



**OSSINING BASEBALL 2015**  
**Little League Division Rules v1.1**

**LITTLE LEAGUE GUIDING PRINCIPLES/MISSION STATEMENT**

As with the Intermediate level, our continued responsibility is to teach the fundamental skills of baseball in a safe and enjoyable setting which promotes sportsmanship and an atmosphere conducive to the emotional and physical growth of our players. Our goal is to teach baseball to all of our players, providing opportunities for all to play in a variety of baseball positions, regardless of their level of experience or skill. Our hope is that coaches will assess their success by the degree to which they have met these goals, rather than by the number of games won or lost.

That being said, this is the first division in which records and scores are officially recorded and there are playoffs. That leads to more competition. As a result, it is a delicate task for coaches to balance the competitive aspects with our essential goal to promote positive emotional growth and a successful experience for all of our participants, who will have a variety of ability levels. Coaches in Little League will consider a player's ability level when positioning players, but must make sure that all players play both the infield and the outfield. No player should be assigned a position and limited to only playing that position. Such an approach is discouraged as it seems inevitably to lead players to stop playing baseball.

The required time commitment for coaches at this level is similar to that in Intermediate. At this level, teams practice once a week (on a week night) usually at Ryder Park or Nelson Park for one hour and may have one or two games per week at either Ryder or Nelson; one on a weekday night and one on Saturday morning. Games at this level are supposed to be 6 innings, but may be called due to darkness or the start of the next scheduled game.



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### I. Rules of the Game

The Ossining Little League division uses the general rules of Little League International with several additions and alterations detailed below.

#### *Ossining Additions/Alterations to the Little League International Rulebook:*

1. **Roster batting.** Every player on the team shall bat in the team's batting order for the entire game (Roster batting). One option for batting that is highly recommended is to set the line-up at the beginning of the year and use the same order for the season. Each game you begin the order with the player on deck when the last out was made in the previous game. If a player isn't at a game simply skip their turn in the order. This makes it easier to remember where they bat in the order and it makes it so every player gets roughly the same number of at-bats during the season.
2. **Late arriving players.** Players who arrive after the game has started will be added to the end of the batting order.
3. **Player leaving the game before the conclusion of the game.** If a player leaves the game for any reason, his turn will be skipped in the batting order with no penalty. The batter after the player who left will bat next.
4. **Minimum Innings/ Consecutive Innings Requirement.** Every player must play a minimum of 4 complete innings in the field. No player should sit out two innings in the field in a row.
5. **Playing games when a team is short players.** A game may be started if a team does not have enough players. The goal is to avoid a forfeit if at all possible. If a team has 7 or more players, this should almost always be handled by using the last 1-2 players from the other team's line-up as fielders. These players should only play outfield positions. In this circumstance, the players who are batting at the end of the team supplying the outfielders are the outfielders for the first inning and the players who made the last outs in the first inning are the outfielders for the second inning, and so on. This saves any debate about whether a team is purposely supplying weak players to play outfield for the other team.

If a team only has 6 or less players this gets trickier. There are three options: 1) The team short players can use three players from the other team. 2) They may find substitute players from another team to play for them or 3) the game may be rescheduled to another time. The coaches of the team with enough players are the ones that chose which of the three options to use. If the substitute player option is used, the players should NOT BE STRONG players. These players should play in the outfield (unless a catcher is needed) and bat at the end of the order. If the opposing manager is concerned that the substitute players give the team short players an unfair advantage, they can request that option 1 or 3 be used instead. The division coordinator can be contacted to help mediate any issues before the game starts. The goal again is to have all games played; however, kids do miss games so the team short will likely be at a disadvantage which is OK.



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6. **Maximum Pitch Count per Game.** In Ossining the maximum number of pitches a play can throw in a day is 70, not the 85 used by Little League.

