



LAKESHORE BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION

MINORS BASEBALL RULES

Objectives

The primary objectives of Minors Baseball are to teach the fundamentals of the game, to improve the players' skills, and to develop habits of teamwork and good sportsmanship.

Governing Rules

1. Except where specifically amended in this document, the rules of Little League Baseball will govern baseball play in the Lakeshore Little League.
2. If there is a conflict between these rules and the Little League rules, these rules apply.

Field Layout

1. 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.
2. The front of the pitching rubber is located 46 feet from the point of home plate in a direct line with second base.

Game Administration

1. The "Home Team" is in the field first and bats last.
2. A division coordinator designated by the league will determine whether fields are playable. Coaches must not conduct practice or play games when the coordinator has determined the fields to be unplayable. The division coordinator will communicate with the coaches if the fields are closed. The coaches are responsible for communicating with their players/parents.

Duration and Weather Delays

1. A game is 6 innings or 2 hours, whichever comes first. The top of an inning of a weekday game may not start after 7:50 P.M.
2. A game may be shortened by mutual agreement of the coaches for reasons such as darkness or inclement weather.
3. A game may be suspended for rain by the umpire and may be restarted at any time provided that the field conditions permit.
4. A game must be suspended immediately if lightning is observed by anyone. If using a weather app with lightning tracking, a game should be suspended if lightning is noted within 10 miles of the field. Play may be resumed a minimum of 30 minutes after the last lightning bolt was observed.



5. If a weather delay lasts more than 60 minutes, the game should be postponed.

Uniforms and Appearance

1. All players are to wear Lakeshore uniforms during games, including hat, shirt, and baseball pants, 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.
2. 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.

Rules of Play

1. There is no leading off. Runners may not leave the base until after the ball has crossed home plate.
2. Bunting is **NOT** permitted.
3. Runners may advance after a caught fly ball, provided that they tag up. If a runner leaves the base before a fly ball is caught, and the ball is thrown to the base before he returns, the runner is out (i.e. "doubled up").
4. If a thrown ball goes out of play, regardless of where the throw originated, the play is dead and runners advance one base beyond the base to which they are nearest.
5. If a thrown ball does not go out of play, regardless of where the throw originated, the play is **not dead** and runners may advance at their own risk.
 - a. **Exception:** If the ball is thrown from the catcher on a steal of a base, the ball is dead and runners may not advance. See "Baserunning" below.
6. A runner who intentionally collides with a fielder is out. If a fielder obstructs the path of a runner, the runner advances to the next base without liability to be put out.

Safety

1. All batters, runners and catchers must wear protective helmets.
2. Catchers must also wear a facemask, throat/neck guard, chest protector, shin guards, and protective cup (boys only).
3. All bats not being used at the plate or on-deck circle must remain on the ground. Warm up swings are only allowed at the plate or at the designated on-deck circle. Only the active batter and on-deck batter are allowed to have a bat in their hands. The head coach of each team will determine the location of their team's on-deck circle.
4. Sliding is permitted, and is encouraged as necessary to avoid collisions. Sliding is only allowed **FEET FIRST. NO HEADFIRST SLIDING IS ALLOWED.** If a runner slides headfirst, the runner may be called out at the umpire's discretion.



5. At home plate, a runner must slide when a defensive player has the ball and is attempting to put the runner out. No collisions with the catcher will be permitted. A base runner who, in the judgment of the umpire(s), intentionally runs into the catcher or another defensive player will be ruled out.

Scoring

1. Runs scored, pitch counts, and other game statistics must be logged using GameChanger. Failure to use GameChanger may result in loss of post-season privileges for the coaching staff.

Batting Order, Defensive Lineup and Player Participation

1. 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.
2. 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 four innings per game and should not be off the field for two consecutive innings. Therefore, if one player plays four innings, no one else can play more than five. Exceptions to this rule may only occur as the result of injury or premature termination of a game due to weather, darkness, or run rule.
3. 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.
4. 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 and will bat in that spot in the order for the rest of the game.
5. Games may start with a minimum of 7 players. If you have less than 7 players, your team will take an out every time the 7th player is up to bat. One out will be recorded, and the lineup will flip back to the 1st batter and continue normal gameplay.
6. If you know you are going to be short players, you may secure a temporary substitute from your own division or the division directly below you. The temporary substitute must be a registered player for your league. The division coordinator, player agent and/or the league President must be notified via text of the substitution prior to the start of the game. NOTE: If you are securing temporary substitutes, you should not exceed 9 players for that game, and the substitute player(s) should not pitch.

