

MINOR A RULES

The Game

1. Evening games will begin with a 5:10 pm warm-up followed by a 6:00 pm start time that will be enforced by umps and supported by coaches. The visitors shall have the infield for warm up from 5:35 - 5:45 and the home team shall have the infield for warm up from 5:45 – 5:55.
2. One Coach from each team shall together meet with the umpires before the game to clarify any questions and discuss any issues, such as strike zone, rule clarification, or the implications of weather or field conditions. Coaches should give one copy of their roster to the plate umpire and one copy to the opposing coach. Once the game begins, the umpires are in charge and are the ultimate authority.
3. Minimum player requirement - Each team must have not less than 8 players to commence a game. If a team plays with 8 players, then the 9th position in the batting order will be treated as an automatic out. If a team does not have 8 players present for the start of the game, it should be treated as a forfeit.
4. Call ups – If a team is short players it may call up players from Minor B, but call ups can only be from players on the Minor B call up list. Called up players cannot miss their own game or practice to play as a call up. Call ups cannot pitch or play catcher.
5. Dugouts - Home team takes the third base line dugout while the visiting team takes the first base line dugout.
6. Field set up - Home team is responsible for field set up and takedown (to be completed not less than 25 min. before game time). This includes using the drag mat to smooth out the sand portions of the infield (home plate, base paths, cut-out areas around each base) prior to and after each game. Other duties include installing the bases, painting the base paths from home plate to first base and from home plate to third base, and painting the batter's boxes. The pitching mound and home plate should be covered with tarps and weights after each game.
7. Subject to weather, daylight and time restrictions, games are scheduled for five innings:
 - a. The first two innings are limited to 2 runs each.
 - b. The third and fourth innings are limited to 4 runs each
 - c. The fifth inning is once through the order or 3 outs, whichever comes first. The number of players in "the order" is the number of players on the team that has the greater number of players. Players on the team with the lesser number of players may bat until that team has reached the number of players in "the order".
 - d. Teams cannot hit batters "out of order" during any inning.
 - e. No new innings to start after 8:00 pm or the 2 hour mark for daytime games.
 - f. If after three innings, the umpire determines that the game will only last four innings (the minimum number required for a complete game) then the final inning rules apply to the fourth inning.
8. Following each game the home team is required to report the score of the game to the Division Coordinator.

9. In the event a game is rained out or otherwise postponed, the teams involved will be responsible to re-schedule and complete the game at some later date. Until such games are made up and the outcome is reported to the Minor A Coordinator, the game will be treated a 0 run loss for both of the teams involved.

Pitching

1. The mound will be placed such that the front of the rubber is 42 feet from the point at the back of home plate.

2. Only “Rookie Pitchers” can be used for the first two innings of each game

3. A “Rookie Pitcher” is defined as a player who meets both of the following criteria:

- Has not pitched more than 3 innings in Minor A the previous season, and
- Example for the 2016 season – must be born 2006 or later
- If the “rookie pitcher” can throw with moderate velocity from the pitching rubber (and have the pitch reach the plate) please consider having him/her pitch from the rubber and not the painted line (see pitching rule 4).
- Emphasis is on developing the young pitchers and not trying to gain an advantage from having a capable pitcher throw from the closer distance if it isn’t necessary.
- Coaches are encouraged to calmly communicate any concerns with each other in a respectful manner and away from the players.

4. During the first two innings only, a rookie pitcher is permitted to pitch from a line painted no more than 24” in front of the pitching rubber. This will only be permitted until May 15th.

5. Rookie pitchers are permitted to pitch in innings 3 through 5 but must do so from the pitching rubber.

6. From May 15th through to the end of the playoffs, all pitchers must pitch from the pitching rubber but teams are still required to use rookie pitchers in the first two innings.

7. Once a pitcher is taken out, he/she cannot return to pitch for the rest of the game.

8. A pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day. If a player catches more than 3 innings, he or she cannot then go on to pitch in the same game.

9. There is no limit to the number of pitchers a team may use in a game.

10. The coach must remove a pitcher when said pitcher reaches the pitch limit for his/her age group as noted below (examples used for the 2016 season):

- league age 11 (born before May 1, 2005) - 85 pitches per day
- league age 10 (born May 1, 2005 – August 31, 2006) – 75 pitches per day
- league age 9 (born September 1, 2006 – August 31, 2007) – 75 pitches per day
- league age 8 (born September 1, 2007 or later) – 50 pitches per day

11. If a pitcher reaches the limit for his/her league age while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any one of the following conditions occurs:

- a. That batter reaches base
- b. That batter is put out
- c. The third out is made to complete the half-inning.

12. Each game must have a designated scorekeeper in addition to another person acting as the official pitch count recorder.

13. The pitch count recorder must provide the current pitch count for any pitcher when requested by any coach or umpire. However, the coaches are ultimately responsible for knowing when the pitcher must be removed.

