

Lakeshore Baseball and Softball Association

Rules for Minors Baseball

A. Governing Rules

- A1.** Except where specifically amended in this document, the rules of the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFSHSA) will govern baseball play in the Lakeshore Baseball and Softball Association.
- A2.** If there is a conflict between these rules and the rules of the NFSHSA, these rules apply.

B. Game Administration

Field Dimensions

- B1.** The base paths are 60 feet in length. Measurements are taken from the point of home plate to the back edges of first base and third base, and from the foul line edges of first and third base to the center of second base. First and third base are entirely inside the corners of the diamond while second base is centered on the corner.
- B2.** The pitching rubber is located 46 feet from the point of home plate in a direct line with second base. At the North and South Fields, the correct pitching rubber is the one furthest from home plate and closest to second base.

Uniforms and Appearance

- B3.** All players are to wear Lakeshore Uniforms during games, including hat, shirt, and socks, but will not be disqualified from playing in a game for failure to wear a complete uniform. It is the responsibility of coaches to discipline players who repeatedly violate this rule. Hats must be worn correctly and shirts must be tucked in at all times.
- B4.** Wearing of jewelry by players is discouraged. Umpires may require the removal of any jewelry which, in the umpire's judgment, may present a hazard to the player or others.
- B5.** Catchers must wear facemasks, chest protectors, shin guards. Boys must also wear protective cups.

Line-ups and Player Participation

- B6.** Before each league game, coaches will provide a batting order that includes every player expected to participate in that game. Players will bat in that order throughout the game whether they are playing in the field or not.
- B7.** Teams on defense will have 10 fielders, four of whom will be in the outfield.

- B8.** No player should play in the field more than one inning longer than any other player. Every player must play in the field for at least 4 innings per game and should not be off the field for two consecutive innings. Therefore, if one player plays 4 innings, no one else can play more than 5. Exceptions to this rule may only occur as the result of injury or premature termination of a game due to weather or darkness.
- B9.** A player who has not arrived prior to his/her first at bat will be removed from the line-up without penalty to the team. A player who arrives after having been removed from the line-up, or who was not included in the original line-up, will be placed at the end of the batting order.
- B10.** A pitcher may pitch a maximum of three innings per game, including extra innings. A pitcher must pitch consecutive innings, unless the game goes into extra innings. [*Example:* A pitcher who pitches 1 or 2 innings during regular play may return during extra innings to complete his/her total of 3.] A player throwing one or more pitches in an inning is credited with an inning pitched.
- B11.** Players that have been removed from the field for a substitute may re-enter the game after the team has recorded at least three outs while the substitute was in the field, or at any time if the substitute is unable to continue play due to illness or injury. However, a pitcher may not re-enter as a pitcher, except during extra innings as described in Rule **B10**, above.

Umpires and Game Conduct

- B12. Umpire's Rule:** The umpire(s) shall have the power to rule on any matter not specifically covered by the NFSHSA rules or these rules.
- B13.** Games are six innings. A game called on account of weather, darkness, or any other reason is official if the team trailing in the score has batted at least four times.
- B14. 5 Run Rule:** An inning will end when the team batting has either scored 5 runs or made 3 outs, except for the 6th inning or any subsequent extra innings played.
- B15. 15 Run Rule:** During the regular season, if either team is leading by 15 runs or more after the opposing team has had 4 or more turns at bat, the game will be ended provided the coach of the losing team consents.
- B16.** If there is a question regarding a call by an umpire: a coach may call time out and ask to speak to the umpire. The opposing coach will be included in the discussion. Only questions concerning the proper application of the rules by the umpire may be raised. Calls involving solely the judgment of the umpire may not be questioned.
- B17.** Any attempt to injure a player, coach, or umpire will result in the ejection of the offending player. In addition, an offending player who is a batter or baserunner will be ruled out.

Coaches

- B18.** Base coaches may be players (wearing a helmet) or coaches.
- B19.** A coach may call for time out to talk to a pitcher. A pitcher must be removed if a coach calls for two timeouts to talk to the same pitcher in one inning.

C. Pitching

- C1. The balk rule will not be enforced. An umpire who observes a balk will immediately call time out, rule “no pitch,” and explain to the pitcher and the pitcher’s coach the action that constituted a balk.
- C2. A pitcher who hits three batters in the same inning must be removed and cannot return to pitch in the same game, including extra innings.

D. Batting

- D1. Bats used in Lakeshore baseball games that have not been provided by the Lakeshore Baseball must be ‘Little League’ approved.
- D2. **Thrown Bat.** A batter who throws a bat deliberately will be called out and ejected from the game; all runners will return to their original bases. A batter who throws a bat unintentionally will be warned on the first occurrence. On the second and any subsequent occurrence, the batter will be called out and all runners will return to their original bases. The umpire’s judgment as to the batter’s intent will be conclusive.
- D3. The batter is out, and the ball is dead, on a third strike. The batter does not have to be put out.
- D4. **Catchers Interference.** If the batter hits the catcher’s glove while in the act of swinging at a pitched ball, it is catcher’s interference. The ball is dead. The batter is awarded first base and the runners advance to the next base if forced to do so.

