

The Little League[®] Tournament

Tournament Playing Rules

Tournament Playing Rules

The Little League, Intermediate (50-70) Division, Junior League and Senior League Baseball/ Softball Playing Rules shall govern tournament play except as noted below:

1. **BASEBALLS:** Baseballs licensed by Little League with the “RS-T” (regular season and tournament) designation must be used.
- **SOFTBALLS:** Softballs meeting Little League specifications for a 12-inch softball shall be used. (The 11-inch softball should be used for the **8- to 10 Division**)

FIELDS

- 2. FIELDS:** All fields are considered neutral. The home team shall be determined by the toss of a coin, the winner having the choice.

Softball The official pitching distance shall be – (1) **8- to 10 Year Old Division:** 35 feet; (2) **9- to 11 Year Old Division, Little League (Majors):** 40 feet; (3) **Junior and Senior:** 43 feet.

PLAYING RULES

- 3. PLAYING RULES:** A copy of the Little League, Intermediate (50-70) Division, Junior League and Senior League Baseball/Softball Regulations and Playing Rules and the Tournament Rules and Guidelines must be available at each tournament site and at the time the game is to be played. This is the responsibility of the Tournament Director. Written ground rules established by the Tournament Director or assistant must be reviewed with both managers and Umpire-in-Chief at least ten (10) minutes before the start of the game. It is suggested the same be available to news media if requested.

PLAYING RULES

a. After entering the batter's box the batter must remain in the box with at least one foot throughout the at bat.

- **Exceptions:**

1. On a swing, slap, or check swing.
2. When forced out of the box by a pitch.
3. When the batter attempts a "drag bunt."
4. When the catcher does not catch the pitched ball.
5. When a play has been attempted.
6. When time has been called.
7. Baseball: When the pitcher leaves the dirt area of the pitching mound or takes a position more than five feet from the pitcher's plate after receiving the ball or the catcher leaves the catcher's box. SOFTBALL: When the pitcher leaves the eight foot circle or the catcher leaves the catcher's box.
8. On a three ball count pitch that is a strike that the batter thinks is a ball

PLAYING RULES

- **Penalty:** If the batter leaves the batter's box or delays play and none of the exceptions apply, the umpire shall warn the batter. After one warning on a batter, the umpire shall call a strike. Any number of strikes can be called on each batter.
- **Minor/Major Division Baseball and All Softball Divisions:** No pitch has to be thrown, the ball is dead, and no runners may advance.
- **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior Baseball Divisions:** No pitch has to be thrown and ball is live.
- **NOTE:** The batter may return their position in the batter's box and assume the new count at any time during the at-bat, unless such enforced penalty is the third strike.

PLAYING RULES

- b. In all Tournament levels and divisions, the penalty for use of an illegal bat [see Rule 6.06(d)], if discovered before the next player enters the batter's box following the turn at bat of the player who used an illegal bat, is:
 - i. The batter is out (**NOTE:** The manager of the defense may advise the plate umpire of a decision to decline this portion of the penalty and accept the play. Such election shall be made immediately at the end of the play), and;
 - ii. The manager of the team will be ejected from the game, the batter who violated the rule will be ejected from the game, and the offensive team will lose one eligible adult base coach for the duration of the game.

PLAYING RULES

- c. **9- to 11 Year Old Division:** the batter may advance on an uncaught third strike (6.05/6.09). This rule will not apply for the **8- to 10 Year Old Division**.

Softball Only

- d. **9- to 11 Year Old Division:** Base runner(s) must maintain contact with the base in which they are entitled until the ball has been released by the pitcher on delivery [(7.08(a)(5)]. **8- to 10-Year-Old Division:** Base runner(s) must maintain contact with the base in which they are entitled until the ball has been batted or reaches the batter [(7.08(a)(5)].

PLAYING RULES

d. (e. Softball) Twice a game but not more than one time per inning, a team may utilize a player who is not in the batting order as a special pinch-runner for any offensive player. A player may only be removed for a special pinch-runner one time during a game. The player for whom the pinch-runner runs is not subject to removal from the lineup. If the pinch-runner remains in the game as a substitute defensive or offensive player, the player may not be used again as a pinch-runner while in the batting order. However, if removed for another substitute that player or any player not in the line-up, is again eligible to be used as a pinch-runner.

