

WHLL Spring Rules

Team coaches are responsible for the behavior of their players as well as that of the parents of their players. Coaches are responsible for advising all parents of the WHLL Zero Tolerance Policy. Possible consequences for violating the policy include forfeiting the game, being removed from the premises, and being banned from one or more games.

WHLL will abide by the Official Regulations and Playing Rules of Little League Baseball except as follows:

- There is no “drop dead” time limit for games. The last inning started will be played to completion.
- If both coaches and the umpires agree to continue games that have not reached the time limit but have concluded due to run rules, they may do so unless there is another game scheduled for that field that is ready to proceed.
- In all leagues, WHLL teams bat the entire roster.
- Minimum participation rules do not apply if a player is benched for disciplinary reasons or failure to attend practices regularly. There will be no penalty if a player does not play the minimum number of outs in a game that concludes early due to the run rule or weather.
- The home team will use the third base dugout.
- Official LL baseballs will be used in leagues MP7 through Major National. RIF 1 balls will be used in TBall, RIF 5 balls in CP.
- Coaches may warm up pitchers both at home plate and in the bullpen.
- All players must wear a facemask on their batting helmets.
- No batter may fake a bunt and swing away on the same pitch. If the batter does this, the ball will be declared dead, and the batter will be called out.
- There are no intentional walks.
- Teams will be limited to four practices and games per week. Any batting cage or on-field workout of at least three players and a coach will constitute a practice.

Pitch Count Regulations

A. There is no limit on the number of pitchers who may pitch in a game.

B. Pitch Counts:

Little League Baseball Regular Season and Tournament Pitching Rules

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

Pitch Count limits:

11-12 years - 85 pitches per day

9-10 years - 75 pitches per day

7- 8 years - 50 pitches per day

- Pitchers who reach the limit imposed for their age may continue to pitch until either the batter reaches base or is put out.
- A calendar day rest is one full day. Three days rest after pitching on Monday means a pitcher may not pitch again until Friday.
- Players may not pitch in more than one game a day.
- Warm-up pitches between innings do not count.
- A pitcher who has pitched 41 or more pitches may not play the position of catcher for the remainder of the day.
- 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. (A catcher need catch only one pitch for it to count as an inning.)

The following local rules apply only to the specific division within Western Hills Little League.

Major National League

- When there is a game immediately following, no new inning may begin after two hours have elapsed; otherwise, teams play six-inning games and there are no ties.
- A team must have at least eight players to begin a game. If a team fields only eight players, the ninth spot will not be counted as an out.
- Each player must play defensively for 6 outs that need not be consecutive.

Major American League

- No new inning will begin after 2 hours have elapsed.
- A team must have at least eight players to begin a game. If a team fields only eight players, the ninth spot will not be counted as an out.
- No player may sit out defensively more than two innings. Each player must play in the infield at least one inning during each game.
- A team may not score more than 5 runs in an inning.

Minor National

- No new inning will begin after 1 hour and 45 minutes have elapsed.
- A team must have at least eight players to begin a game. If a team fields only eight players, the ninth spot will not be counted as an out.
- No player may sit out defensively in consecutive innings. Each player must play in the infield at least one inning during each game.
- A team may not score more than 5 runs in an inning.
- **NEEDS UPDATE FOR 2012: If a team plays two games in a week, 9 year-olds must pitch for six outs. If a team plays three games in a week, 9 year-olds must pitch for eight outs.**
- Generally speaking, umpires do not invoke the infield fly rule in this division.

Minor American

- No new inning will begin after 1 hour and 30 minutes have elapsed.
- No player may sit out defensively more than two innings. Each player must play in the infield at least one inning during each game.
- A team may not score more than 5 runs in an inning.
- Generally speaking, umpires do not invoke the infield fly rule in this division.

Machine Pitch-8

- No new inning will begin after 1 hour and 15 minutes have elapsed.
- A team may not score more than five (5) runs in an inning.
- There is no infield fly rule.
- A defensive team will field ten players. Four of these players will occupy the outfield and one will serve as catcher.
- The player fielding the pitching position will stand behind and to the right or left of the machine.
- No player may sit out defensively more than two innings. Each player must play in the infield at least one inning during each game. For this rule, the catcher and the fielder occupying the pitching position will count as infielders.
- Only one coach on the defensive team may stand on the field to operate the pitching machine. The coach may not serve as a fielder. If the coach makes a play on the ball, the batter will be out.
- All pitches will be delivered by a machine. Each batter will receive five pitches. If the batter swings and misses three times on or before the fifth pitch, an out will be recorded. A batter may not be called out for fouling off a pitch but will instead be given another pitch. There are no walks and batters may be called out for failing to swing at their last pitch.

