



**2020 RULES
and ASAP GUIDE
(A Safety Awareness Program)**

RULES

Setting Expectations

Like managers, coaches and parents, umpires are there to help give our kids the best baseball experience possible. As we looked at ways to improve your child's baseball experience, were reminded of the words of the Little League Mission and Pledge:

Little League Mission

Through proper guidance and exemplary leadership, the Little League program assists youth in developing the qualities of citizenship, discipline, teamwork and physical well-being. By espousing the virtues of character, courage and loyalty, the Little League Baseball program is designed to develop superior citizens rather than superior athletes.

THE LITTLE LEAGUE PLEDGE

I TRUST IN GOD
I LOVE MY COUNTRY
AND WILL RESPECT IT'S LAWS
I WILL PLAY FAIR AND STRIVE TO WIN, BUT WIN OR LOSE,
I WILL ALWAYS DO MY BEST.

The message should be clear.

By **our** leadership, our kids will learn from us to respect the authority of an umpire and to accept things that happen on the field in a sportsmanlike manner. How can we expect our kids to do that if we don't show them the way? Managers and coaches, you have an even more awesome responsibility because you are now the example to twelve to fifteen kids, not just your own.

In order to foster a feeling of mutual respect for each other and for the game the League has these expectations:

Umpires are expected to be:

- 1. Prompt for games**
- 2. Professional in manner and appearance**
- 3. Knowledgeable about the rules**
- 4. Consistent in game administration**
- 5. Flexible relative to player level (e.g. 9-10 A versus 11-12 Majors)**
- 6. Courteous and helpful to players, managers, and coaches**
- 7. Aware of safety issues**

Managers and coaches are expected to be:

- a. Courteous and respectful of umpires, other coaches, and players**
- b. Reasonably knowledgeable about the rules**
- c. Aware there are NO ARGUMENTS on judgment calls**
- d. Aware that discussions about rules interpretations are OK**
- e. Mindful of the Little League Pledge and Mission**

Parents and spectators are expected to be:

- 1. Courteous and respectful of umpires, coaches, and players**
- 2. Cheering positively for players realizing the weight your words carry as parents**
- 3. Mindful of the Little League Pledge and Mission**

Players are expected to be:

- e. Courteous and respectful of umpires, other players and coaches**
- f. Doing their best to play fair and try to win**
- g. Having fun and enjoying themselves learning to play the great game of baseball**
- h. Mindful of the Little League Pledge and Mission**

Notes

PARTICIPANTS

The only people allowed on the field during game play are **Players, Coaches & Umpires**. Absolutely know one else should be on the field for any reason without the express permission from the President or Vice President. Keep the fields tidy and free of obstructions and distractions.

CATCHER

Have your catcher ready before the next inning when possible to keep the flow of the game moving

ATTENTION - PLAYER POSITIONING (COACH PITCH)

Outfielders belong in outfield and in there respective positions (Left Field, Right Field, Left Center, Right Center). This means they should be a reasonable distance from any infield position. On oversize fields starting location is the edge of the green / clay, on 46/60 fields they should be clearly in the green.

All other divisions should know the rules.

BATS

Know your division bat rules. Next Page. Their should be no issue with coaches requesting bats are verified pre-game with the umpire.

HEAD COACH

Questions or disagreements will be resolved by the Head Coach approaching the umpire in a discreet and amenable manner. Yelling or poor behavior (from the dugout or anywhere else) on any part of the Head Coach or his/her assistants will not be tolerated and discipline will be mandated by the league board as they see fit. The goal here is to not escalate beyond whatever the issue at hand may be.

Beyond the umpire, we expect you and your team to act with good sportsmanship.

Some examples of poor sportsmanship :

Not shaking hands after a game, Players throwing bats or helmets, Teams yelling negative comments at the opposing teams, Coaches making demeaning comments about another team or players.

Coaches should not disagree with each other about plays. That is what the umpire is for. Asking for a time to discuss a situation with an umpire does not require a verbal disagreement from the opposing team. Yelling "Play Ball" or anything else while a coach is having a discussion with the umpire is unacceptable..