PLAYING RULES

e. (f. Softball) Each umpire has authority to disqualify any player, coach, manager, or substitute for objecting to decisions or for unsportsmanlike conduct or language and to eject such disqualified person from the playing field. If an umpire disqualifies a player while a play is in progress, the disqualification shall not take effect until no further action is possible in that play. The stealing and relaying of signs to alert the batter of pitch selection and/or location is unsportsmanlike behavior. If, in the judgment of the umpire, this behavior is occurring, both the player and the manager may be ejected from the game.

PITCHING RULES - LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL, 8- to 10-YEAR OLD, 9- to 11-YEAR OLD, INTERMEDIATE (50-70) DIVISION AND JUNIOR LEAGUE

These rules replace the regular season pitching regulations. *Violation of these pitching rules is subject to protest and action by the Tournament Committee in Williamsport if protested or brought to the Tournament Committee's attention.*

- a. Any player on a tournament team may pitch. **Exception:** 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.
- b. A tournament pitcher may not pitch in regular season or Special Games while the team is still participating in the tournament.
- c. Pitchers once removed from the mound may not return as pitchers. **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior League:** A pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position, can return as a pitcher anytime in the remainder of the game, but only once per game.

PITCHING RULES - LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL, 8- to 10-YEAR OLD, 9- to 11-YEAR OLD, INTERMEDIATE (50-70) DIVISION AND JUNIOR LEAGUE

- d. The manager must remove the pitcher when said pitcher reaches the pitch limit for his/her age group as noted below, but the pitcher may remain in the game at another position:

League Age:	13-14	95 pitches per day
	11-12	85 pitches per day
	9-10	75 pitches per day
	8	50 pitches per day

Exception: If a pitcher reaches the pitch limit imposed above for his/her league age while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any one of the following conditions occurs: (1) That batter reaches base; (2) That batter is retired; (3) The third out is made to complete the half-inning or the game. **NOTE: A pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day.**

PITCHING RULES - LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL, 8- to 10-YEAR OLD, 9- to 11-YEAR OLD, INTERMEDIATE (50-70) DIVISION AND JUNIOR LEAGUE

- e. Pitchers league age 14 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 to 65 pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest must be observed.
 - If a player pitches 36 to 50 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest must be observed.
 - If a player pitches 21 to 35 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar day of rest must be observed.
 - If a player pitches 1 to 20 pitches in a day, no rest is required.

PITCHING RULES - LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL, 8- to 10-YEAR OLD, 9- to 11-YEAR OLD, INTERMEDIATE (50-70) DIVISION AND JUNIOR LEAGUE

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: (1) That batter reaches base; (2) That batter is retired; (3) The third out is made to complete the half-inning or the game. 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.

**PITCHING RULES - LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL,
8- to 10-YEAR OLD, 9- to 11-YEAR OLD, INTERMEDIATE (50-70)
DIVISION AND JUNIOR LEAGUE**

- f. **A player cannot pitch in two games in a day. (Exception: Junior League—If a player pitches in 30 or less pitches in the first game, that player may pitch in the second game on that day);**

PITCHING RULES – SENIOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

These rules replace the regular season pitching regulations. *Violation of these pitching rules is subject to protest and action by the Tournament Committee in Williamsport if protested or brought to the Tournament Committee's attention.*

- a. Any player on a tournament team may pitch. **Exception:** 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.
- b. A Tournament pitcher may not pitch in regular season or Special Games while the team is still participating in the Tournament.
- c. A pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position, can return as a pitcher anytime in the remainder of the game, but only once per game.

PITCHING RULES – SENIOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

d. The manager must remove the pitcher when said pitcher reaches the pitch limit for his/her age group as noted below, but the pitcher may remain in the game at another position:

League Age: 13 - 16(Senior League) 95 pitches per day

Exception: If a pitcher reaches the pitch limit imposed above for his/her league age while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any one of the following conditions occurs: (1) That batter reaches base; (2) That batter is retired; (3) The third out is made to complete the half-inning. **NOTE: A pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day.**

PITCHING RULES – SENIOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

- e. Pitchers league age 13-16 must adhere to the following rest requirements:
- If a player pitches 76 or more pitches in a day, four (4) calendar days of rest must be observed.
 - If a player pitches 61 to 75 pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest must be observed.
 - If a player pitches 46 to 60 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest must be observed.
 - If a player pitches 31 to 45 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar days of rest must be observed.
 - If a player pitches 1 to 30 pitches in a day, no (0) calendar day of rest is required.

PITCHING RULES – SENIOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

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: (1) That batter reaches base; (2) That batter is retired; (3) The third out is made to complete the half-inning or the game. 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.

