LITTLE LEAGUE®
INTERNATIONAL
SOFTBALL
“Thank you Little League for having the rule that you can only pitch so many innings. Our other pitcher’s had used up their innings and needed someone to try...I volunteered without ever having tried it before. Needless to say, I fell in love with the pitching.”

- CAT OSTERMAN
Two-Time Olympic Medalist, 2016 Little League® Hall of Excellence Enshrinee

“Little League is so much more than just putting a kid out there with a glove and bat, it’s about development as a player and person. Little League has had a tremendous impact on my life, and I am forever grateful for the experience.”

- LENA SPRINGER
Ohio State University Pitcher; member of the 2013 Puerto Rico Junior National Softball Team

“I was the player that wasn’t the biggest, fastest or smartest, but I still learned through Little League that I have no limits. It’s a joy to recognize Little League because it set a standard of excellence for me as a person, athlete, and teammate...I love Little League.”

- SUE ENQUIST
NCAA Softball Champion player and coach, UCLA
MISSION OF LITTLE LEAGUE®

To provide a wholesome, healthy activity for children using the ball field as a classroom to instill discipline, teamwork, sportsmanship, and fair play.

“I compare playing in the Little League® World Series to playing in the Olympics because you are representing so many people, and doing something that so many people look forward to.”

- KRISY WENDELL
  NCAA Women’s Hockey National Champion, U.S. Olympian

“Little League is a dream come true. It took my three years of Little League to finally achieve my dream of winning, but all the losses and hardships were so worth it to make it to the finals. I made some great friends and had the opportunity to play on the greatest stage there is for young girls softball. If softball is truly a passion, Little League is there to enhance it.”

- CARLEY HOOVER
  2013 Gatorade Softball Player of the Year, Louisiana State University Softball Pitcher
History of Little League Softball®

For more than 75 years, Little League has expanded around the globe and now offers opportunities to over 2.4 million boys and girls of all abilities in more than 80 countries worldwide.

1939: Founded in 1939 by Carl Stotz in Williamsport, PA.

1974: In 1974, Little League’s Federal Charter was amended to include participation by girls. Little League revises its rules and creates the Major and Senior League Softball Programs.

1974: Freeport, NY, held the first Little League Softball World Series where Wellswood Little League (Tampa, FL) earned the first championship title.

1989: In 1989, Canada was the first international country to submit a team into a Little League Softball World Series tournament.

2001: During the 2001 tournament season, Little League expanded television coverage to include the championship game of each Softball World Series, each broadcasted on ESPN2.

That same year, Rosario Y Cardona Little League became the first international team to win a Little League Softball World Series title.


2015: Kempala, Uganda won the Europe and Africa Region tournament and is the first African representative to a Softball World Series.

Today: For more than 40 years, Little League has continued to help grow the game of softball. Today millions of volunteers help operate the Little League Softball program in the U.S. and more than 25 countries so players of all levels and backgrounds may play softball, compete, grow, and have fun.
WHY LITTLE LEAGUE?

Little League provides the framework, resources, and support used by more than 7,000 communities around the world to provide a world-class youth baseball and softball experience.

The Little League Softball® program includes divisions for all girls ages 4–16. With the proven Little League structure, it allows organizations to offer a youth softball program to serve every child in the community. Where the regular season brings friends and classmates together to enjoy an exciting softball experience while teaching the basics of teamwork, sportsmanship, and fair play; the Little League International Tournament provides tournament opportunities for athletes interested in competing to earn a berth to one of three Softball World Series. In addition to on-field fundamentals and providing a competitive environment, Little League Softball uses the sport to strengthen participants’ self-esteem and confidence.

To support our leagues, Little League Softball provides every local program with access to a wide range of resources and partners designed to enhance their Little League experience. From a Tee Ball program, focused on fun, fitness, and fundamentals, designed to give young athletes a positive first experience with the game, to clinics and training for coaches and umpires of all levels of experience, to unmatched tools and resources for league administrators, Little League has something to offer everyone.

