



Pocono Mountain East Little League

2023 Minors Baseball Rules

1) Team Composition:

- A) Each team must field a minimum of eight (8) players for a legal lineup. (Modification of LL Rule 4.16 and 4.17)
- B) Only players on the official league roster provided to the manager / head coach by the league commissioner are permitted to play in a league game unless assigned by Player Agent. (Summary of Regulation V)
- C) If a team knows it will be short players for a game the manager can make a request to the Player Agent for fill-in players. The Player Agent maintains a list of eligible pool players from which the fill-in players will be drawn. **DO NOT CANCEL A GAME BECAUSE YOUR SHORT PLAYERS BEFORE WE EXHAUST EVERY AVENUE** (Summary of Regulation V)

2) Equipment:

- A) The bat must be a baseball bat which meets the USA Baseball Bat standard (USABat) as adopted by Little League. (LL Rule 1.10)
- B) Traditional Batting donuts are not allowed to be used. (LL Rule 1.10)
- C) Any non-adult personnel occupying a coach's box must wear a helmet. (LL Rule 1.16)
- D) Helmets cannot be removed during play. After a warning the player can be removed for unsportsmanlike conduct. (LL Rule 1.16)
- E) All male players wear athletic supporters while playing and are required to wear a metal, fiber or plastic type protective cup while playing catcher. (LL Rule 1.17). MCLL strongly encourages all players to wear protective cups regardless of position.
- F) All catching masks must be outfitted with a "dangling" type throat protector" (LL Rule 1.17)
- G) Shoes with metal spikes or cleats are not permitted. Shoes with molded cleats are permissible. (LL Rule 1.11.h)
- H) C-flaps and other protective helmet attachments are permitted so long as the helmet is not altered in a manner that voids the helmet safety certification ([NOCSAE certification](#)). For example, drilling holds in a helmet will void the certification, as may the addition of after-market third party C-flaps.

3) Game:

- A) Home team will occupy the 1st base dugout and bench area.
- B) Each team must supply a scorekeeper and pitch counter. The home team keeps the official book.
- C) Teams are responsible for tracking their own pitch counts and removing players when pitch count limits have been reached. (See Pitching)
- D) Each game shall consist of six (6) innings. Or 90 min time limit whichever comes first. No new inning will be started within 15 minutes before the official end time. (LL Rule 4.10a)
- E) An official game shall consist of at least four (4) innings, 3 & 1/2 innings if the home team is ahead. (LL Rule 4.10c)
- F) A team may only score five (5) runs per inning. After the 5th run has scored, that team's at-bat is over. (Rule 2.00 - An Inning) With the exception of the last inning there will be no run limit 3 outs must be played (2nd Half of Season)
- G) A 15 run mercy rule is in effect. If after 3 innings, two and one-half innings if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of fifteen (15) runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede the victory to the opponent. NOTE: (1) If the visiting team has a lead of fifteen (15) runs or more, the home team must bat in its half of the inning. (LL Rule 4.10e)
- H) A 10 run mercy rule is in effect. If after 4 innings, three and one-half innings if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of ten (10) runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede the victory to the opponent. NOTE: (1) If the visiting team has a lead of ten (10) runs or more, the home team must bat in its half of the inning. (LL Rule 4.10e)

4) Offense:

- A) A continuous batting order that includes all players on the team roster present for the game batting in order shall be used. (LL Rule 4.04)
- B) When a player is injured, becomes ill, or must leave the game site after the start of the game, the team will skip over him/her when his/her time at bat comes up without penalty. If the injured, ill, or absent player returns he/she is merely inserted into their original spot in the batting order and the game continues. Also, if a player arrives late to a game site, if the manager chooses to enter him/her in the lineup (see Rule 4.01 NOTE 2), he/she would be added to the end of the current lineup. (Variant of LL Rule 4.04)

- C) The on-deck position is not permitted in Little League (Majors) Division and below. (LL Rule 1.08 NOTE 1)
- D) Only one player (the batter) is allowed to handle a bat at any time - the batter at the plate. All other players must remain on the "bench". An assistant coach or parent must monitor this requirement to avoid injuries. (LL Rule 1.08 NOTE 2)
- E) Any player throwing a bat will be given a "player warning" for throwing equipment (each player will receive one warning per game). Any further action of throwing equipment will result in the offending player to be called out. If that player had put the ball in play (with less than 2 outs and other runners on) then it is a live ball and the defense may make a play to record an out. In such a case where one of the other runners was called out then both that runner and the offending player would be out.
- F) Batters are OUT on a dropped 3rd strike. (LL Rule 6.05.b.2)
- G) Runners may not take a lead and cannot leave the base until the ball has crossed home plate. **Secondary Leads should be taken after every pitch** (LL Rule 7.13)
- H) **The following restrictions on stealing apply.**
- 1) Players may only advance one base (total) on a passed ball or attempted steal.
 - 2) Catchers should be encouraged to make a play on an attempted steal if there is a chance to throw the runner out. The base runner is not allowed to advance on an overthrow we want to encourage catchers to throw down.
 - 3) First half of the season a runner must be hit home. 2nd half of season a team may only have one successful steal of home per inning. (Only During Kid Pitch) Advancing home on an overthrow from the catcher to pitcher does not count as a steal home.
- I) Head first sliding is not allowed and that player will automatically be called out. Exception: Any player who has possession of a base may "dive back" into the same base to avoid being thrown out by a fielder making a play. (LL Rule 7.08.4)

- J) There is no “must slide” rule. However, the runner is out when the runner does not slide or attempt to get around a fielder who has the ball and is waiting to make the tag. (LL Rule 7.08.a.3)

- K) Pursuant to LL Rule 7.00(b) a "courtesy runner" shall be permitted for a player who is on base with two outs and is the designated catcher or pitcher in the next half inning. The courtesy runner will be the player that made the last out (i.e., the player that made the second out of the inning). No courtesy runner is allowed in the last inning of the game (i.e., the 6th inning or as may be designated by the umpire).