UMPIRES

The following statements are absolutely true with regard to any baseball game:

- 1) The umpires are the only ones empowered to decide the outcome of a given play.
- 2) If the umpires didn't see it, it didn't happen.
- 3) Balls and strikes are whatever the home plate umpire says they are.
- 4) Out or safe calls are not negotiable.

Be mindful of the negative impact that arguing with an umpire in front of children and spectators would have on the pleasant atmosphere that we all want to enjoy as we participate in or watch a game.

Trust that all of the close calls you'll witness during your team's games will even out over the course of a season.

Remember the close ones that went your team's way, and be thankful, because those calls could have very easily gone the other way.

Protest situations should be prevented if at all possible. When a situation arises that you recognize as possibly leading to a protest, the potential offenders should be notified immediately so that they can take whatever action is necessary to avoid the protest.

For a protest to be considered, the procedures outlined in the Little League rulebook must be followed. Any concerns related to our league's umpires should be directed to league board members. Coaches and umpires know that your efforts on behalf of our neighborhood's children are very much appreciated.

Thanks for all you do to make our season a positive, successful experience for all the children entrusted to your care.

BAT RULES TEE-BALL - MAJORS

Does your bat have this logo?



All players Baseball bats need to have this logo to be legal.



<https://www.littleleague.org/playing-rules/bat-rules/>

TEE-BALL, COACH PITCH, MINORS, MAJORS – USA BASEBALL EMBLEM REQUIRED

The bat must be a baseball bat which meets the USA Baseball Bat standard (USABat) as adopted by Little League. It shall be a smooth, rounded stick, and made of wood or of material and color tested and proved acceptable to the USA Baseball Bat standard (USABat).

The Baseball Bat must have the USA Baseball logo printed. Stickers will not make the bat legal.

An illegal bat must be removed. Any bat that has been altered shall be removed from play. PENALTY – See Rule – 6.06(d). Balls struck or put in play by an illegal bat are considered dead and all runners must return.

Intermediate (50-70) Division and Junior League:

It shall not be more than 34" inches in length; nor more than 2 1/8 inches in diameter, and if wood, not less than fifteen-sixteenths (15/16) inches in diameter (7/8 inch for bats less than 30") at its smallest part. Wood bats taped or fitted with a sleeve may not exceed eighteen (18) inches from the small end.

NOTE 1: Solid one-piece wood barrel bats do not require a USA Baseball logo.

NOTE 2: Also, permitted for the Intermediate (50-70) Division and Junior League Division are bats meeting the BBCOR performance standard, and so labeled with a silkscreen or other permanent certification mark. The certification mark shall be rectangular, a minimum of a half-inch on each side and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting color. Aluminum/alloy and composite bats shall be marked as to their material makeup being aluminum/alloy or composite. This marking shall be silkscreen or other permanent certification mark, a minimum of one-half-inch on each side, and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting color.

Rule 1.10 – Softball

The bat must be a softball bat which meets Little League specifications and standards as noted in this rule. It shall be a smooth, rounded stick and made of wood or a material tested and proved acceptable to Little League standards. The bat shall be no more than 33 inches (34 inches for Junior/Senior League) in length, not more than two and one-quarter (2 1/4) inches in diameter, and if wood, not less than fifteen-sixteenth (15/16) inches in diameter (7/8 inch for bats less than 30 inches) at its smallest part. Non-wood bats shall be printed with a BPF (bat performance factor) of 1.20. Bats may be taped or fitted with a sleeve for a distance not exceeding 16 inches from the small end. Colored bats are acceptable. A non-wood bat must have a grip of cork, tape or composition material, and must extend a minimum of 10 inches from the small end. Slippery tape or similar material is prohibited.

Common Misconceptions or Misunderstandings

Out of the baseline (7.08a1):

The confusion with this rule is the definition of “baseline”. It is not the direct line between two bases.

The runner establishes the baseline: it is a direct line between the runner and the base to which he is advancing or returning. Depending on the circumstances, his/her baseline may change as the play develops.