PITCHING RULES – SENIOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

- f. A player may be used as a pitcher in up to two games in a day.
(Exception: - If the player pitched 31 or more pitches in the first game, that player may not pitch in the second game on that day);

PITCHING RULES - LITTLE LEAGUE SOFTBALL, 8- to 10-YEAR-OLD and 9- to 11- YEAR-OLD DIVISION

These rules replace the regular season pitching regulations. *Violation of these pitching rules is subject to protest and action by the Tournament Committee in Williamsport if protested or brought to the Tournament Committee's attention.*

- a. Any player on a tournament team may pitch. (**NOTE:** There is no limit to the number of pitchers a tournament team may use in a game.)
- b. A Tournament pitcher may not pitch in regular season or Special Games while the team is still participating in the Tournament.
- c. Delivery of a single pitch constitutes having pitched an inning.
- d. A pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position, can return as a pitcher anytime in the remainder of the game, but only once in the same inning as he/she was removed.

PITCHING RULES - LITTLE LEAGUE SOFTBALL, 8- to 10-YEAR-OLD and 9- to 11- YEAR-OLD DIVISION

- e. One (1) calendar day rest must be observed following regular season or Special Games play, and between levels of Tournament Play if a player pitches seven (7) or more innings in a calendar day.
- f. A player may not pitch in more than twelve (12) innings in a day.
- g. If a player pitches in less than seven (7) innings in a calendar day, no rest is required.
- h. If a player pitches in seven (7) or more innings in a calendar day, one day's rest is required. This also applies between regular season games following Tournament elimination or Special Games following the Tournament.

Example 1: A player may pitch on Saturday in regular season play then, after one (1) calendar day's rest, pitch again in the next level of tournament play on Monday.

Example 2: A player may pitch on Saturday in the final district game then, after one (1) calendar day's rest, pitch again in the next level of tournament play on Monday.

PITCHING RULES - LITTLE LEAGUE SOFTBALL, 8- to 10-YEAR-OLD and 9- to 11- YEAR-OLD DIVISION

Exceptions:

- (1) A player may pitch on consecutive calendar days if less than seven (7) innings were pitched in the previous calendar day.
- (2) In a game suspended by darkness, weather or other causes and resumed the following calendar day, the pitchers of record at the time the game was halted may continue to pitch to the extent of the remaining eligibility that pitcher would have had during the previous day. However, in no event shall any pitcher pitch more than twelve (12) innings.

PITCHING RULES – JUNIOR/SENIOR LEAGUE SOFTBALL

These rules replace the regular season pitching regulations.

Violation of these pitching rules is subject to protest and action by the Tournament Committee in Williamsport if protested or brought to the Tournament Committee's attention.

- a. Any player on a tournament team may pitch. (**NOTE:** There is no limit to the number of eligible pitchers a tournament team may use in a game.)
- b. A Tournament pitcher may not pitch in regular season or Special Games while the team is still participating in the Tournament.
- c. A pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position, can return as a pitcher anytime in the remainder of the game, but only once in the same inning as he/she was removed. A pitcher may be withdrawn from the game, offensively or defensively, and return as pitcher only once per inning provided the return does not violate the substitution, or mandatory play rule(s). **Penalty:** See Rule 10(f).
- d. No pitching restrictions apply.

FORFEITS & BENCH/DUGOUT

- 5. FORFEITS:** No game may be forfeited or a team disqualified without the authorization of the Tournament Committee. Violations which may result in forfeiture or disqualification must be reported immediately to the Regional Director before further play takes place which would involve a team or teams affected by such action.
- 6. BENCH/DUGOUT:** No one except the players, manager and coach(es) shall occupy the bench or dugout during a game. Base coaches may be players or adults. Two (2) adult base coaches are permitted at all levels subject to playing rule 4.05(2).

VISITS

- 7. VISITS:** A manager or coach may not leave a dugout for any reason during a game without receiving permission from an umpire. The manager or coach may be removed from the field for the remainder of the game for violation of this rule.

When permission is granted, the manager or coach will be permitted to go to the mound to confer with the pitcher or any defensive player(s). A manager or coach who is granted a time out to talk to any defensive player will be charged with a visit to the pitcher.

A manager or coach may come out twice in one inning to visit with the pitcher, but the third time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher. The manager or coach may come out three times in a game to visit with the pitcher, but the fourth time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher.

The rule applies to each pitcher who enters a game.

NOTE: Only one offensive time-out will be permitted each inning.

INJURY/ILLNESS

8. **INJURY/ILLNESS:** If a player is injured or becomes ill during a game, the decision of a doctor (if present) or medical personnel will be final as to whether or not the player may continue in the game.