5) Defense:

- A) Teams are allowed to use 10 players on defense by adding a fourth outfielder.

- B) There is no infield fly (Modification LL Rule 2.00)

- C) Playing Rule IV is modified so that each player must play at least three (3) innings by the end of the fifth (5th) inning of the game and **each player must have played both an infield and outfield position** by that point of the game. The Catcher position counts as an infield position. This rule is intended to encourage player development but not easy to enforce, therefore coaches are encouraged to follow this rule with integrity. **During the playoffs this rule is suspended although all players must play in the field for 6 defensive outs.**

- D) No one player can play a single position for more than 2 consecutive innings. We want to encourage all players to learn all positions at this level. During the playoffs this rule is suspended.

- E) Playing Rule 4.03(c) is modified such that outfielders must play approximately 20 feet or more beyond the base path which typically means that players must be stationed on the outfield grass. (Modification of LL Rule 4.03(c))

- F) Infielders must start their defensive position within 5 feet of the baseline in which they are playing. (Modification of LL Rule 4.03(c))

- G) A coach is allowed to be out in the outfield behind all outfielders in order to assist with instruction it's recommended but not mandatory

6) Pitching:

- A) Pitching limitations – Regulation VI regarding pitch limits MUST be adhered to. (<https://www.littleleague.org/playing-rules/pitch-count/>). A player's pitch count for the purposes of day(s) rest threshold is determined by the first pitch thrown to their final batter
- B) The pitcher's mound is set at 43 feet from home. (Modification of LL Rule)
- C) Any player who has played the position of catcher in four (4) or more innings in a game is not eligible to pitch on that calendar day. The catcher receiving one pitch to a batter in the fourth inning constitutes having caught four (4) innings. Warm-up pitches do not count. (Regulation VI.a)
- D) Any player who played the position of catcher for three innings or less, and delivers 21 pitches or more in the same day may not return to the catcher position, except if a pitcher reaches 20 pitches while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch and maintain their eligibility to play catcher until that batter reaches base, is retired, third out is made, or pitcher is removed prior to the batter completing the at-bat. (Regulation VI.a)
- E) A pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day, except if a pitcher reaches 40 pitches while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch and maintain their eligibility to play catcher until that batter reaches base, is retired, third out is made, or pitcher is removed prior to the batter completing the at-bat (Regulation VI.c)
- F) Under no circumstances may a player pitch more than 3 consecutive days or more than one game in a day. (Regulation VI.d and k)
- G) A pitcher is allowed eight (8) warm-up pitches between innings or one (1) minute, whichever comes first. An initial eight (8) pitches will be awarded to any pitcher entering the game. (LL Rule 8.03)
- H) Managers and coaches are permitted to warm up pitchers if the catcher is not ready or when a bench player is not able to. Catchers or bench players wearing the proper face mask and a protective cup are strongly encouraged to warm up pitchers. (Modification of Regulation XIV.f)
- I) There are illegal pitches but no balks in this division. (LL Rule 8.05)
- J) If a pitcher hits (2) two batters in one inning or three (3) batters in one game, the pitcher will be removed from and will not be eligible to return to the pitcher position for the remainder of the game.

K) A manager or coach may come out twice in one inning to visit the pitcher, but the third time out, the player must be removed as pitcher. A manager may come out three times in one game to visit the pitcher, but the third time out the player must be removed as pitcher. 2 per inning, 3rd visit a removal; 3 per game, 4th visit a removal. (LL Rule 8.06)

L) Only ONE pitcher may pitch a maximum of 2 innings in a game All other pitchers are limited to a maximum of 1 inning that game (Throwing 1 pitch is considered an inning pitched) We want teams to develop multiple pitchers on their rosters.

M) There is a maximum of 3 walks per inning (Hit By Pitch is not a Walk) If a team has walked 3 batters in an inning and reaches a 3 ball count on another batter in that same inning a coach from the batting team shall come out and finish the at bat. A batter cannot be walked by the coach. We will adhere to the following counts when a coach comes in to pitch.

3-0=3 Pitch Max

3-1=2 Pitch Max

3-2=1 Pitch Max

A foul ball allows the batter to receive another pitch. When the at bat ends Kid pitch will resume until another 3-ball count occurs. In the event of a pitching change the 3 walk 3 ball count carries over to the new pitcher.

N) For the first half of the season no batter shall be put on base by a walk. If a kid pitcher walks the batter a coach from the batting team will come out and pitch until the batter either puts the ball in play or strikes out.

O) 11yr olds are allowed to pitch in minors 12yr olds are not