### II. GAME MANAGEMENT, TIME LIMITS, AND RESCHEDULING

7. Use of a “run rule” is not required and not encouraged unless the coach of the team that is losing thinks it is best for his or her team.
8. No innings shall start later than 7:45 on a weeknight. On a weekend, no inning shall start more than 1:45 from the beginning of the game. This includes the last game of the day.
9. To be eligible for selection to the Little League International tournament at the end of the season, a player must have played in 60% of the team’s game.
10. Little League International requires that all team play a minimum of 12 games to be eligible for the tournament so it is critical that rainouts be made up in a timely manner. Coaches should contact each other the next day after a rainout and propose two possible dates for reschedule. Within one week of the game, if the coaches from the two teams cannot find a mutually agreeable time to play the game within the following two weeks (or longer with coordinator approval), the division coordinator will assign a date when the game must be played. Since we are trying to avoid rainouts all getting bunched at the end of the season, it may be necessary for the coordinator to assign a date.
11. All players should play positions in both the infield and outfield in each game, not just the outfield or infield.

### III. PITCHING

Some of the most important Little League rules are those that involve pitching and limitations on pitchers. Our Ossining league rules are based on the Little League rules with a lower maximum number of pitches allowed than the official Little League rules.

14. **Pitching Eligibility.** Any player may pitch. There is no limit to the number of pitchers a team may use in a game. While the development of many pitchers is encouraged and most players will want the chance to pitch, coaches are encouraged to remove a pitcher if he walks four batters in a row as the other team’s opportunity to have a meaningful chance to hit is being compromised. A pitcher once removed from the mound cannot return as a pitcher.

15. **Maximum innings per week.** A pitcher may only pitch 6 innings per week.

16. **Maximum pitch count per game.** A pitcher may not pitch more than 70 pitches in one day. The manager must remove the pitcher when the pitcher reaches the pitch count of 70 pitches (see note below).



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**17. Required days of rest.**

# of Pitches Thown	Days Rest Required
66-70 (max)	4 Days
51-65	3 Days
36-50	2 Days
21-35	1 Day
1-20	No rest required

Examples: A pitcher pitching 67 pitches on Tuesday needs four days of rest before pitching again, so he cannot pitch on Saturday, but could pitch on Sunday. A pitcher pitching 40 pitches on Saturday can pitch again on Tuesday but if they pitch 40 pitches on Thursday they cannot pitch again in Saturday's game, but could pitch if there was a game on Sunday. A pitcher pitching up to 20 pitches can pitch the next day.

Note: For all of the limits above if a pitcher reaches the limit while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any one of the following conditions occurs: Batter reaches base or the batter is put out or the third out is made to complete the ½ inning.

Note: the rest is based on calendar days, not 24 hour periods. For example, if a pitcher throws 55 pitches in a game that ends Saturday at 11, the rule is that the pitcher cannot pitch again until Wednesday, even if 72 hours ends sometime on Tuesday afternoon.

**18. Catching after pitching.** A Pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of the day.

**19. Keeping track of pitch counts.** Each team will designate a coach/adult to keep the pitch count. Each pitcher's pitch count coach/adult will report to the umpire between ½ innings or as needed to update the official count. The umpire will record it on his scorecard. If the pitch counts do not agree the coach with the higher total pitch count for that ½ inning will be used. Problems with this procedure shall be brought to the attention of the league coordinator. We are doing this tracking in part to get players and coaches used to doing for the Little League tournament.

**20. Pitching Log.** Coaches must maintain a pitching log in their scorebook, which includes the Date, Pitcher's Name, Opponent and the number of pitches thrown. This log is to be available for review upon request by the opposing coach or league coordinator. Failure to maintain or produce your log may result in a player being declared ineligible to pitch if the player has not pitched yet, or may result in a game that has been played being declared a forfeit.

**21. Visits to the mound.** Coaches may visit the mound up to 2 times in an inning with the same pitcher. If the coach visits the mound for a 3rd time in the inning with the same pitcher, that pitcher must be removed as the pitcher. Once a new pitcher is inserted into the game, the coach can then visit up to 2 times in an inning with this pitcher. Coaches must request time from the umpire prior to visiting the



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mound. Visits to the mound or the playing field to check on the status of an injured player will not count as a charged visit. Coaches should try to balance teaching during mound visits with moving the game along.