MANDATORY PLAY: 8- to 10-Year Old, 9- to 11-Year Old Division, Little League, Intermediate (50-70) Division and Junior League

9. **MANDATORY PLAY:** If a tournament team has thirteen (13) or more eligible players in uniform at a game, then every player on a team roster shall participate in each game for a minimum of one (1) at bat. If a tournament team has twelve (12) or fewer eligible players in uniform at a game, then every player on a team roster shall participate in each game for a minimum of six (6) consecutive defensive outs and bat at least one (1) time.
- Managers are responsible for fulfilling the mandatory play requirements.
 - There is no exception to this rule unless the game is shortened for any reason. **NOTE:** A game is not considered shortened if the home team does not complete the offensive half of the sixth or seventh inning (or any extra inning) due to winning the game.

MANDATORY PLAY: 8- to 10-Year Old, 9- to 11-Year Old Division, Little League, Intermediate (50-70) Division and Junior League

- c. Failure to meet the mandatory play requirements in this rule is a basis for protest. If one or more players on a roster do not meet this requirement, and if protested or brought to the Tournament Committee's attention, it shall result (by action of the Tournament Committee) in the suspension of the team's manager for the next two scheduled tournament games, even if those games are played at the next tournament level. Additional penalties (up to and including forfeiture of a game and/or disqualification of the team, managers or coaches from further tournament participation) may be imposed if, in the opinion of the Tournament Committee:
1. a manager or coach takes any action that results in making a travesty of the game, causing players to intentionally perform poorly for the purpose of extending or shortening a game, or;



MANDATORY PLAY: 8- to 10-Year Old, 9- to 11-Year Old Division, Little League, Intermediate (50-70) Division and Junior League

2. a team fails to meet the requirements of this rule more than once during the International Tournament, which begins with District play and ends at the World Series level (State level for 8- to 10- and 9- to 11-Year Old Divisions), or;
3. a manager willfully and knowingly disregards the requirements of this rule.

A manager or coach suspended for any reason is not permitted to be at the game site and must not take any part in the game, nor have any communications whatsoever with any persons at the game site. This includes pregame and postgame activities. Violation may result, by action of the Tournament Committee, in further suspension, forfeiture of a game and/or disqualification of the team, managers or coaches from further tournament participation.

MANDATORY PLAY: 8- to 10-Year Old, 9- to 11-Year Old Division, Little League, Intermediate (50-70) Division and Junior League

- d. For the purposes of this rule, “six (6) consecutive defensive outs” is defined as: A player enters the field in one of the nine defensive positions when his/her team is on defense and occupies such position while six consecutive outs are made; “bat at least one (1) time” is defined as: A player enters the batter’s box with no count and completes that time at bat by being retired or by reaching base safely.

SUBSTITUTION/RE-ENTRY

- 10. SUBSTITUTIONS/RE-ENTRY:** This tournament rule replaces regular season Rule 3.03 (re-entry) for all levels of tournament play.
- a. If illness, injury or the ejection of a player prevents a team from fielding nine (9) players, a player previously used in the lineup may be inserted, but only if there are no other eligible substitutes available. The opposing team manager shall select the player to re-enter the lineup. A player ejected from the game is not eligible for re-entry.

SUBSTITUTION/RE-ENTRY

- b. Any player who has been removed for a substitute may re-enter the game in the **SAME** position in the batting order.
- c. **A substitute entering the game for the first time may not be removed prior to completion of her/his mandatory play requirements.**

NOTE 1: see definitions in Rule 9(d) above on complying with this rule defensively and offensively. Tournament Rule 10(c) does not apply to Senior League.

SUBSTITUTION/RE-ENTRY

NOTE 2: A player who has met the mandatory play requirements, and is a pitcher at the time she/he is removed, may be removed for a substitute batter and re-enter the game as a pitcher once, provided the pitcher was not physically replaced on the mound. **If a team has thirteen (13) or more players in uniform at the start of a game and is the visiting team, they may substitute a batter for the starting pitcher listed in the line-up prior to the pitcher facing a batter without violating Rule 3.03(c) provided that the pitcher of record pitches to the first batter in the bottom of the first inning in accordance with Rule 3.05. All other rules governing the pitcher are still in effect.**

Junior/Senior League: (Softball) See Rule 3.03 (c). A pitcher may be withdrawn from the game offensively or defensively, and return as pitcher once per inning provided the return does not violate either the substitution, visits per pitcher or mandatory play rule(s) in their applicable division.