14. The official pitch count recorder should inform the umpire when a pitcher is approaching the maximum limit of pitches for the game. The umpire will inform the pitcher's coach that the pitcher must be removed in accordance with Little League Regulation VI (c). However, the failure by the pitch count recorder to notify the umpire, and/or the failure of the umpire to notify the coach, does not relieve the coach of their responsibility to remove a pitcher when that pitcher is no longer eligible.

15. Pitchers league age 12 and under must adhere to the following rest requirements:

If a player pitches 66 or more pitches in a day, four (4) calendar days of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches 51-65 pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches 36-50 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches 21-35 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar days of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches 1-20 pitches in a day, no (0) calendar day of rest is required.

Example: If a pitcher pitches 55 pitches in a Tuesday game, that pitcher is not eligible to pitch again until Saturday (3 calendar days of rest = Weds, Thurs, Fri)

16. Pitches delivered in suspended games shall be charged against pitcher's eligibility

17. When a new pitcher is put in mid-inning, he/she is allowed 3 warm-up pitches only, so as to keep the pace of the game moving along. Coaches are encouraged to warm up anticipated replacement pitchers while their team is at bat or while the replacement pitcher is sitting off as a substitute player.

Batting

18. There are called strikes and umpires have been instructed to be reasonably liberal with the strike zone.

19. Teams hit through their lineup in order, and all players hit.

20. All batters and base runners must wear helmets until they have completely left the playing field and have returned to their dug out.

21. On Deck - There is NO "on deck" circle in Little League due to safety reasons. No players other than the batter should be swinging bats during the game. The player "on deck" must remain in the dug out waiting for their turn to hit.

22. All players are to remain in the dug out when their team is batting.

23. Adult base coaches are permitted at 1st and 3rd bases (one coach per base) and must stand in foul ball territory and only enter the field of play when a time out has been called by the umpire or in the event of an injury.

Base Running

24. Stealing

Base runners can only steal one base in a given play (on a pitch delivered to home plate). They may not advance a further base if there is an overthrow (whether the ball is in play or out of play). This is to encourage the defence to attempt the throw without concern for further bases being taken. Runners are not permitted to steal home. Base runner must be more than half way from the base they have vacated to the base they are attempting to advance to when a ball is returned to the infield from the outfield and under control by a defensive player in the infield.

25. Lead Offs

Base runners are not permitted to leave the base, be it to steal or otherwise, until the pitched ball has crossed the plate. Runners who leave early will be sent back. If a base runner leaves early on a batted ball and reaches the next base safely, it is the umpire's discretion to either allow that runner to advance to that base, or call that runner out if it is felt the base runner may have been out had they not left early. If the umpire rules that a baserunner left early on a batted ball, but would have reached the next base safely, that base runner (and those behind him/her) will be limited to advancing only one base on that batted ball.

26. Over throws

In the case of a batted ball, base runners can only advance one base on an overthrow (whether the throw is from the outfield or between infielders) even if the ball remains in the field of play (i.e. runners cannot continue to run around the bases on a single or multiple overthrows).

27. Sliding

Players should not slide at first base, but it is not an out.

For safety reasons, if there is even the slightest possibility of a play at home plate base runners must slide, otherwise the umpire will call them out.

No head first sliding at any base or the runner is out.

28. Unless they have the ball, fielders are not to block the base runner's progress by standing on the base paths. If the umpire determines that obstruction has occurred, the base runner will be awarded the base he or she is advancing to.

Umpires

29. Once the game begins, the umpire is the ultimate authority over all aspects of the game.

30. Arguing with Umpires will not be tolerated. Coaches, parents, and/or players who do so may be ejected and/or asked to leave the park.

31. In the event a coach wishes to clarify an umpire's ruling they may call time out and, together with the opposing coach, they may have a brief discussion with the umpire.

32. Coaches will not have discussions with the umpire during the game unless a coach from each team is present.

33. Coaches will not ask the umpire to change a decision which involves judgment, such as, but not limited to, whether a batted ball is fair or foul, whether a pitch is a strike or a ball, or whether a runner is safe or out. Judgement calls are final. No coach shall object to any such judgment decisions.

34. Coaches can only appeal a call that may involve the incorrect interpretation of the rules. If there is reasonable doubt that an umpire's decision may be in conflict with the rules, a coach may appeal the decision and ask that a correct ruling be made. Examples of what can be appealed include: a batter hitting out of turn, awarding an incorrect number of bases when a ball goes out of play, and not returning a runner or runners to their base(s) after a dead ball situation.

35. Any coach wishing to appeal the interpretation must call time out and request that the opposing coach attend a conference with the umpire. In any event, the umpire has the ultimate authority. Please be respectful when approaching umpires for appeals and clarifications and be supportive of a positive learning environment for umpires and players alike.

General

36. Equal defensive playing time for all players. Players should be given the opportunity to play as many positions as possible.

37. Defensive substitutions are unlimited, and substituted players can re-enter the game, although pitchers who have been relieved cannot return to the mound.

38. Catchers must wear a cup, and it is recommended that all players wear cups and mouth guards for every game and practice.

39. All equipment must be kept in the dug out area away from the field of play.

40. Minor A players who are on the Major B call up list cannot miss their own Minor A game or practice to play as a call up in Major B.