- If the machine malfunctions and delivers a wild pitch, it will not be counted as a pitch. Only the umpire will determine if the pitch is a wild pitch, and this will be a judgment call that may not be appealed.
- If a batter hits a fair ball that makes direct contact with the coach operating the machine, whether a fly, a line drive, or a bounding ball, the ball is dead and the batter is awarded first base. All runners on base may advance one base if forced. Otherwise, they remain at the base they occupied before contact was made.
- If a batted ball hits the machine itself, it will be live.
- Runners may attempt to steal 2nd and 3rd per LL rules but may not attempt to steal home.
- Base runners may advance after a hit until the pitcher controls the ball in the mound area. That is, a pitcher may not run to areas normally controlled by other infielders to gain control of the ball to stop runners from advancing. In any case, a base runner who has advanced more than halfway to the next base before the pitcher has the ball in the mound area may continue to the next unoccupied base. Except when forced, a player who is less than halfway to the next base when the ball is controlled by the pitcher in the mound area but who safely reaches the next base shall be sent back to the previous base once the play is over. (If, during the play, the runner is tagged out before safely reaching the next base, the out stands.) The umpire alone will determine if a player has advanced more than halfway to the base.
- Scores of each game will be kept but there will be no standings.

NEEDS UPDATE FOR 2012 (Machine Pitch-7): Coach Pitch 7 League

- A defensive team may field no more than 9 players.
- No player may sit out defensively more than two innings. Each player must play in the infield at least one inning during each game.
- No new inning will begin after 1 hour and 15 minutes have elapsed.
- A team may not score more than 5 runs in an inning.
- The coach of the offensive team will pitch to his own players. The coach may stand or kneel on the mound. The pitcher shall keep both feet on the pitcher's plate until the batter hits the ball.
- Only one other coach on the defensive team may stand on the field of play behind the pitcher to assist players, but as the season moves on, coaches should make an effort to train players well enough to render this practice unnecessary.
- Each batter will receive 5 pitches or 3 strikes. If the last pitch is fouled off, the batter gets another pitch.
- Each team will bat until the defense gets three outs or all players bat in the half-inning
- Bunts are not permitted.
- Stealing is not allowed.
- There is no infield fly rule.
- When players have advanced as far as possible without being put out or having been retired, the umpire shall call "time" and the ball will be given to the coach on the mound.
- The runner or runners will be permitted to advance at their own risk on an overthrow that remains in play, but not more than one base.
- Coaches on the mound must attempt to avoid being struck by the ball. If a batted ball hits the offensive coach on the mound, the ball is dead. The batter will be awarded first base. All forced runners advance one base. If a thrown ball hits the offensive coach on the mound, it remains alive and in play.
- No official score will be kept; there will be no league standings.

Coach Pitch League

- No inning new will begin after 1 hour has elapsed.
- The defensive team may field no more than 10 players. The 10th player must play in the outfield.
- No player may sit out defensively more than two innings. Each player must play in the infield at least one inning during each game.
- Each team will bat through half of the order during its half inning at bat. If a team has nine players, it will bat 5 players each half inning; if 11, 6 players each inning; if 13, either 6 or 7 players each inning, at the coach's discretion.

- The coach of the offensive team will pitch to his own players. He may pitch from a distance that best allows players to make contact.
- A batter will have ONLY six pitches to hit a fair ball. After six pitches, unless the last swing is a foul ball, the batter will hit off the tee. The batter has only three swings to hit the ball off the tee. Coaches must strictly adhere to this rule to keep the game moving.
- Each team may have only three coaches on the field, including the coach-pitcher. A second coach may stand in the field behind the pitcher and a third may stand behind the batter to retrieve balls. The coach-pitcher may keep a bucket of balls behind the mound to expedite play.
- The coaches in the field (excluding the catcher-coach) may not act as fielders.
- Players who are put out will not be allowed to remain on the base.
- When a fielder who has the ball returns it to the coach-pitcher, that particular play is concluded and runners must occupy the base they've reached.
- Coaches should have a parent or assistant coach attending to the batters to ensure that the batting order is maintained and that players are prepared to bat when their time at the plate comes up.
- All players must remain in the dugout when not batting or playing defensively. NO ON DECK BATTERS.
- No official score will be kept; there will be no league standings.