Whether you are looking to compete against neighboring leagues or international countries, Little League is more than an organization, it’s a community softball program dedicated to providing a premier softball experience for every girl and to growing the game worldwide.
THE LITTLE LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENT

Beginning in June with district tournaments around the world and culminating in August with the Softball World Series, the Little League International Tournament is the world’s largest organized youth sports tournament. Thousands of communities worldwide participate annually, entering teams in the five softball tournament trails (three of which culminate in a World Series Championship) for softball players ages 8–16. With each Softball World Series Championship televised on the ESPN family of networks, and additional semi-finals and play-in games, this is most broadcast youth softball tournament. More than just tournaments, these events promote comradery and create life-long friendships.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOURNAMENT</th>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>CHAMPIONSHIP</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
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<td>12-14</td>
<td>World Championship</td>
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<td>Senior League</td>
<td>13-16</td>
<td>World Championship</td>
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Tee Ball Softball

• Introductory level of play focused on teaching fundamentals in a fun active environment.

• 10-Week ready-to-play curriculum provided free to all chartered leagues that includes practice plans and activities designed for 4- to 7-year-olds.

• Tee Ball focused registration/promotional materials available to assist with new player registration.

Minor Division Softball

• Instructional level of play that can incorporate machine pitch, Coach Pitch and Player Pitch to enhance player development.

• Leagues subdivide the Minor Division into multiple levels of play (e.g. 7-8 Coach/Machine Pitch; 9-10 Player Pitch, etc.).

• League age 5 and 6 year old players may participate provided they have one year of Little League Tee Ball experience.

• Minor Divisions may utilize different rules (number of defensive players, stealing, bunting, etc.) based on level of play, to create an instructional division and a competitive division.

Major Division Softball

• Leagues may choose to structure the Major Division for players 9-12, 10-12 or 11-12.

• Players that wish to compete in the Little League Softball (10-12) level of tournament must participate in the Major Division.

• Players league age 12 may participate on both a Major Division and Junior Division team simultaneously.

FAST FACTS

AGES: 4-7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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AGES: 5-11

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AGES: 9-12

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<td>Stealing Permitted</td>
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<tr>
<td>Game Length</td>
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<td>Max. Games Per Day</td>
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<td>Tournament Offered</td>
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**Junior League Division Softball**

- Players league age 12 may participate on both a Major Division and Junior Division team simultaneously.
- Beginning in 2017, age eligible players may participate in up to two divisions.
- Players may participate in the Junior or Senior League Division tournament provided they are age eligible and meet all other eligibility requirements.
- Special Game tournaments may count towards Tournament Participation.

**Senior League Division Softball**

- May be operated by a local league or as a district-wide program.
- Leagues may choose to structure the Senior Division for players 13-16, 14-16 or 15-16.
- Beginning in 2017, age eligible players may participate in up to two divisions.
- Players may participate in the Junior or Senior League Division Tournament provided they are age eligible and meet all other eligibility requirements.
- Special Game tournaments may count towards Tournament Participation.
- Rules align closely with NFHS rules.
Little League® Challenger Program

Developed in 1989, the Little League Challenger Program provides an opportunity for players with physical and intellectual challenges of all ages to enjoy the full benefits of participation in a Little League® program.

- Two divisions of play: Little League Challenger Division® for players 4-18; and Senior League Challenger Division for players 15 and older.
- Supplies a framework so leagues may offer a structured, athletic activity for all participants in their community.
- Players use “buddies” to assist them during game play. Special rules allow for flexibility to adapt the game to meet the needs of the player.

Find more information at LittleLeagueChallenger.org

Child Protection Program

Established in 1998, Little League’s Child Protection Program aims to educate local volunteers on ways they can help ensure the safety of children in their league. Since 2003, Little League has required leagues to conduct background checks on managers, coaches, and all other volunteers that have regular and repetitive access to the children in the league. Little League provides each local league with 125 free background checks annually and an unlimited number of checks at a nominal cost.

Find more information at LittleLeague.org/ChildProtectionProgram

Little League® Urban Initiative

Since 1999, the Little League Urban Initiative has worked to provide access to the benefits of the Little League program to boys and girls within urban communities where safety, security, and comfort are not common realities for children. The program’s goal is to identify and then create or renew baseball and softball programs within these communities, bringing the values of teamwork, fair play, respect for authority, and the desire to excel to the children’s lives.

