

Bellaire Little League Major & Minor League

2009 Ground Rules

1. Each division will produce game schedules each season. *Refer to the attached game time-line to determine when teams report for field preparation, batting practice, pre-game conference, etc.* For the purpose of playing times, all games will be considered to start at their scheduled start time whether or not the game actually starts at that time. If the first game runs late, it is the responsibility of the managers to get their equipment and players out of the dugout immediately at the end of the first game and to have a volunteer quickly get the field ready for the next game.

2. No new inning will start after one hour and 40 minutes unless at such time the game is tied, and then no new inning will start after one hour and 45 minutes. All games in which the final inning of play, which began prior to 1:40 (or 1:45 for ties) elapsed game time, is completed prior to one hour and 55 minutes after official start time or at 10:00 pm, whichever is first, shall be considered final if it has become a regulation game under Rule 4.10(c); if the game is not completed as of that time, the score will revert back to the immediately preceding completed inning unless the home team is at bat and (a) the home team is ahead at that time (in which case the home team wins) or (b) the home team has come back to tie (in which case the game is recorded as a tie). Only games which have NOT become a regulation game under Rule 4.10(c) when time is called shall be suspended for later completion. All incomplete games so suspended shall be resumed per LL Rule 4.12, preferably immediately prior to the next scheduled game between the two teams, from the exact point at which play was halted in the original game, and shall be played until a winner is determined in accordance with the Rules. See ADDITIONAL GROUND RULES FOR MINOR LEAGUE ONLY attached to this document.

3. A game is considered complete after 4 innings for the Major League (see LL Rules section 4.10 for Major League only). During pre-season games rule 4.10 (e) will not apply. **Fall League Only:** A maximum of 5 (five) runs may be scored by each team in each of the first 3 (three) innings of a game. Specifically, the home and visitors teams may each score up to 5 (five) runs in their respective half of each of the first three innings of each game. After three (3) innings, the number of runs that may be scored in each half inning is unlimited. Therefore rule 4.10 will not apply in Fall League.

4. There shall be one minute between innings with the one-minute time limit commencing upon the third out of the preceding half-inning. Pitchers will be allowed up to 8 (eight) warm up pitches between innings, not to exceed the one minute limit.

5. Only players equipped with catcher's mitt, athletic cup, and mask may warm up a pitcher (no manager or coach may warm-up any pitcher, whether on the field or in the bullpen). Catchers must use a catcher's mitt. See Rule 1.12. Each manager is responsible for keeping his catcher equipped unless he is at bat or on base.

6. Under LL Rule 1.15 pitchers are permitted to use multi-color, non-white/non-gray gloves (as manufactured). Pitchers are permitted to wear a batting glove under the player's fielding glove as long as the batting glove does not have any white, gray or optic yellow on it. Pitcher should be reminded that they may not rub the ball between their hands while they are wearing a batting glove on their non-pitching hand (see Rule 8.02(a)(6)) – only bare hands may be used to rub the ball.

Pitchers shall not have white anywhere on either arm (other than the uniform shirt). Pitchers may not wear a white or gray shirt under their uniform shirt unless the white or gray shirt is not materially visible.

No jewelry of any kind is allowed with the exception of Medical ID, which must be kept covered (preferably taped down) and approved by the Umpire in Charge (see Rule 1.11).

7. Subject to the time limitations imposed by Sections 1 and 2 above, the visitors' team will take infield practice for *15 minutes commencing 40 minutes prior to the scheduled start time of the game*, and the home team will have infield practice for *15 minutes* commencing immediately upon the visitor team completing its infield practice. *See game time-line for details*. The time (if reasonably available) between the first and second games will be used for infield practice, divided equally between the home and visiting teams. Infield practice shall terminate 5 minutes before the scheduled start time of each game for pre-game conference. The Umpire in Charge, in his sole discretion, may prohibit or limit infield practice to avoid delay in the scheduled start time of any game.

