

# SOFTBALL MINOR, MAJOR, JUNIOR & SENIOR LEAGUE PLAYING RULES

## I. LEAGUE RULES

- A. These league rules, in addition to Maryville Little League rules and the “Official Regulations and Playing Rules” of Little League Baseball, govern play. The Maryville Little League League rules shall be those as adopted by Maryville Little League Board of Directors for all leagues with the only exceptions as covered under these rules.
- B. The number of players per team shall be determined by the Board of Directors.
- C. The league shall recognize one Manager and one Coach for protection purposes. Player distribution shall be made in accordance to the Maryville Little League Draft Procedures.
- D. The Protest Committee shall consist of the League Commissioner, the applicable Vice-President of Baseball or Softball, the League’s umpire-in chief and the President. If any member of the Protest Committee is involved as a parent, manager or coach within the league to be governed, a replacement member shall be named by the remaining Protest Committee members.
- E. Games postponed due to inclement weather shall be rescheduled at the earliest available date. Any rescheduled game or games shall be approved by the Commissioner. Complete or incomplete games postponed for any reason shall be rescheduled at the earliest available date. The earliest available dates include Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. and Sundays at 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m., except for Easter and Mother’s Day, and Saturdays when no other regular games are scheduled. Managers and Commissioners shall not make exception to this rule without the permission of the Protest Committee.

## II. GAME RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Team duties at games:
  - 1. Visiting team shall put out bases, scorebook and the scoreboard console from the proper storage places listed below, and then both teams shall prepare the field for play.
  - 2. Home team shall occupy the first base dugout and provide scoreboard operator.
  - 3. Visiting team shall occupy the third base dugout and provide the scorekeeper.
  - 4. Home team shall remove all bases, scorebook, scoreboard console and all field readiness equipment (rakes, shovels, mound covers, wheelbarrows, etc.) back to the proper storage facilities listed below at the conclusion of the last game of the day. If appropriate, the home team shall also cover the mounds and batters’ boxes.
  - 5. Both teams shall clean the dugout area after every game.
- B. In the event of inclement weather, it shall be the responsibility of the managers, coaches and parents to ready the field for play. The original starting times and ending times shall be enforced.
- C. In the event of inclement weather, the managers shall determine (no earlier than 15 minutes prior to the game) if the game is to be played. In the event that the managers cannot agree, the President, a duly delegated representative or the umpire-in-chief of the scheduled game shall make the determination. One game may be canceled and the next one may be played. Once a game is underway, the decision to postpone or cancel due to bad weather is up to the umpire-in-chief. If a member of the Safety Committee or the Board of Directors closes the park due to weather or other safety concerns, all managers, coaches and players shall stop all games in progress and clear the fields. If Field #4 is cleared because of lightening, all other fields must be immediately cleared also. Games postponed because of weather or other approved reasons shall be made up at the earliest available date as determined by the Commissioner. The earliest available date shall include Sundays, Wednesdays, holidays and any other day that the needed field is available with the exception of Easter & Mother’s Day. However, postponed games from leagues that award champions shall take precedent over postponed Tee Ball games. Managers and Commissioners shall not make exception to this rule without the permission of the Protest Committee. If a team decides not to play during the first available date, then the postponed game shall not be made up and the decision of forfeiture will be referred to the Protest Committee.
- D. Post Game Field Duties
  - 1. After the last game of the day, both teams should repair and drag the field, i.e., rake dirt in holes at each base and batter’s box, repair pitcher’s mound, etc.
  - 2. Home team shall remove all bases, scorebook, scoreboard console and all field readiness equipment (rakes, shovels, mound covers, wheelbarrows, etc.) back to the proper storage facilities (listed within these rules) at the conclusion of the last game of the day. If appropriate, the home team shall also cover the mounds and batters’ boxes.
  - 3. Both teams shall clean the dugout area after every game.