For example, if the runner takes a wide turn at first into the grass behind the second baseman's normal position, and the throw comes back to first, the baseline goes from the runner to first base. If the first baseman tries to tag him, he cannot deviate more than three feet to either side of this line. The other source of confusion with this rule is the fact that the runner is not out for being out of the baseline unless he's avoiding a tag. If he's running around a fielder who is trying to field a batted ball, there is no violation.

The batter-runner must turn to his right after overrunning first base. - 7.08(c) & (j)

This is a judgment call by the umpire. There is no rule requiring a runner to turn to the right on first base. If by the umpire's judgment the player made an attempt for 2nd base and is tagged by a defensive player who has control of a live ball, the runner will be ruled out. Turning right only enforces to the umpire that the runner has no intention of taking 2nd. To reiterate, this is a judgment call by the umpire.

Catcher Pitcher (Minors / Majors)

Please completely familiarize yourself with the pitch count rules & rules regarding catchers changing to pitcher position located in the rules below in the Minors / Majors Division.

League Rules – Spring 2020 (Coach Pitch Division)

1. Coaches
 - a. Teams can have up to 4 assistant coaches max, and must have ID badge to be on the field or in the dugout
 - b. One adult coach must remain in the dugout at all times
 - c. Two (2) coaches can assist in the field during defensive play to help assisting the positioning of players and must remain on the outfield grass
 - d. Coach Pitch Red: Once a pitch is delivered the coaches cannot communicate with their players. Keep it to a minimum everyone. Advise players before the pitch. Do not yell instructions once the pitcher is in motion.
 - e. No non-coaches shall be in the dugout during play
2. Game is six (6) innings or 1.5 hours of play from first pitch, no new inning will start after timed out. Teams can finish the bottom of the inning once timed out.
3. Five (5) pitches per batter (unless 5th pitch is fouled by batter)
4. Continuous batting order – all players must bat throughout the entire game
5. No infield fly rule, no walks, no bunting, no stealing, no lead-offs are allowed
6. Maximum five (5) runs per inning allowed (except for 6th which will bat through complete lineup or 3 defensive outs, lineup # of players is irrelevant)
7. Base runners must go on contact, no leads. No “jumps” or running starts. Base runners must leave on contact with the bat.
8. Mercy rule is ten (10) runs after bottom of 4th inning or home team has the 10-run lead after top of 4
9. Only one (1) base on an overthrow, play is considered dead after one base regardless of additional throwing or fielding errors
10. Play is shut down when ball is returned to the pitcher or lands in mound circle. Pitcher does not need control of the ball to stop the play. There must be a reasonable attempt to get the ball back to the pitcher in the mound area. There is only ONE base for ONE throwing error per play. A throwing error back to the mound after an overthrow on the same play does not count as a throwing error. ONE BASE ONLY on a single throwing error per play!
 - a. Runner is sent back to previous base if not beyond $\frac{3}{4}$ distance once ball is returned to pitcher (spot to be marked in base path to determine $\frac{3}{4}$ distance to home)
11. COACH PITCH BLUE ONLY: Pitch location for coach – be at a comfortable distance to which you can have some accuracy but not so close as to interfere with a ball put in play. 20'-25' foot or approximately 14 adult steps from home plate is reasonable minimum.
12. COACH PITCH RED ONLY ONLY: Pitch location for coach – 5 to 6 feet in front of rubber, off knee or bucket, which will be marked
 - a. To start the season, pitcher must be no closer to 30' from home plate (16' off mound rubber) to deliver the pitch. All throws are to be overhand throws to simulate pitching motion, and preferred to be in a kneeling position at some point in the season to get used to the trajectory of the ball flight. At

midseason point (or determined later based on player progress), pitchers must all pitch from the tournament required location.

- b. Playoffs will follow tournament rules. Pitcher must deliver pitch from the mound, off knee and one foot touching the mound rubber
- c. If hit ball makes contact with the ball bucket it is considered a dead ball. Ruled as NO PITCH and runners will return to previous base. If ball hits the pitcher, it is considered a live ball and play resumes.
- d. No bucket to be used in tournament play, so all hit balls are live plays. At midseason point (or determined later based on player progress), the bucket will be removed and pitcher will have 5 balls to use for pitching.