- d. Defensive substitutions must be made while the team is on defense. Offensive substitutions must be made at the time the offensive player has her/his turn at bat or is on base.

SUBSTITUTION/RE-ENTRY

- e. A starter and her/his substitute must not be in the lineup at the same time, except as provided in Playing Rule 10(a).
- f. Improper substitution is a basis for protest. Protests involving improper substitution not resolved before the next pitch or play shall not be considered.

Junior/Senior League Softball: Ineligible pitcher under 1) a Tournament pitcher pitches during the regular season or special games concurrently; 2) a Tournament pitcher, starter or substitute, violates substitution or mandatory play rule(s); or 3) a Tournament pitcher moves to another defensive position twice and then returns as pitcher twice in the same inning, will be considered an improper substitution.

- g. Tournament Rule 3 (d) baseball 3 (e) softball will replace Rule 7.14 as the Special Pinch Runner rule,

SUBSTITUTION/RE-ENTRY

Senior League

- h. **Senior League:** Rule 3.03, Designated Hitter, **WILL** apply during the tournament.

Baseball Intermediate(50-70)/Junior/Senior League Only: A Pitcher remaining in the game but moving to a different position, an return as pitcher anytime in the remainder of the game, but only once per game.

- i. **Senior League:** Any player in the starting lineup, including the designated hitter, who has been removed for a substitute may re-enter the game **ONCE**, provided such player occupies the same batting position as he or she did in the starting lineup. A substitute (non-starter) may not re-enter the game in any position once that player is removed from the line-up.

SUSPENDED GAMES

11. SUSPENDED GAMES: Any game in which a winner cannot be determined in accordance with the playing rules shall be resumed from the exact point at which it was suspended regardless of the number of innings played.

EXCEPTION: In the event that the first inning is not completed, the game shall be replayed from the beginning and all records, including pitching, disregarded. Incomplete (not regulation) or tie games are considered suspended games. **NOTE:** A contest decided by forfeit does not constitute a “game” for the purposes of this rule, unless one complete inning was physically played before the game was forfeited. (Forfeits are only by decree of the Tournament Committee in Williamsport.)

TEN RUN RULE

12. TEN RUN RULE: If at the end of a regulation game, 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: If the visiting team has a lead of ten (10) or more runs, the home team must bat in their half of the inning.

REGULATION GAME

- 13. REGULATION GAME:** Each tournament game must be played to the point of being an official game:
- a. Regulation games are of four or more innings (five or more innings for **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League**) in which one team has scored more runs than the other (three and one-half (3 1/2) if the home team is ahead or four and one-half (4 1/2) if the home team is ahead in **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League**).
 - b. Regulation games (when a winner can be determined) terminated because of weather, darkness or curfew must be resumed if the visiting team ties the game or takes the lead in their half of the inning and the home team does not complete their at bat or take the lead in an incomplete inning. This does not apply to games suspended or delayed by weather that may still be resumed before darkness or curfew (as defined in Tournament Rules and Guidelines – Curfew) on the same day.
 - c. If two games are scheduled for the same site, no “time limit” may be imposed on the first game.

REPLAYING GAMES & UNAUTHORIZED AGREEMENTS

- 14. REPLAYING GAMES:** No tournament game may be replayed without specific approval from the Tournament Committee at Williamsport.
- 15. UNAUTHORIZED AGREEMENTS:** No agreements shall be made between managers and/or Tournament Directors and/or umpires contrary to Tournament Rules.

ALTERCATIONS & EJECTIONS

- **ALTERCATIONS:** A manager, coach, or player shall not leave their position in the field or bench area during a fight or physical confrontation; a manager or coach who attempts to prevent a fight or restore order, in the umpire's judgment, is not in violation of this rule.
- **Penalty:** The umpire shall eject the offender(s) from the game immediately. Failure to comply with the ejection may result in the umpire suspending the game. The Tournament Director shall refer all incidents to the Tournament Committee who may impose additional penalties and/or actions towards individuals and/or teams up to and including forfeiture of a game, further suspension and/or disqualification.

ALTERCATIONS & EJECTIONS

17. EJECTIONS - Any manager, coach or player ejected from a game will be suspended for the next physically played game (See Rule 4.07). This includes pregame or postgame activities. Ejections shall be noted in the tournament team's affidavit in the Record of Ejections on page 4. Entry should include member's name and date ejected and be signed by the Tournament Director or District Administrator.

Thank You!

LittleLeague.org/TournamentResources