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- E. The visiting team is responsible for providing the official scorekeeper. The home team is responsible for providing the official scoreboard operator. Both should be adults.
- F. During the game all gates to the dugout and field must be kept closed.
- G. Players' uniforms must be alike. Shirts should be tucked in, and, if a cap/visor is worn, it must only be the MLL issued cap/visor worn in a correct position.
- H. Teams may have one manager and two coaches during the game. Exception: Minor League may have three coaches (including the coach pitcher) **when the coach pitcher rule has not be suspended.**
- I. There shall be no questions as to the umpire's judgment.
- J. Each manager is responsible for the conduct of his or her players. There shall not be any foul language or inappropriate behavior. Any violation may result in removal of the offender for the remainder of the game. If a player, manager, coach or fan is removed from a game, the umpire must notify the League Commissioner within 24 hours. Any ejected manager, coach, or **player** shall also serve an additional one-game suspension. He or she may not participate as a manager, coach, scorekeeper nor any other role in the next physically played game. The Commissioner of the league or the Protest Committee may impose a stricter penalty if it is deemed appropriate.
- K. No tobacco products shall be allowed on the field or in the dugout at any time. Penalty: Offender is ejected.
- L. Managers shall meet with umpires 5 minutes before the game to turn in lineups and cover any ground rules.
- M. Teams may take five (5) minutes of infield practice before the game. The warm-ups should start at least 15 minutes before game time. A team may start early but would need to share this extra time with the other team. The visiting team shall take infield first.
- N. The batting cages are to be utilized as follows: The batting cage outside of center field on Field#1 is reserved for the games on Field#1. The batting cage next to Field#4 is reserved for games on Field#4. The batting cage next to Field#5 is reserved for games on Field#5. The batting cage next to Field#3 is reserved first for Baseball Minor League and Softball Minor League. If Baseball Minor League and Softball Minor League play on the same night on Field#2 and Field#3, respectively, the batting cage next to Field#3 is utilized on a first come basis. If neither Baseball Minor League and Softball Minor League are scheduled to play, the batting cage next to Field#3 is utilized on a first come basis. For scheduled Minor League, Major League, Junior League and Senior League games, each batting cage is reserved for the home team starting at 45 minutes prior to the scheduled game.

### III. GAMES.

- A. The game shall consist of: a) Senior & Junior League - 7 innings or 2 hours; b) Intermediate - 7 innings or 1 hour and 45 minutes; c) Major League - 6 innings or 1 hour and 45 minutes; d) Minor League - 6 innings or 1 hour and 30 minutes. **No inning shall be started with less than five minutes left before stated time expires.** (An inning shall be held as starting when the final out of the preceding inning is made) **Time Limit Exception: If the game is the last game of the day or there is no immediately scheduled game, no time limit may be imposed in Major & Senior League.** All Minor League games shall have the stated time limit. An inning in progress shall be completed if it is necessary to determine the outcome of the game. In case of a tie, the game is to be played out unless the time limit is called. **Time Limit Exception All Leagues: If there is no immediately scheduled game on the field, tie games or games not reaching regulation may be continued (subject to curfew rules) until a winner can be determined or until the umpire-in-chief determines that continued play may encroach upon the next scheduled game starting time. A regulation game consists of a) Senior League: 5 innings or 4 and 1/2 with the home team ahead; b) Major League: 4 innings or 3 and 1/2 with the home team ahead; c) Minor League: 4 innings or 3 and 1/2 with the home team ahead or a time limited game.**
- B. Rule 4.10(e): **Junior & Senior League:** Rule 4.10(e) regarding one team being ten runs ahead after five innings will be utilized. A team **shall** have to concede as outlined in rule 4.10(e). **Major & Minor League:** Rule 4.10(e) regarding one team being ten runs ahead after four innings will not be utilized. A team **does not have to** concede as outlined in rule 4.10 (e).
- C. Managers and umpires must keep the game moving, and coaches shall not intentionally delay a game. If, in the umpire's judgment, a coach is intentionally delaying the game, the umpire shall warn the coach that the player must "play ball" and shall report the incident to the commissioner of the league. Failure to "play ball" could result in ejection from the game.