Find more information at LittleLeague.org/UrbanInitiative
Little League’s Grow the Game Grant Program

Introduced in 2015, Little League’s Grow the Game Grant Program provides assistance to chartered Little League programs working to further the mission of Little League in their community. Grants of up to $20,000 are available for the following focus areas:

- Softball Enhancement/Development
- League Enhancement
- Challenger Program Enhancement/Development
- Little League Urban Initiative

Little League® Field Centers

Structure of Little League®

Little League® International
- Located in South Williamsport, PA
- Responsible for International Operations of Little League

Regional Headquarters
- Five regional headquarters in the US in addition to offices in Canada, Hong Kong, Poland and Puerto Rico
- Provide support to leagues and district administrators

District Administrators
- Volunteers who oversee leagues at a local level
- Elected every 4 years by leagues in the district
- Act as a liaison between leagues and the regional office

Local Leagues
- Local, volunteer-run baseball and softball programs that choose to affiliate with Little League
Joining the Little League® Family?

Determine which chartering option would be best for your group:

• Addition to an Existing Charter
• Addition to an Existing Charter with Modified Boundaries
• Softball-Only League

Steps to chartering with Little League for the first time

Chartering with Little League® for the first time is a quick and easy 3-step process that is often completed in less than two weeks. To request a charter packet, visit LittleLeague.org/affiliate or contact Little League International at (570) 326-1921 and ask to speak with Development.

1. Complete and submit a charter application
   The Little League Charter Application and Insurance Enrollment Form is where you will indicate how many teams your league will charter in each division, as well as whether or not you will elect to purchase insurance through the AIG group insurance program offered to all chartered Little Leagues. 
   **Once completed, the charter application should be mailed to:**
   Little League International
   539 US Highway 15
   PO Box 3485

2. Submit a league constitution and list of Board Members
   Each affiliated Little League program must submit a copy of their league’s constitution. A constitution is the legal document that governs the operation of your Little League program. We strongly encourage all leagues to adopt the Little League Model Constitution available at LittleLeague.org/constitution; however, if you have an existing constitution you may submit that as well. Along with your league’s constitution, please provide a list of current board members for our records. 
   **Once completed, please submit a copy of both to Little League International and your respective regional office.**

3. Create a Boundary Map
   All Little League programs must file a boundary map of the area which they will service as well as a written description of that area. The map must be signed by both the League President and the volunteer Little League District Administrator for your league. For your local District Administrator’s name and contact information, please contact Little League International or your regional office.
   **Once completed, send a copy of your signed boundary map and written description to your respective regional office.**
Is your league looking to add a Little League Softball component? We’ve got everything you need to offer a program for everyone in your community and here’s how to get started in the right direction!

- **Assess Your League and Your Community** - The board should appoint a softball committee to head-up the effort. The committee should consist of at least one board member, and may include other members of the league or members of the community interested in starting a Little League Softball program.

- **Begin Promoting your Softball Program and Gauge Interest in the Community** – When you first begin promoting your Little League Softball program, consider promoting the program for all ages 4–16. Based on the interest at each age level, the league can determine which divisions it will charter and where it might need to combine. Be sure to utilize the League Resource Guide and Little League University (LittleLeagueU.org) for helpful tips and flyers!

- **Who’s in Your League?** - Your league may already have a number of girls in the program! Assess your league and determine how many girls are currently registered. It may be as simple as placing existing girls interested in softball within appropriate softball divisions and marketing for additional players. Ask existing families to encourage friends to register!

- **Tee Ball** - Start the softball divisions from the league’s youngest age division and allow the program to grow each year. If your league offers Tee Ball, create a Tee Ball Softball division or form teams of girls in Tee Ball Baseball. Players learn softball from the youngest age, involve their parents, and allow players to participate with friends who will advance together in future age divisions.

- **Teenage Divisions** - If the league is thinking about starting with Junior or Senior League Softball, work with the local high schools in the area and explain how we can provide a second season, tournament opportunities, and fall instruction for their players.

- **Expand Your Board** – We recommend appointing at least a Softball Vice President and a Softball Player Agent to your Board. These two board positions should be created prior to registration. The Vice President of Softball should act as the primary softball representative on the board and the Softball Player Agent should oversee registrations and the draft for softball.

- **Hold Registration for your Little League Softball program** – Have your league hold its softball registration in conjunction with its baseball registration. This will expose families that participate in your league’s baseball program to your newly formed softball program. Also work with your local schools, community programs, parks department, etc., to promote.

