

Baseball Rules Meeting 2008

LOCAL RULES

Business League

1. Each team will play 10 players in the field at all times (4 outfielders – LF, LC, RC, RF). **The outfielders are to be positioned at least 10 feet into the grass.**
2. Fielders **may not** change positions during a half-inning other than for substitutions.
3. Stealing is allowed **only** from 3rd base on a passed ball. A passed ball is defined as a pitched ball which the catcher should have caught or controlled with ordinary effort.
4. The infield fly rule will **not** be in effect.
5. There is a **7** run rule per half-inning. Once the 7th run has crossed the plate, the half-inning is over.
6. Special rules regarding use of the pitching machine:
 - A. A coach or parent from the batting team is responsible for feeding the pitching machine. No coaching is allowed from this position.
 - B. The speed of the pitching machine should be set at **52** rpm.
 - C. Adjustments to the aim of the pitching machine should be made **only** when absolutely necessary and then only at the beginning of an inning.
 - D. “Feed” the pitching machine in a consistent manner throughout the game (seams down).
 - E. The pitching machine is not in play. When a batted or thrown ball hits the machine, it immediately becomes a dead ball. The batter advances to first base only and any runners advance one base only if forced.
 - F. The adult who is feeding the pitching machine is in play. If a batted or thrown ball hits this person, the ball is still live and in play.
 - G. The fielder in the pitching position shall have both feet on the dirt portion of the mound and be even with, or behind the pitcher’s rubber when the ball is released from the pitching machine.
 - H. There are **no** walks, but strikes will be called if the batter misses a pitch or does not swing at a pitch in the strike zone.
7. Bunting is not allowed. A bunt will be called a no pitch.
8. If the ball is in the infield controlled by a fielder and it is being returned to the mound, the runners must return to their previous base unless they are over halfway to the next base (in which case they can take that base only). Where the runners were located when this occurs will be a judgment call for the umpire.
9. The game must start with a minimum of 10 players (at least 8 of which must be from your team. If there are not 8, the game will be forfeited). Substitute players may only be obtained from teams who played the previous business game. A substitute player must bat **last** in the batting order and only play the outfield.
10. No infield or outfield practice is to be taken between half-innings.

Bank League

1. Once the batter squares to bunt, he may **not** swing away or he will be declared out.
2. **NEW THIS YEAR -There are no intentional walks.**
3. **Teams must start the game with 10 players** (at least 8 of which must be from your team. If there are not 8, the game will be forfeited). Substitute players may only be obtained from the two business teams who played the previous game (whether on that same day or the day before). A fill-in business player cannot play any more innings than any rostered bank league player. A substitute player must bat **last** in the batting order and only play the outfield.
4. In our perfect WLLL world, here is the procedure for picking up the needed substitute players. As soon as each bank manager knows how many players he needs for the next game, he first needs to communicate with the opposing bank manager. Then one (or both) of the bank managers communicates this number with each of the involved business managers and agrees with the business managers on how many players from each team are needed for the bank game. As each business manager turns in his batting order to the Official Scorer before the game, he designates his players who are available and needed for playing in that night's bank game. These names are put into a hat. The bank managers then meet before their game and draw the needed number of players out of the hat with the visiting team drawing first. If the home team needs more substitute players than the visiting team, then it draws first.
It is suggested by the board that before the season starts, every business team develops a list of possible substitute players. Once a business player on this list is picked up for a bank game he moves to the bottom of the list. **No 9 year olds or younger are allowed to substitute in the Bank League.**

Business and Bank Leagues

1. **In both the Business and Bank Leagues, all players will be in the batting order for the entire game.** A player may be entered and/or re-entered defensively into the game anytime provided he meets the requirements of mandatory play. Every player in the batting order still needs to play defensively for a minimum of six (6) outs. These 6 outs do not have to be consecutive.
2. **Every player must wear a facemask helmet when batting and on base.**
3. The home team shall occupy the third base dugout. The visiting team shall occupy the first base dugout.
3. On game days this schedule should be followed by both teams:

BUSINESS

- | | |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4:30 - 4:50 | Visiting team has the batting cages (batting practice is NOT to take place on the field) |
| 4:50 - 5:10 | Home team has the batting cages |

5:10 - 5:20 Visiting team takes infield/outfield
5:20 - 5:30 Home team takes infield/outfield and remains on the field for the start of the game
5:30 Game starts (Before school is out, no inning shall start after 7:00 p.m. After school is out, no inning shall start after 7:30 p.m. An inning starts the moment the third out is made in the bottom of the previous inning.)