13. Defensive assignments

- a. Ten (10) defensive players, 4 to the outfield.
- b. Catchers must play in full gear (with throat guard and cup)
- c. Each player must play one inning of a defensive position in the infield (including catcher)
- d. Four (4) defensive players will play in the outfield
 - d.i. Can play a "short" field behind 2nd base but must remain on the grass
- e. No player will be allowed to play the same position for more than two (2) consecutive innings
- f. Players must play in their designated positions, no shifts, covering both sides of the pitching mound or any other movement of player positions to maximize infield coverage is allowed. Play baseball the way it is meant to be played!
- g. Playoffs will follow tournament rules where players must play at least six (6) consecutive defensive outs and one (1) full plate appearance

14. Gentleman's agreements will not be allowed to enhance or change the rules (# of pitches, pitching location, etc).

**All coaches are encouraged to hold a "coach's meeting" prior to the game to discuss any specific situations that may need to be discussed regarding anything that may be interpreted outside of the set rules to mitigate any confusion

15. Head coach will be only person allowed to appeal and contest calls made by the umpire. Umpire's decision following appeal is final and play will continue.

League Rules – Spring 2020 (Minors / Majors Division)

1. Coaches

- a. One adult coach must remain in the dugout at all times.
- b. Teams can have up to 3 assistant coaches max, and must have ID badge to be on the field or in the dugout
- c. 1st and 3rd base coaches are allowed during offensive play
- d. No coaches shall be in the field during defensive play or sitting outside of dugout at any time during play
- e. No non-coaches shall be in the dugout during play. A total of three (3) coaches are allowed in the dugout during regular season and tournament play.

2. Pitching

- a. Pitching age limits, cap limits and required rest
 - a.i. 11 yrs = 85 pitches max
 - a.ii. 9 or 10 yrs = 75 pitches max
 - a.iii. 8 yrs = 50 pitches max
 - a.iv. If pitcher reaches max allowable pitches while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue until any one of the conditions occur:
 - a.iv.1. That specific batter reaches base
 - a.iv.2. That specific batter is put out
 - a.iv.3. The third out is made to complete that half inning
 - a.v. Required rest for pitchers
 - a.v.1. 66 or more = 4 calendar days of rest
 - a.v.2. 51 to 65 = 3 calendar days of rest
 - a.v.3. 36 to 50 = 2 calendar days of rest
 - a.v.4. 21 to 35 = 1 calendar days of rest
 - a.v.5. 1 to 20 = 0 calendar days of rest
 - a.v.6. Pitch threshold log will revert to the previous cap on the max count for specific rest day. (i.e. – Pitcher starts his last batter at 32 pitches and finishes that batter on 37 pitches and gets pulled, the pitch count reverts to 35 as his log count, and applicable rest shall apply)
 - a.v.7. Days of rest does not count the day the games are played, only days in between games (i.e. – Monday and Thursday game days means 2 days of rest)
 - a.v.8. Pitchers who deliver 41 or more pitches in a game cannot play the catcher position from that point on, 40 pitches is the threshold. 40 or less pitches, a catcher is allowed to catch more than 3 innings.

a.v.9. Catchers who catch (4) or more innings cannot pitch that same day (or catch 3 or less innings, may be able to pitch). Catcher starts an inning it will count as a full inning for that position.

a.v.10. Pitchers cannot pitch in three (3) consecutive days, regardless of pitch count. Mostly will apply to rescheduled games and playoff formats.

a.v.11. If a player reaches the threshold of a rest limit while in progress with a batter, they may finish pitching to that batter and the pitch count will revert back to that previous threshold

a.vi. Coaches are not allowed to warm up pitchers in bullpen area or at the plate during or before a game. "Bench" players can warm up pitchers in between innings provided they are in complete catcher's gear.