T-ball League

- No inning will begin after 1 hour has elapsed.
- All players at the game will take defensive positions in the field each inning regardless of the number of players.
- There is no run limit.
- There are no strikeouts.
- Batters may bat against a coach-pitcher or off the tee, but for the first two games, all players will bat off the tee. If a player bats against their coach, the player will receive ONLY four pitches to hit a fair ball. After four pitches, unless the last swing is a foul ball, the batter will hit off the tee.
- Players may not steal.
- Players may not tag up or advance on caught fly balls.
- Players may not take leads. Runners may not leave the base until the ball is hit.
- There will be no catcher. A parent/helper will return balls to the pitcher.
- Play stops when the fielders return the ball to the infield. The runners may advance to the next base if they are between bases when the ball enters the infield, but they are in jeopardy of being tagged out. They may not continue to advance in the event of an overthrow.
- All players must play one of the following positions at least one inning per game: pitcher, first, second, third or short.
- A player may not play pitcher or first base more than one inning per game.
- Coaches may go on to the playing field.
- No official score will be kept; there will be no league standings.

Points of Emphasis

The following items are all LL rules which some coaches, parents, or players might not be familiar with. Numbers after the rule refer to the official Little League rulebook.

Equipment

- Batting donuts are not permissible on the field. (1.10 NOTE 1)
- All bats must be stamped Little League Approved.
- Catchers must wear a cup, a facemask (even when warming up pitchers, including in the bullpen), throat protector, and must use a catcher's mitt. (1.12), (1.17)

Postponed, Suspended, Forfeited, and Delayed Games

- If lightening is seen AND thunder is heard within 30 seconds following the lightning, the game will be immediately suspended for a minimum of 30 minutes, and all players will move to a safe location. Play may resume if lightning has not been seen and thunder has not been heard for 30 minutes.
- The umpire has the responsibility to call or suspend any game when, in his judgment, the safety of the players is in question. The decision cannot be reversed by an agreement of the coaches to the contrary.
- Any game stopped due to weather, light failure, or other reason prior to the completion of at least 4 innings (3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead) will be resumed from the point at which the game was stopped. Games stopped after 4 innings (3 ½ if the home team is ahead) will be official games. (4.10 (c) (1) – (3)).
- Suspended but incomplete games will begin where they left off if one or more innings have been played. (4.10 (d))
- A game may be forfeited if a team is unable to begin within 10 minutes of the appointed game time. It is the umpire's discretion whether or not to call the game a forfeit. (4.15 (1)). Bear in mind, though, that WHLL has a local rule allowing play with 8 players.
- A forfeited game will be scored 6-0 (2.00)
- When a player is injured while batting or running the bases, a courtesy runner may be used. That runner will be the player who is not on base and is the farthest away from batting. If a courtesy runner is needed, the player taken off the field must sit out the team's next defensive inning in that game. Also, if the player's spot in the batting order comes up again in the inning in which he or she was removed, this spot will be skipped but no out will be recorded. If a courtesy runner is used for a pitcher, then the pitcher may no longer pitch in that game. The umpire may deny a courtesy runner if he thinks this rule is being manipulated. A player who is removed twice in a game for a courtesy runner must sit out the remainder of the game. (4.04)
- Except where specifically described otherwise, if after four innings (3 ½ if the home team is ahead), one team has a lead of ten runs or more, the game is over. Note that if the visiting team is ahead by ten runs, the home team may still bat. WHLL has a local rule that allows coaches to continue playing (without altering the official score) if both agree to do so.

Length of Games

- Except where noted otherwise in rules for each division, a regulation game consists of six innings and there are no ties. (4.10 (a))
- If a game is called, it is a regulation game if four innings have been completed. (4.10 (c) (1))
- If at least four innings have been played and one team is ahead by ten runs or more, the game is over. (4.10 (e))

Expedient Transaction

- Umpires should keep the game moving by enforcing Rule 8.03, which gives a pitcher one minute to throw no more than eight warm-up pitches. Defensive teams are expected to be ready to play one and one-half minutes after their offensive inning has ended. Coaches should not wait until an at-bat has ended to inform players what their next defensive position will be.
- When a pitcher is summoned to the mound during an inning, the umpire determines how many warm up pitches the pitcher may have.
- When the bases are unoccupied, the pitcher must deliver the ball to the batter within 20 seconds of receiving it.