22. **Balks.** There is no balk rule. Pitchers must pitch from the rubber and should be instructed not to balk. Umpire may call a pitch a no pitch if the pitcher's foot does not contact the rubber at the start of the pitching motion.

### IV. HITTING

23. Players may not fake a bunt and then swing away. If a player squares to bunt he must either bunt or take the pitch. Any player who violates this rule shall be called out.

### V. BASERUNNING

24. Base runners are not allowed to take a lead, they can only leave the base to steal after the pitch has reached the plate. There is no limit on the number of steals.

25. Players may tag up on a fly ball.

26. Runners may advance on a wild throw from the catcher back to the pitcher.

28. Players must slide when there is a play. Failure to slide will result in the player being called out.

29. Headfirst slides are not permitted, except when a player is returning to a base he has previously acquired. A runner who illegally slides headfirst may be called out.

30. A dropped 3rd strike is a strikeout. The catcher does not have to tag the runner or throw to first base. The batter is automatically out. This Ossining rule is different than the Little League International rule used in the tournament. If two coaches for a particular game agree to allow runners to run on a dropped third strike for all or part of a game they can agree to do so to give players some experience with this rule.

31. We do not use the infield fly rule.

The catcher may be run for with two outs to speed up the game.

### VI. SAFETY

31. All players must wear helmets when batting and running the bases. Any player who coaches a base must wear a helmet.

32. Catchers shall wear protective gear; helmet/mask with throat protector, shin guards, chest protector and a protective cup. Protective gear shall be worn during practice sessions and during a game.



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33. Infielders may wear any protective gear approved for that position. It is recommended that they wear a protective cup.
34. Players must be in full uniform at all times. This includes baseball cap, team jersey, pants (long), and rubber cleats or sneakers. No metal spikes.
35. No one shall swing a bat in the dugout. **(DOES LL USE THIS RULE?)** Only the batter on-deck should have a bat in their hands. If the umpire spots a player not on-deck with a bat, they will be given a team warning. The second time a team is warned, the player currently at-bat will be called out as a penalty. The penalty continues for each violation after the first warning.
36. No Jewelry is to be worn (rings, watches, chains, earrings etc.). Pitchers also cannot wear distracting armbands, undershirts or non-prescription sunglasses.
37. No player or fan shall be allowed behind the backstop while the game is in progress.
38. No player shall jump a fence at any time for any reason. No player or spectator shall be allowed to climb onto a backstop or fence surrounding the field of play. Players should be instructed to keep hands out of the fences and backstops.
39. No games shall be played if the parks are closed due to weather or other conditions.
40. Coaches should move quickly to clear the field in the event of thunder and lightning. Coaches should also discontinue games due to darkness. If visibility is in question, play should be stopped. In such a situation, if four innings have been played, the game can be considered complete, and the score reverts to the score at the end of the last complete inning.

### **VII. SPORTSMANSHIP**

41. A standard practice of good sportsmanship shall prevail at all times. This rule applies to everyone attending the game. Common sense should prevail especially at the end of the game. A team line up for handshakes should take place after all games.

### **VIII. UMPIRES**

42. Umpires for the Little League division are former league players, many of whom are not much older than the players. Coaches must establish the standard that the umpires be treated with respect at all times by coaches, players, family members, and spectators. Coaches should model respectful treatment of umpires and make sure they do not attempt to influence umpiring decisions. When a coach has a question about a rule, he should ask for time and confer with the umpires and the opposing coach, out of the earshot of the players. Our Little League umpires are learning, and will make mistakes. Coaches should use this as an opportunity to teach their players to be respectful and demonstrate sportsmanship.



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Anyone in violation of this concept may be asked to leave the field and or the park. The league coordinator is to be notified immediately of any such infraction and or ejection. The umpires can stop the game to control a situation with the assistance of the coaches.

**IX. PRACTICE**

When the fields and batting cages available to our league for practice are determined, coaches will meet to determine a fair distribution of fields and batting cage time. A team cannot reserve a field or batting cage for practice unless given specific instructions otherwise from the league coordinator. If a team is waiting to use the field, practices must be limited to one hour. One practice a week is standard.