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- D. A game shall not be started or continued with less than 9 players. If there are fewer than 9 players present before the game or during game time, player(s) shall be "picked-up." Any player "picked" up shall be picked up according to the following restrictions: a) Any "picked-up" player must be a player at Maryville Little League; b) Minor League - Any Minor League player who is league age 9-years-old; A Minor League team shall not "pick up" players if there are 9 regular players present; c) Major League - Any Major League player who is league age 11-years-old; d) Senior League - Any Senior League player who is **not** the same league age as the oldest league age player in the Senior League. **Any player arriving late to a game, if inserted (see rule III F), shall replace any "picked up" player in the game. However, the "picked up" player must play nine consecutive outs and bat once before being replaced.** If a game is delayed because a team is unable to field enough players, the original ending time shall still be enforced. There shall be no postponing the game until another date except in the case of inclement weather.
1. The "picked up" player or players must play defense starting first in right field (in normal right field position), secondly in left field and thirdly in center (Minor League - right center) field. The "picked up" players must bat starting last, then second from last and then third from last in the batting order. Exception: If a game is in progress when a player is "picked up," the "picked up" player shall bat in the order for the player he or she replaces. The maximum number of "pick up" players shall be three.
  2. If a team cannot or will not "pick up" players to play at the scheduled time to play or to complete a game, the decision to forfeit or reschedule the game shall be made by the Protest Committee.
  3. The manager must notify the official scorer and the opposing Team Manager as to any "picked up" players prior to the start of the game. Penalty: The Team Manager shall be subject to possible suspension by the Protest Committee.
- E. Participation: When the continuous batting order is NOT used, each player on a team roster shall participate in each game for a minimum of six defensive outs and bat at least one time. Minor League - The outfield shall have four players. Exception: If only nine players are present, the outfield shall be played with only three players. When the continuous batting order is used, field substitution shall be unlimited except as follows: Players shall play in the field for at least six defensive outs. **Note: if three outs aren't recorded in a half-inning AND a player plays the entire half-inning in the field, it shall count as three defensive outs.** At the conclusion of the third inning, if any player has not yet participated in the field, any such player shall be inserted and play the field in the 4th inning and complete the minimum participation requirements of this rule.
1. At the conclusion of the third inning (fourth for Junior and Senior League), the umpire in-chief shall determine if every player on each team's roster has participated in the game. If any player has not yet participated, any such player shall be inserted into the batting order when the continuous batting order is NOT being used, play the field in the 4th (5th for Junior and Senior League) inning, and complete the minimum participation requirements of this rule. Note: If the umpire in-chief fails in this determination, the manager is not relieved of his or her responsibilities under this rule.
  2. If a manager violates this rule, the player shall start the next game and complete the required playing time for both games.
  3. The game manager for violation of this rule shall for the:
    - a. First offense - receive a warning.
    - b. Second offense - be suspended for the next scheduled game.
    - c. Third offense - be suspended for the remainder of the season.Note: If the violation is determined to have been intentional, a more severe penalty may be assessed by the Board of Directors. The penalty for the manager is waived for a game that is shorten for any reason if the manager inserted all substitutes according to E.1. Above.
- F. **All divisions of Softball shall use a continuous batting order. Under this rule, a player may be entered and/or re-entered defensively in the game anytime provided he/she meets the requirement of mandatory play.**

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- G. Continuous Batting Order: All players attending the game must bat before returning to the first of the batting order. All players must bat in correct order from the beginning of the game until the end of the game. Exception:
1. If a player becomes injured or ill during his or her time at-bat and is unable to complete the at-bat, the next batter shall become the proper batter assuming the current count of the injured or ill batter. The batting order then continues in the listed order.
  2. If a player cannot complete a game for any reason, his or her place in the batting order shall be skipped for the remainder of the game without penalty. If the player returns, he or she is merely inserted into the player's original spot in the batting order and the game continues.
  3. Players arriving late may be inserted into the lineup, if the manager so chooses and mandatory play does not apply to such players. If a continuous batting order is used, if a player arriving late is inserted, the player must be inserted at the bottom of the batting order.
- H. Minor League Run Limit - Any half-inning ends when: 1) Three out are recorded, or 2) All players on the roster have batted once in that half-inning, or, 3) five runs have scored. Note: #3) does not apply to the last half-inning of the game (the 6th inning only) for either team, nor would it apply to any half-inning in an "extra inning" (beyond the 6th). #1 and #2 apply to all half-innings.
- I. All players, coaches and managers must be in the dugout when their team is batting unless they are base coaches. Both base coaches may be adults. **At least one adult must remain in the dugout at all times.** No unauthorized person shall be allowed on the field.
- J. In accordance with Little League Baseball regulations, there shall be no bat boys. This function should be performed by the next batter (after the current batter hits), a manager or coach.
- K. Pitching Distance: The distance between the front side of the pitcher's plate and home base (the rear point of home plate) shall be - Minor League: 35 feet; Major League: 40 feet; Senior and **Junior League: 43 feet.**
- L. Designated Hitter: Senior League only. Please see rule 3.03 in rule book.
- M. **All bats must be in compliance with Rule 1.10.**

