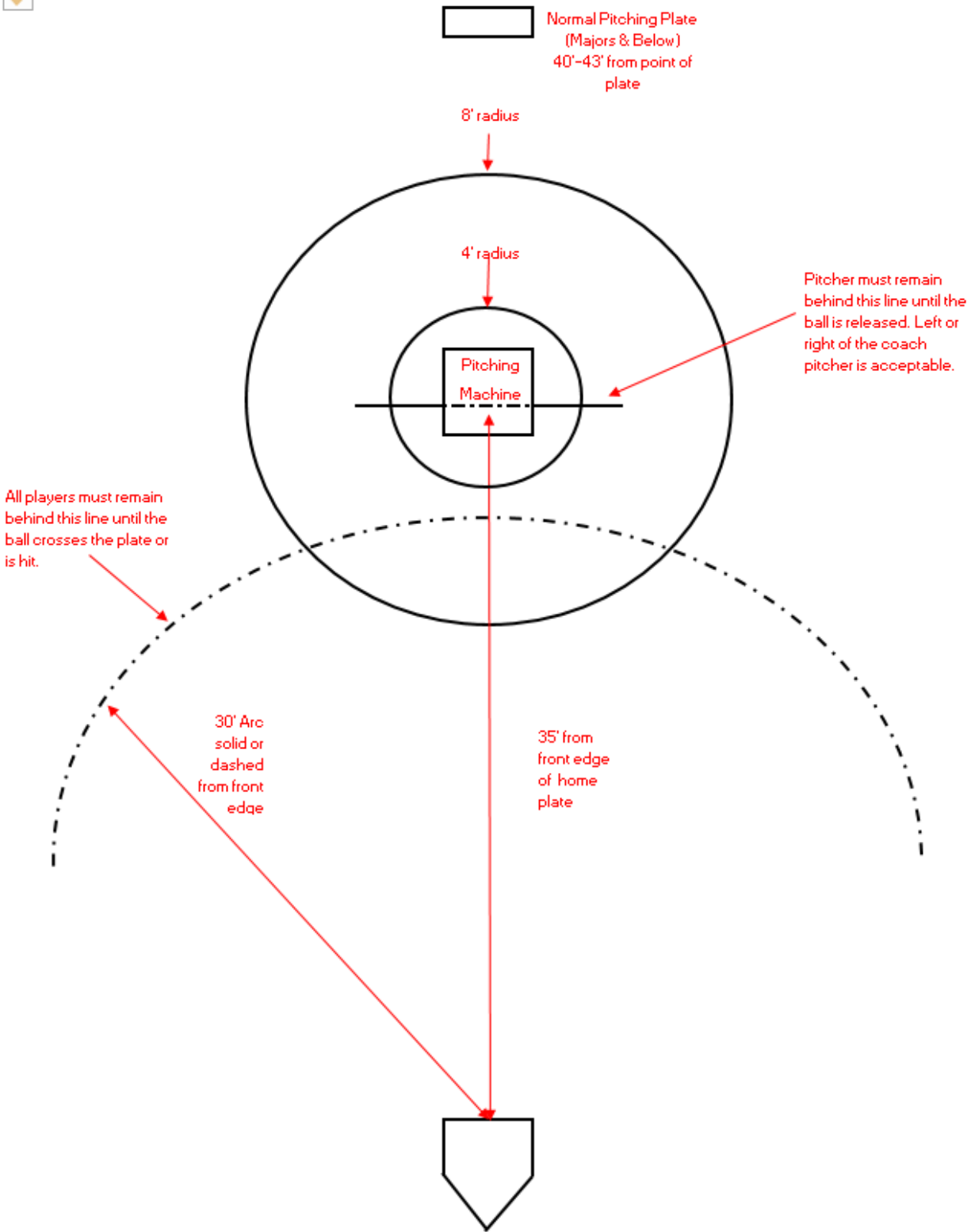
Windell Carnley

District 1 Administrator

01/11/2026



# MP Softball Interleague Rules



**Attachment 1**