E. Fielding and Base Running

- E1. Runners must remain in contact with the base until the pitched ball crosses home plate. The following provisions apply when a runner is judged to have left the base too early:
 - a. Each **team** will receive one warning. In the event of a warning:
 - i. Any outs made in the subsequent action stand.
 - ii. If the ball was not put into play by the batter, **all** runners not called out return to their original bases.
 - iii. If the ball is put in play, the runner who left early and any runners behind him/her will occupy the base(s) closest to where the batter finished. If the batter is out, the runner who left early, and any runners behind him/her must return to their original base(s).
 - b. Violations after the team warning will result in the offending runner being ruled out. The disposition of other runners will follow the provisions in **E1-a-ii, iii.**

- E2.** A base runner must avoid contact with a defensive player, whenever possible. At home plate, a runner must slide when a defensive player has the ball and is attempting to put the runner out.
- E3.** A base runner who, in the judgment of the umpire(s), intentionally runs into a defensive player will be ruled out.
- E4.** A base runner who is on third base may only advance home on a ball which is hit into play by a batter or by being forced home. A base runner may not score on a wild pitch, a passed ball, an error on the return throw to the pitcher or on an attempted steal.

F. End of Season Tournament

- F1.** All teams will play in an end-of-season tournament. Teams will be seeded according to number drawn using a lottery system.
- F2.** All tournament games must go the full six innings unless the coach of a team that is losing by 15 or more runs after his team has had four turns at bat elects to concede.

Appendix

Some Commonly Misunderstood Rules

Advancing Home from Third Base. A base runner on third base may not score on a wild pitch, a passed ball, on any return throw to the pitcher or as a result of an attempt by the defensive team to put out a runner stealing second or third base. **Note to Coaches:** The intention of this rule is to encourage the catcher to make the throw on an attempted stolen base and to ensure that the defensive team will not otherwise be at a disadvantage when playing an inexperienced catcher or fielder.

Batter Hit by Pitch While Swinging: If a batter is hit while swinging, it is a strike if the batter misses or hits it foul. If the batter hits the ball into fair territory, it is in play. The umpire must use discretion in judging whether a batter is making a legitimate attempt to swing.

Batter Hit on Hand by Pitch While Not Swinging: The batter is awarded first base. The batter's hands are not "part of the bat."

Batter Batting Out of Order: If a batter is batting – or has batted – out of order, the following rules apply:

- a. If the umpire is notified of the mistake, by either team, before the at-bat is completed, the correct batter will complete the at-bat with the existing ball/strike count.
- b. If the umpire is notified of the mistake by the defensive team, after the at-bat is completed and before a pitch has been made to the next batter:
 - i. The player who should have batted is declared out.
 - ii. If the improper batter has reached base, he or she will be removed from the bases and all players who advanced as a result of the play that put the improper batter on base (e.g. hit, walk, error, fielder's choice, etc.) return to their original bases.
 - iii. If the improper batter made an out, the out is nullified and any runners who advanced on the play return to their original bases.
 - iv. Runners who advance on their own while the improper batter is at the plate (e.g. by steal, passed ball, wild pitch), keep the bases they have advanced to.
- c. If the umpire is notified of the mistake, by either team, after the at-bat is completed and after a pitch has been made to the next batter, the at bat is considered legal and the player following the improper batter in the line-up becomes the next batter.

Foul Ball Situations:

- a. Home plate is in fair territory.
- b. The bases are also in fair territory. If a ball hits a base, it is a fair ball no matter where it goes afterwards.
- c. If a ball first touches the ground in the outfield (beyond first or third base), all that matters is where it lands. A ball hit fair that passes first or third base in fair territory but lands in foul territory, is a foul ball.

- d. If a ball is played in the infield (between home plate and either first or third base), all that matters is where the ball is when it is touched by a player. A ball that rolls down the baseline is fair if it stops or is touched in fair territory. Conversely, it is foul if it stops or is touched in foul territory.
- e. If the batter is the first player to touch the ball, he/she is out if the ball is in fair territory when the touching occurs. If the ball is in foul territory when it hits the batter, it is a foul ball, even if it later bounces into fair territory.

Infield Fly Rule: The infield fly rule is called when, with two or more baserunners in force situations and less than two outs, a batter hits a fair fly ball and the umpire judges that an infielder could catch the ball with ordinary effort. If the infield fly rule is called, the batter is automatically out and the runners advance at their own risk. They may tag up on a caught ball. If the infield fly rule is called, and the fielder fails to catch the ball, *the runners do not have to run*.

The purpose of the infield fly rule is to prevent a fielder from intentionally missing a fly ball in order to start a double or triple play.

Runner Hit by a Batted Ball: A runner (including the batter) who is hit in fair territory by a batted ball, is out, and the ball is immediately dead. Other runners return to the last base they reached safely.

Contact between batter running to first base and catcher fielding the ball. This is not interference on the batter or obstruction on the catcher unless the umpire judges that the contact was intentional.