Umpires and Game Conduct

1. Umpire's Rule: The umpire(s) shall have the power to rule on any matter not specifically covered by the Little League Baseball rules or these rules.
2. 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.



3. 5 Run Rule: In innings 1-5, the half inning is ended when 5 runs are scored. There is no run rule in the sixth (or last) inning.
4. 15 Run Rule: 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.
5. 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.
6. Any attempt to injure a player, coach, or umpire will result in the ejection of the offending player or coach. In addition, an offending player who is a batter or baserunner will be ruled out.

Coaches

1. Base coaches may be players (wearing a helmet) or coaches.
2. A coach may call for time out to talk to a pitcher. ~~A pitcher must be removed when the coach calls a third timeout to talk to the same pitcher in one inning.~~ **The granting of a time out to permit a mound visit is at the discretion of the umpire. See rules associated with mound visits in the “Pitching” section below. [Rev. 2]**
3. Coaches or any other members of the bench may only enter the field of play after granted “Time” by the umpire, or to tend to the health or safety of a player.
4. Coaches, especially base coaches, must refrain from calls or other actions that could impact the view or judgement of the umpire.
5. Base coaches must try to avoid contacting foul balls, overthrows, or other balls that have not been ruled dead by the umpire.
6. Coaches must behave in a manner that upholds the values of the league, including sportsmanship, trust, and mutual respect for players, coaches, umpire(s) and fans. Deviations from this behavior will follow a three-strikes policy.
 - a. Strike 1 will result in a verbal discussion/warning.
 - b. Strike 2 will result in a discussion or meeting with the Baseball leadership and could result in a suspension or other punishment based on the severity of the action(s) as solely determined by the Baseball leadership.
 - c. Strike 3 will result in punishment based on the severity of the action(s) as solely determined by the Baseball leadership, and may result in suspension from the league, either immediately or in the following years.

Pitching

1. 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.
2. If a pitcher hits three batters in the same inning, the umpire will make a judgement as to



whether that pitcher needs to be removed from the position. If the pitcher is removed, they cannot return to pitch in the same game, including extra innings.

3. Any player on a regular season team may pitch. There is no limit to the number of pitchers a team may use in a game.
 - a. **Exception:** Any player who has caught (i.e. played the catcher position) for four or more innings in a game is not eligible to pitch on that calendar day.
4. There is no limit to the number of mound visits per inning, or if a pitcher must be removed from the game after said visit(s). The purpose of the mound visits is to encourage teaching, development and to help the players navigate adversity. **Mound visits can also be used to help refocus/settle the pitcher or discuss strategy. However, the time out necessary to permit a mound visit is at the discretion of the umpire, and visits should not be used egregiously to disrupt the flow of the game. [Rev. 2]**
5. A pitcher once removed from the mound cannot return as a pitcher.
6. A player who has caught for three innings or less, moves to the pitcher position, and delivers 21 pitches or more in the same day, may not return to the catcher position on that calendar day.
 - a. **Threshold Exception:** If the pitcher reaches the 20-pitch threshold while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch, and maintain their eligibility to return to the catcher position, until any one of the following conditions occur:
 - i. That batter reaches base
 - ii. That batter is retired, or
 - iii. The third out is made to complete the half-inning.
7. The manager must remove the pitcher when said pitcher reaches the pitch limit for his/her league age, but the pitcher may remain in the game at another position:

League Age and Pitch Limits

1. League age is defined as the age of the player as of August 31 of the calendar year
2. All pitchers are subject to the following pitch limits based on their individual league age:
 - **11-12 years old** – 85 pitches per day
 - **9-10 years old** – 75 pitches per day
 - **7-8 years old** – 50 pitches per day
 - a. **Threshold Exception:** If a pitcher reaches a pitch threshold while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch and be under that threshold until any one of the following conditions occurs:
 - i. That batter reaches base
 - ii. That batter is retired, or



- iii. The third out is made to complete the half-inning.
- b. **Note:** If a pitcher reaches 40 pitches while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch, and maintain their eligibility to play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day, until any one of the following conditions occurs:
 - i. That batter reaches base
 - ii. That batter is retired, or
 - iii. The third out is made to complete the half-inning.
- c. The pitcher would be allowed to play the catcher position provided that pitcher is moved, removed, or the game is completed before delivering a pitch to another batter. If a player delivers 41 or more pitches, and is not covered under the threshold exception described above, the player may not play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day.