Umpires

- Umpires, not coaches, are in charge of the game. (4.01 (d); 9.01 (a) – (f))
- No umpire may reverse or interfere with another umpire's decision on a judgment call unless asked to do so by the umpire who made the call. This rule does not apply when an umpire makes an error regarding the rules. If an umpire believes another umpire has incorrectly applied or not applied a rule, he may request a conference with his partner. (9.02 (c)) *N.B: Exception: If an umpire is training a less experienced umpire, he may tactfully overrule the trainee's call. A coach may respectfully and discretely request that the lead umpire do this, or the lead umpire may on his or her own revise the call.*

Protests

- See Rule 4.19 for a formal description of the protest. Note that the coach must lodge his protest with the umpire before any other play is made.

Coaches

- Once a game begins, a coach may not enter the diamond except in the case of injury or with the umpire's permission.
- Only the head coach may speak to the umpires during the game about rules and appeals, and only after calling for and receiving a time out. He may never go into fair territory to talk with the umpire, but should request that the umpire come to the sideline. Coaches should only request a conference with the umpire for rule interpretations, not judgment calls (ball/strike calls, close tag plays, close force plays, tag-ups, etc.). (See Rule 4.19a)
- On all appeal plays, the ball is live. (Rule 7.10)
- A coach may not use the visit to the pitcher to call a team meeting of the infielders. However, the catcher may join a conference with the pitcher. (8.06 (d)) This rule is not enforced in WHLL.
- A coach may confer with any player, including the pitcher, to evaluate the player's condition after an injury. Such a conference with a pitcher is not counted as a visit to the mound.
- A coach is allowed only one offensive time-out per inning to confer with a player. (Rule 5.10.d)
- Ejected coaches must leave the field and may not sit in the stands. (4.07)
- If in the judgment of the umpire a base coach physically aids a runner in stopping or advancing by pushing or holding the runner, the runner will be called out. (7.09 (i)) Note that giving the player a congratulatory high-five is neither stopping nor assisting him in his advance.
- A coach may have two visits per inning to the pitcher. If he visits him a third time in the inning, he must make a pitching change then. He may visit any given pitcher only three times in a game. So if a coach visits a pitcher twice in an inning, then visits him a third time in a subsequent inning, he has used up his visits to that pitcher and the next time he calls a conference with that pitcher, he must remove him from the mound. (Rule 8.06a)

Pitchers

- There are no balks in Little League, but there are illegal pitches, which are counted as balls. There are various kinds of illegal pitches, including but not limited to quick pitches; interrupted motion toward the plate; and dropping the ball or feinting a throw to a base when on the rubber. (8.05 (a) – (m))
- Once the pitcher receives the ball from the catcher, he has 20 seconds to deliver the ball to the batter. When the umpire enforces this rule, failure to deliver a pitch within the time allotted results in a ball. (8.04)
- If a team forfeits a game due to lack of players but then plays its opponent in a practice game, a pitcher's pitch count in the practice game will count for that week.
- A coach may have two visits per inning to the pitcher. If he visits him a third time in the inning, he must make a pitching change then. He may visit any given pitcher only three times in a game. So if a coach visits a pitcher twice in an inning, then visits him a third time in a subsequent inning, he has used up his visits to that pitcher and the next time he calls a conference with that pitcher, he must remove him from the mound. (Rule 8.06a)

Runners

- The runner is out if he slides head-first while advancing. (7.08 (a)) He may dive back to the base he occupies head-first.
- When the pitcher is touching the rubber and the catcher is in the catcher's box ready to receive the ball, base runners shall not leave their bases until the ball has been delivered and reaches the batter. (7.13) Note that this does not necessarily mean that the ball must reach the plate. The umpire judges when the ball has reached the batter.
- If a runner leaves early, he may be put out, but if he is not put out and the batter does not hit the ball, he must return to the base he previously occupied. (7.13 (b))

- There are various consequences if a runner leaves early and the ball is hit, and they are too numerous to include here. (see 7.13) Suffice it to say that if there is a single runner on any base, he may not score if he leaves early and the batter hits a single or a double. All runners may score if a batter hits a clean triple or home run.
- A runner cannot be tagged out after overrunning or oversliding first base if he returns immediately to the base, having made no attempt to advance to second. (7.08 (c); 7:10 (c)) It is the umpire's judgment whether the runner was attempting to advance to second or not.
- A runner is out when he runs out of the base path (three feet on either side of the base path) unless he is trying to avoid colliding with a fielder in the process of fielding the ball. (7.08 (a))