NOTE: The home team is responsible for setting up AND putting away both the GAME machine and any other equipment used in the batting cages/area (second pitching machine, tees, etc).

BANK

6:30 - 6:50 Visiting team has the batting cages (batting practice is NOT to take place on the field)
6:50 - 7:10 Home team has the batting cages
7:10 - 7:20 Visiting team takes infield/outfield
7:20 - 7:30 Home team takes infield/outfield and remains on the field for the start of the game
7:30 Game starts. (Before school is out, no inning shall start after 9:15 p.m. After school is out, no inning shall start after 10:00 p.m. An inning starts the moment the third out is made in the bottom of the previous inning.)

NOTE: The home team is responsible for putting up any equipment used in the batting cages/area (pitching machine, tees, etc).

4. Team hats **must** be worn while in the field.
5. No more than three adults may be in the dugout at any one time. Adults must remain either in the dugout or behind the fence during live ball situations, except when coaching the bases. There can be two adult coaches on the bases, provided there is still an adult in the dugout.

BASEBALL RULES

Bank League

1. A catcher need not catch a third strike for the batter to be declared out, but runners may advance.
2. A batter who bunts the ball foul with two strikes is out.
3. Any forward movement of the bat during a **bunt attempt** is considered a swing.
4. A base runner may not leave a base until either the ball has been hit by the batter or the ball has crossed home plate. If a runner leaves too soon, the umpire should remove his cap. After the play is over, the runner returns to the base unless forced to advance by the play.
5. **Infield fly rule:** a fair fly ball that can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort, when first and second, or first, second and third bases are occupied with either no or one out. When apparent, the umpire shall declare, "Infield Fly, Batter is Out." Runners may advance at their own

risk. If the catch is made, runners must tag up prior to advancing. The rule still applies even if the umpire fails to declare.

6. There are no balks in Little League baseball.
7. A manager or coach may **visit with the pitcher** no more than twice in any inning. The pitcher must be removed during the third visit. Once removed, a pitcher may not re-enter the game as a pitcher. **NEW – NOTE: A pitcher who delivers one or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day. (see Note 1 on the top of page 35)**
8. A manager or coach may come out three times in one game to visit with the pitcher, but the fourth time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher.
9. **This is found in Regulation VI – Pitchers in the 2008 Little League Rule Book (pp 34-36)**
 - a. Any player on a team may pitch. (NOTE: There is no limit to the number of pitchers a team may use in a game.)
 - b. When the pitcher reaches the 85 pitch limit for 11-12 year olds, then the pitcher must be removed but may remain in the game at any other position except catcher.

Exception: If a pitcher reaches the 85 pitch limit while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch to that batter until any one of the following conditions occurs:

1. That batter reaches base.
 2. That batter is put out.
 3. The third out is made to complete the half-inning.
- c. Pitchers must adhere to the following rest requirements:
 - If a player pitches 61 or more pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest **and a game** must be observed.
 - If a player pitches 41 – 60 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest **and a game** must be observed.
 - If a player pitches 21-40 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar day of rest must be observed
 - If a player pitches 1 -20 pitches in a day, no (0) calendar day of rest must be observed.
 - d. The official score keeper is designated as the official pitch count recorder.
 - e. The pitch count recorder must provide the current pitch count for any pitcher when requested by either manager or any umpire. However, the manager is responsible for knowing when his pitcher must be removed.
 - f. The official pitch count recorder should inform the umpire-in-chief when a pitcher has delivered his maximum limit of the game. The umpire-in-chief will inform the pitcher's manager that the pitcher must be removed. However, the failure by the pitch count recorder to notify the umpire-in-chief, and/or the failure of the umpire-in-chief to notify the manager, does not relieve the manager of his responsibility to remove a pitcher when that pitcher is no longer eligible.

- g. A player may not pitch in more than one game in a day.

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.
2. Pitches delivered in games declared "Regulation Tie Games" or "Suspended Games" shall be charged against the pitcher's eligibility.
3. In suspended games resumed on another day, the pitchers of record at the time the game was halted may continue to pitch to the extent of their eligibility for that day, provided said pitcher has observed the required days of rest.