a.vii. Pitchers during game can only be warmed up between innings and not in bullpen or outside of dugout during game play

3. Batting

a. Standard baseball "balls and strikes" LL rules

b. Continuous batting order – all players must bat throughout the entire game

c. No Butcher Boy "fake bunts"

d. On deck batters must remain in the dugout, no on deck circle, no practice swings during play (except for first "lead off" batter at the beginning of each half inning in designated area)

e. Illegal bats – a batter is out as soon as he enters the batter's box (both feet) with an illegal bat

4. Base Running

a. Run rabbit run for fielding / throwing errors

b. Infield fly rule in effect at umpire's discretion

c. No lead-offs are allowed

d. Stealing is allowed only when the pitch crosses home plate

e. Pinch Running – Once each inning, a team may utilize a player who is not in the batting order (or was the last batter out in the lineup when using continuous batting order) as a special pinch-runner for any offensive player that reaches base. A player may only be removed for a special pinch-runner one time per game.

e.i. From the 3rd inning and after, if there are two (2) outs in the inning, and the batting team's defensive catcher is on base, he may be removed for a pinch runner (as described above) in order to get his gear put on to help expedite the game between the following half inning. This will count as the player's substitution turn for a pinch-runner.

f. Majors only – dropped 3rd strike batter can advance unless 1st base is covered with a base runner with zero or one out, and can advance in any base running scenario with two outs

g. Majors only – a batter becomes a live base runner if the catcher drops a 3rd strike and first base is not occupied with one or zero outs. All dropped balls on 3rd strikes with two outs, regardless of baserunners, become live runners

5. Defensive assignments

- a. a. Minors will have Ten (10) defensive players, 4 to the outfield. Shortfield allowed but must remain on outfield grass
- b. Majors will have Nine (9) defensive players
- c. Catchers must play in full gear (with throat guard and cup)

6. General

- a. Questions or disagreements will be resolved by the Head Coach approaching the umpire in a discreet and amenable manner. Yelling or poor behavior on any part of the Head Coach or his/her assistants will not be tolerated and discipline will be mandated by the league board as they see fit
- b. Game is six (6) innings or 1 hour and 50 minutes of play from first pitch, no new inning will start after timed out.
- c. Teams can finish the bottom of the inning once timed out.
- d. Time outs – limited to one (1) per inning on offense and two (2) per inning on defense, pitcher is removed upon 2nd visit to the mound in same inning. Three (3) total defensive time outs for the same pitcher will require a pitching change (managers will only visit a single pitcher twice per inning before a pitching change is required).
- e. Regulation games is four (4) complete innings to determine mercy rule and weather events. Mercy rule is ten (10) runs after four (4) innings, or fifteen runs (15) after three (3) innings.
 - e.i. If the visiting team has the ten (10) run lead after the regulation four (4) innings (or 15 runs after 3 innings), the home team will bat the bottom half of that inning.
- f. Suspended play for inclement weather will have rescheduled game start EXACTLY where it left off. Inning, pitch count, etc. Pitching rest will resume as the chart allows. Pitch counts less than 20 will revert to zero on rescheduled day.
- g. Maximum five (5) runs per inning allowed (except for 6th, which will bat through the entire lineup or the defensive team gets three (3) outs first, number of players is irrelevant to this rule.
- h. For the mercy rule (10 runs), the manager of the team with the lesser number of runs shall concede the victory to the opposing team.
- i. Players chanting and cheering for their teammates is encouraged. Derogatory cheers against opposing teams players is not allowed and must be discouraged by the coaches.
- j. Substitution of players from other teams / divisions must follow the age applicable guide from the LL rule book and discussed with opposing team's coach prior to the game so it is known.

7. Playoffs (Tournament rules)

- a. Green Book rules apply for batting order and substitutions
- b. "Married" rule for player substitutions will only apply to tournament play, not the regular season. You must bat continuous through the full lineup throughout the season.
 - b.i. **Green book substitution rules will apply when playing teams outside of our district. (i.e. – Majors teams playing in the Deerfield league, etc.)

ASAP PROGRAM GUIDE