Pitch Counts and Rest Requirements

1. All pitchers are subject to the following rest requirements. Day one of the rest period occurs on the calendar day immediately following the game day.

PITCH COUNT	REST (CALENDAR DAYS)
>66	4
51-65	3
36-50	2
21-35	1
<20	No rest is required.

- a. **Threshold Exception:** If a pitcher reaches a day(s) of rest threshold while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any one of the following conditions occurs:
 - i. That batter reaches base
 - ii. That batter is retired, or
 - iii. The third out is made to complete the half-inning.
- b. The pitcher will only be required to observe the calendar day(s) of rest for the threshold he/she reached during that at-bat, provided that pitcher is removed or the game is completed before delivering a pitch to another batter.
- c. **Double Header Exception:** If a pitcher reaches 30 pitches while facing a batter in the first game, the pitcher may continue to pitch, and maintain their eligibility to pitch in the second game on that day, until any one of the following conditions occurs:



- i. That batter reaches base
 - ii. That batter is retired, or
 - iii. The third out is made to complete the half-inning.
- d. The pitcher would be allowed to pitch in a second game if pitcher is moved, removed, or the game is completed before delivering a pitch to another batter. If a player delivers 31 or more pitches in the first game, and is not covered under the double header exception, the player may not pitch in the second game that day.

Fielding

1. Teams will play a maximum of 10 players in the field, including up to 4 outfielders.
2. The infield fly rule is **NOT** in effect.

Batting

1. Bats used in Lakeshore baseball games must be 'USA' or Little League approved.
2. A batter who throws a bat deliberately, will be called out and ejected from the game, and 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.
3. A passed ball or wild pitch on ball 4 is a live ball and the batter and any other baserunners may advance at their own risk.
4. The drop third strike rule is **NOT** in effect. The batter is out, and the ball is dead, on a third strike. The batter does not have to be put out.

Baserunning

1. Runners must remain in contact with the base until the pitched ball crosses home plate. Each team will receive one warning. The following provisions apply when a runner is judged to have left the base too early:
 - a. Any outs made in the subsequent action stand.
 - b. If the ball was not put into play by the batter, all runners not called out return to their original bases.
 - c. 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).
 - d. Violations after the team warning will result in the offending runner being ruled out. The disposition of other runners will follow the provisions above.
2. A baserunner 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.



3. A base runner who, in the judgment of the umpire(s), intentionally runs into a defensive player will be ruled out.
4. Stealing of second and third base is permitted. However, to encourage player development, **on a throwdown or overthrow from the catcher**, the baserunner may not advance past the base they are stealing.
5. Baserunners **cannot** advance to home base on a throwdown, overthrow, a steal of home, a wild pitch, or a passed ball. The runner on third base must be batted home.
6. Runners must return to base when a play is over. This is defined as when the pitcher has control of the ball and has established themselves on the top of the mound (the pitcher does not have to be on the rubber).
7. The team at bat may use a courtesy runner for the catcher at any time. The courtesy runner should be the player who recorded the last out. In the top of the first inning only, the catcher is identified as the player listed on the lineup as the catcher. Thereafter, the catcher is identified as the last player who physically played that position on defense.

Playoffs

1. All teams will play in an end-of-season tournament. Teams will be seeded according to regular-season record.



Appendix A

Some Commonly Misunderstood Rules

1. **Catcher Interference:** If the batter hits the catcher's glove, it is catcher interference. The ball is dead. The batter is awarded first base, and runners who are forced advance to the next base.
2. **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.
3. **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."
4. **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.
5. **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.

6. **Infield Fly Rule: Not in effect; for information only.** 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.
7. **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.
8. **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.