Both Business and Bank Leagues (key rules and situations)

1. The **strike zone** is the space over home plate which is between the batter's armpits and the top of the knees when the batter assumes a natural stance. The ball only needs to pass through a portion of the zone to be considered a strike. **Be liberal with the strike zone.** A ball that touches the ground and the batter swings and misses shall be declared a strike.
2. A **foul ball** is a batted ball that settles on foul territory between home and first or home and third, or that bounds past first or third in foul territory, or that first falls in foul territory past first or third, or that touches any person, player, umpire or object in foul territory.
3. A **foul tip** is a batted ball that goes sharp and direct from the bat to the catcher's hands and is legally caught. It is not a foul tip unless caught and any foul tip that is caught is a strike, and the ball is in play. It is not a catch if it is a rebound, unless the ball has first touched the catcher's glove or hand. A foul tip can only be caught by the catcher.
4. A batter who is **hit by a pitch** is awarded first base. The umpire should yell out, "dead ball." The batter must make some attempt to avoid the pitch. The pitch must not be in the strike zone or it is a strike. If the pitch touches the ground first and then hits the batter, the batter is awarded first base. Please note: a batter's hand is not part of the bat but the same as getting hit anywhere else. A batter who is **hit by a pitch** while swinging is not awarded first base. The pitch is ruled a strike and the ball is dead.
5. The bat must come through the hitting zone (cross the plate) to be considered a **swing**.
6. Offensive **interference** is an act by the team at bat which interferes with, obstructs, impedes, hinders or confuses any fielder attempting to make a play. The ball is dead, the runner or batter is out, and any runners return to the last base that was legally touched at the time of the interference.
7. **Catcher's interference** occurs when the catcher's mitt touches the batter's bat when attempting to swing. The ball is dead and the batter is awarded first base. Other runners advance if forced. If the batter hits the ball and advances past first base, the interference is ignored.
8. **Obstruction** is the act of a fielder who, while not in possession of the ball, impedes the progress of any runner. It does not have to be an intentional act. A fake tag is considered obstruction. The

runner must have a reasonable chance of advancing for obstruction to be called. Obstruction shall be called on a defensive player who blocks off a base, baseline, or home plate from a base runner while not in possession of the ball. This is often a delayed dead ball situation and bases are not awarded until after the play is over. If the runners advance prior to the play finishing, the call is waved off. The umpire should give the obstruction sign.

9. If a play is being made on a runner at a base, the runner must either slide or **avoid contact** with the fielder. If the runner does not avoid contact with the fielder, the runner is declared out.
10. A batter who hits the ball with **one or both feet on the ground entirely outside the batter's box** shall be declared out and the ball is dead.
11. A batter or a runner who is **hit by a batted ball** in fair territory shall be declared out and the ball is dead. All runners return to their bases. If the batted ball has already passed an infielder other than the pitcher or catcher, the call is not made.
12. If, while the ball is alive, two runners are touching the same base, the following runner shall be out when tagged.
13. **Awarding bases:**

Two bases, if a fair ball bounces or is deflected into the stands or goes under or through a fence.
Two bases, when a thrown ball goes into dead ball territory. The award is made from the time of the throw.
One base, when a pitched ball goes into dead ball territory.
14. A runner is declared out when running more than three feet **away from a direct line between bases** (explain how this line may change) to avoid being tagged, unless such action is to avoid interference with a fielder fielding a batted ball.
15. **Appeal plays:**
 - A. can be made for a missed base or failure to tag up after a fly out.
 - B. must be clearly intended as an appeal by a verbal request by a player.
 - C. must be made during a live ball situation.
 - D. only one appeal shall be attempted on the same runner at the same base.

SAFETY RULES

1. All batters and runners must wear a facemask helmet while on the field (even while running off the field after an out or between innings.) Players coaching first base must also wear a facemask helmet.
2. Catchers must wear appropriate protection, including a cup for boys.
3. Any time a catcher is warming up a pitcher (including in the bullpen), he must wear at least his mask/helmet.

4. Only one player is allowed in the on-deck cage at a time. (All other players must remain in the dugout.) **The on-deck batter may not hold or swing a bat.**
5. All bats are to remain outside the on-deck cage.
6. All gates to the field should be kept closed at all times.
7. Head first slides are **not** allowed. The runner is ruled out. A runner may dive back into a base.
8. **LOCAL RULE** - The first time the batter throws the bat, the plate umpire issues a warning to the batter after the play is over. (This is noted by the Official Scorer.) If this **same** batter in the same game throws the bat a second time, the ball is dead, the batter is out, and any runners return to the last base that was legally touched at the time of the pitch.
9. In case of inclement weather, the game can be called in advance **only** by league officials. Once the game starts, only the umpire can delay or suspend play. If the game is stopped and cannot be resumed, it is a complete game after four innings or three and a half innings if the home team is ahead. If a game is called before it has become a regulation game, but after one or more innings have been played, it shall be resumed exactly where it left off. All records, including pitching, shall be counted.