Interference and Obstruction

- Interference occurs when a runner intentionally interferes with a thrown ball or when, intentionally or not, he hinders a fielder attempting to make a play on a batted ball. (2.00; 7.08 (b)) The runner is out if the umpire calls interference.
- If a batted ball passes untouched by a fielder and no other fielder has a play on the ball, the runner is not out if the ball hit him and the ball is live. It is an umpire's judgment call whether or not another fielder had a play. If a batted ball touches a fielder or his glove and then hits the runner, the runner is not out and the ball is live.
- Obstruction occurs when a fielder not in possession of the ball impedes the progress of a runner. Note that this includes blocking a plate or base when a runner is attempting to advance but when the fielder does not have the ball. (2.00; 7.06 (a)) The result of obstruction is that the umpire awards the runner the number of bases he believes the runner would have achieved had obstruction not occurred. Note, however, that a defensive player has a right to make a play unimpeded by the runner and may occupy the base path to field a batted ball, in which case it is the runner's obligation to avoid interfering with the fielder. The runner may in these circumstances run out of the base path (that is, to avoid colliding with a fielder attempting to field the ball) without being called out.
- If a fielder is waiting to receive a thrown ball that is in flight directly toward and near enough to the fielder so that he must occupy his position to receive the ball, he may be considered "in the act of fielding the ball." This is a judgment call by the umpire. Once the fielder has made an attempt but has not secured the ball, he may no longer be considered in the act of fielding the ball.
- Runners who collide with a player who is in possession of the ball and attempting to make a play will be called out.
- If a runner's collision with a defensive player in possession of the ball is flagrant, the runner will be ejected. It is the umpire's judgment whether or not the collision was flagrant.

Batters

- There are no on-deck batters outside or inside the dugout. That is, batters may not swing the bat inside or outside the dugout while another batter is at the plate.
- In WHLL games there is a continuous batting order as provided in 4.04 of the rule book.
- A strike is "any part of the ball that passes through any part of the strike zone," and the strike zone is defined as "that space over home plate which is between the batter's armpits and the top of the knees when the batter assumes a natural stance." (Rule 2.00) Practically speaking, a strike is what an umpire calls a strike, and, as mentioned, there is no arguing with his call.
- If a batter swings at a pitch *in the strike zone* and the ball hits him, it is a strike. This includes the hands. It is not the case that "the hands are part of the bat." If a batter swings at a pitch *outside the strike zone* and it hits him, it is also a strike. If a pitched ball bounces in front of the plate and then strikes the batter, the batter is awarded first base. A pitch that bounces in front of the plate is not a strike.
- If a batter bats out of turn and it is discovered before he has completed the at-bat, the proper batter replaces him, assumes the count the improper bat had, and completes the at-bat. If a batter bats out of turn and hits the ball, and it is discovered before the next pitch is thrown, the batter-runner is removed from the base, the proper batter is called out, and the next batter due up after the proper batter is the new batter. (For example, John follows Bob in the batting order, but it is discovered that John just hit in Bob's place. Bob would be called out and John would return to hit.) Any base runners who have advanced as a result of the improper batter's hit must return to the last base they occupied. However, any advance that runners have made during the

improper batter's at-bat either on a stolen base, illegal pitch, wild pitch, or passed ball is legal.
(6.07 (a) – (d))

Miscellaneous, including commonly misunderstood rules

- Home plate, first, third, and the foul lines are fair territory. Therefore, if a ball hits home plate and stops in fair territory or is fielded in fair territory, it is fair. If it hits first or third or the foul line or the foul pole, it is fair. (2.00)
- The infield fly is a fair fly (but not a line drive or bunt) that can be caught by an infielder “with ordinary effort” when first and second, or first, second, and third bases are occupied before two are out. If the umpire signals an infield fly, the batter is out and the runners may advance either at the risk of the ball being caught or by retouching or tagging up and advancing after the ball has been touched, the same as any fly ball. Any player on defense may field an infield fly. (2.00)
- An inning starts the instant the third out is made in the preceding inning.
- Regardless of when the game starts, no inning may begin after 10 PM.
- If a hit fair ball strikes the foul pole or a sign, scoreboard, tree limb or any other object outside the fence and bounces back onto the field, it is a home run. If it strikes anything that is physically a part of the fence and bounces back in, it is an automatic double. If a ball strikes anything that makes it an automatic double, a fielder may not catch it before it hits the ground and record an out.
- On any tip foul caught by the catcher, the ball is live and runners may attempt to steal.
- If a runner standing on a base is hit by a batted fair ball, he is out.

revised 3/8/11