- **Charter your Softball Program** – Once registrations are complete, check your league’s charter to ensure your league has chartered the proper number of teams in each division of softball. If you need to change the number of teams chartered, simply amend your teams at LittleLeague.org/DataCenter.

- **Pre-Season Parent Meeting** – Provide parents a plan. Update them about everything the league is planning for the upcoming season including draft procedures, facilities, games, initiatives, etc. Encourage ideas, suggestions, and welcome volunteers.

- **Set-up a Softball Schedule** – Your league may choose to play regular season games entirely in house, via interleague play, or a combination of the two. Your District Administrator will be able to assist in setting up an interleague play schedule.

- **Make it a Success** – Make it a season the players and parents will never forget! Whether providing training to first time coaches, taking the teams to a Little League Softball Day, or coordinating Special Game Tournaments throughout the year, utilize all Little League Softball has to offer to make your program a success. Encourage feedback from parents to ensure that next season is even better!
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO JOIN LITTLE LEAGUE®?

The cost of affiliating with Little League is $10 per team for all divisions of baseball and softball. All leagues must also carry accident and general liability insurance that meet specific limits. Little League offers affordable options for league insurance through AIG member companies.

WHAT IS THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING A CHARTER APPLICATION?

Leagues should submit their charter application prior to beginning their regular season. The deadline to submit a charter application is typically the first week of June.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE FOR MY LEAGUE’S CHARTER APPLICATION TO BE APPROVED?

Once the charter application, constitution, and boundary map are submitted, most applications are approved within 2 weeks.

WHAT AMOUNT SHOULD I PLACE IN BOX G ON THE CHARTER APPLICATION (GENERAL LIABILITY INSURANCE)?

Your league’s general liability insurance rate will be based on the number of teams in your league. To receive a quote, contact Little League’s Risk Management Department at (570) 326-1921 option #4.

WILL MY LEAGUE RECEIVE RULEBOOKS?

Each league receives one rulebook free of charge for each team chartered. Rulebooks will be sent after your league’s charter is processed.

WHEN CAN MY LEAGUE REGISTER TO PARTICIPATE IN THE LITTLE LEAGUE® INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENT?

Tournament enrollment typically begins online in mid-April online through the Little League Data Center.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO COMPETE IN THE LITTLE LEAGUE® INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENT?

The tournament entry fee is $200 per team. This is paid prior to entering the district tournament and covers all tournament participation through the World Series level of play. Leagues will be reimbursed for tournament travel at a rate of $1 per mile for one round trip to the tournament site (minimum 150 miles) at the section level and beyond.

USEFUL LINKS

LittleLeague.org : Little League® Homepage
LittleLeagueU.org : A learning platform for all of our volunteers and parents to get educational resources
LittleLeagueSoftball.org : Information on Little League Softball®
LittleLeagueChallenger.org : Information on the Little League Challenger Program
LLBWS.org : Information on the World Series, times, schedules, and scores.
LittleLeague.org/affiliate : Request a charter application
LittleLeague.org/newleague : Information on affiliating with Little League
LittleLeague.org/constitution : Download a copy of the Little League model constitution
LittleLeague.org/datacenter : Online league administration tools for your league
“Little League was where I first fell in love with the game. Playing Division I softball and making it to the College World Series is something I dreamed about since I was a kid. Little League definitely shaped me into the player I am today.”

- RACHELE FICO
  Louisiana State University and Akron Racers Pitcher

“The Little League experience was so rooted in my being that it gives me a ton of confidence even today. I was taught to respect the game at an early age, because the games are games, and even if we didn’t have success to always remember the fun.”

- HEATHER TARR
  Head Softball Coach, University of Washington

“Little League not only provided me a place to play with friends and learn the game, it was where I developed my love for the game. I always dreamed of competing at the highest level, and was able to accomplish that goal thanks to my start in Little League.”

- CRYSIL BUSTOS
  Two-Time Olympic Gold Medalist and Softball Clinician
LITTLE LEAGUE® PLEDGE

I TRUST IN GOD

I LOVE MY COUNTRY

AND WILL RESPECT ITS LAWS

I WILL PLAY FAIR

AND STRIVE TO WIN

BUT WIN OR LOSE

I WILL ALWAYS DO MY BEST