### IV. PITCHING (Regulation VI and Rules 4.10, 4.11, 4.12 and 8.03 (c))

- A. Any player on the team roster may pitch. EXCEPTION: A player who has attained a league age of twelve (12) is not eligible to pitch in the Minor League.
- B. **Minors/ Little League (Majors):** A player may pitch in a maximum of twelve (12) innings in a day. If a player pitches in seven (7) or more innings in a day, one calendar day of rest is mandatory. Delivery of a single pitch constitutes having pitched in an inning. **Junior/Senior League:** No pitching restrictions apply. NOTE: The local league Board of Directors or District may impose additional pitching limitations during the Regular Season and interleague.
- C. **Minor/ Major:** A pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position, can return as a pitcher anytime in the remainder of the game but only once in the same inning as he/ she was removed. A pitcher, withdrawn from the game offensively or defensively for a substitute, may not re-enter the game as a pitcher. Exception: See Rule 3.03(c). **Junior/ Senior League:** A pitcher may be withdrawn from the game, offensively or defensively, and return as pitcher once per inning provided the return does not violate the substitution, visits per pitcher, or mandatory play rule(s).
- D. **Little League (Major) Division/ Junior/ Senior League:** Not more than five (5) pitchers per team shall be used in one game. EXCEPTION: In case of illness or injury to a fifth pitcher, an additional pitcher may be used.
- E. Violation of any section of this regulation can result in protest of the game in which it occurs. Protest shall be made in accordance with Playing Rule 4.19.

#### NOTES:

1. The withdrawal of an ineligible pitcher after that pitcher is announced, or after a warm-up pitch is delivered, but before that player has pitched a ball to a batter, shall not be considered a violation. Little League officials are urged to take precautions to prevent protests. When a protest situation is imminent, the potential offender should be notified immediately.
2. Innings pitched in games declared "Regulation Tie Games" or "Suspended Games" shall be charged against pitcher's eligibility. NOTE 1: In suspended games resumed on a subsequent day, the pitchers of record at the time the game was halted may continue to pitch to the extent of their remaining eligibility for that day.
3. Minors/ Little League (Majors): If doubleheaders are played, the limitation of twelve (12) innings in a calendar day would apply to each pitcher. A pitcher who pitches in the first game may pitch in the second game provided that pitcher has eligibility remaining.
4. There is no limit to the number of pitchers of a particular league age group on a team that can be used. EXCEPTION: A player who has attained a league age of twelve (12) is not eligible to pitch in the Minor League.

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5. If the pitcher desires to walk a batter intentionally, all pitches must be legally delivered to the batter.

### V. BASE RUNNING

- A. If the pitcher has possession of the ball within the eight (8) foot circle, the base runner(s) shall not leave the base(s) until the pitched ball is batted or reaches the batter in Minor League OR in Major, Junior & Senior League, the ball has been released by the pitcher. Penalty: "No pitch" shall be declared, the ball shall be immediately declared "dead" and the runner(s) shall be declared out. Rule 7.08(a) and Rule 7.13.
- B. Runners leaving the base before the ball reaches the batter (Minor) or is released by the pitcher (Major/Junior/Senior) cannot be appealed. If the umpire sees any runner leave early on a pitched ball then Rule V(A) above is immediately imposed. Rule 7.13
- C. When a runner is off a base after a pitch or as a result of a batter completing a turn at bat, and while the pitcher has the ball within the eight (8) foot radius circle, the runner must immediately attempt to advance to the next base or return to the base the runner is entitled. Once the pitcher has possession of the ball within the circle, all runners off their bases must immediately attempt to advance to the next base or return to the last base occupied. Penalty: "No pitch" shall be declared, the ball shall be immediately declared "dead" and the runner(s) shall be declared out. Note: If the pitcher has possession of the ball within the pitcher's circle, and is not making a play (a fake throw is considered a play), runners not in contact with their bases must immediately attempt to advance or return to base. Rule 7.08(a)
- D. Dropped Third Strike: Major/Junior/Senior/Big League: The batter becomes a runner when the third strike called by the umpire is not caught, providing (1) first base is unoccupied or (2) first base is occupied with two out. NOTE: A batter forfeits the opportunity to advance to first base when he/she enters the dugout or any other dead ball area.
- E. All Divisions: For the first offense of a batter slinging a bat, the batter and manager shall be warned. For a second offense by the same batter during the same game, the batter ***shall be immediately removed from the game*** unless the ball is hit and the player is on base as a result of hitting the ball. If the player is on base, ***the player shall be removed*** from the game after the player is retired from the bases or when the half-inning is over. Note1: If a continuous batting order is used the batter's position is skipped with no penalty for the rest of the game. Note2: If the team only has 9 players, the removed player may continue to play the field for the remainder of the game.
- F. Major League & Minor League: A runner is out if sliding headfirst **while advancing** to the next base, but is not out if sliding head first while returning to a base. Rule 7.08
- G. Play shall stop on any inadvertent called time-out by the Umpire.
- H. Minor League - The "infield fly" rule shall not be enforced.
- I. Minor League - There shall be no stealing. ***The protest committee is empowered to suspend the application of this rule. If the protest committee suspends this rule, there shall be no stealing while an adult manager or coach is pitching.***