8. The home team is responsible for chalking the field and putting out the bases for the first game, and for putting up equipment, dragging the field, locking the cage, cleaning up dugouts and turning off lights after the last game. All chalk lines (baselines, catcher's box and base coaches' boxes) shall be marked in accordance with Little League Rules [see Diagrams 1 and 2, pp. 43-44 of the Official Rules Book]. The home team Manager is responsible for the proper marking of the field of play. **Fall League only** - The home team shall supply a reasonable qualified volunteer to umpire in the field umpire's position if requested by the plate umpire. The League will supply the umpire in charge for each game.

9. The visitor's team shall have access to the batting cages for 20 minutes beginning 1 (one) hour prior to the game's scheduled start time. The home team will have the next 20 minutes. *See game time line*.

10. The home team is responsible for keeping the official scorebook and official pitch count and phoning or emailing the results to League Rep. (scores, names of pitchers, innings pitched by each pitcher, home runs, and no hitters pitched and chart defensive positions each inning) within 24 hours of the completion of the game. Both managers and the umpire in charge are required to sign the official scorebook. The official scorekeeper for the home team shall keep the official pitch count. In addition, the visiting team and the home team each shall have an additional person from each team keep the pitch count. After each half inning, the umpire shall reconcile each pitch count and make the official determination, which shall be recorded by the home team scorekeeper as the official pitch count. Only with the umpire's advance permission, may only one individual from the home team keep both the official score book and the home team's sole pitch count.

11. A game may start and thereafter be continued only if both teams are able to field 9 (nine) players. If a team will not be able to field the required number of players at the start of the game, the manager must notify the League Rep and the opposing manager at least 4 hours prior to the game or a forfeit will result. If timely notice by the manager is given, the game will be rescheduled subject to field availability. In the event a team is unable to field nine players after the start of the game by reason of player injury, illness or ejection, the game shall be suspended and completed as though it were a "rainout." (*See procedure for Changes in Game Times*).

12. All players shall remain within the fenced-in area after the game starts, except for restroom visits. Absolutely no food or drinks (with the exception of water or sports drinks) are allowed in the dugout during the game. Parents need to feed their players prior to game time or they must wait until after the game is completed. This rule includes players that are currently sitting on the bench. There are no exceptions other than for medical necessity. Any player who after the commencement and before the end of the game leaves the dugout to sit in the stands or to get something to eat or drink shall be removed from the game at the request of the opposing manager.

13. Managers will be held responsible to clean up their respective side of the field following practices and games (including trash).

14. The use of tobacco in any form is prohibited on the playing field, benches, and dugouts. The use of alcoholic beverages or profanity is prohibited anywhere at the baseball complexes.

15. Make-up games will be played as determined by the scheduler.

16. The league will provide only batting helmets with facemasks. A player may wear his own helmet provided it complies with Rule 1.16 and has either a facemask or properly installed C-flap covering the side of the face exposed to the pitcher. Personal helmets may NOT, under any circumstances, be shared!

17. If a manager believes a rule is violated, the manager must notify the umpire of his/her protest prior to the next pitch regarding the rule in question. The manager shall request "time" for purpose of lodging the protest, wait for the Umpire-in-Charge's call of "Time," produce the Little League rulebook, and specify to the umpire to whom the appeal is being made the specific rule under which the protest is being lodged. If the manager fails to produce the rulebook, specify the rule under which the protest is made, or the next pitch or any play is completed prior to the appeal, the umpire's original decision stands. See Rule 4.19.

18. The home team will occupy the third base line dugout, and the visitors will occupy the first base line dugout.

19(a.). Under Rule 4.04 of the Little League Playing Rules, the League has invoked the optional rule that all Major League teams must use a "continuous batting order" to bat all players, in their respective spot in the batting order on the game roster. Open substitutions are permitted, however each player must meet the requirements of Regulation IV(i) (mandatory play – each player on the game roster must play a minimum of six defensive outs, which may be non-consecutive outs, and at least one at bat during each game); provided, that pitcher substitutions must still comply with the limitation of Rule 3.03(3) (once removed as pitcher, the player may not return to the lineup as a pitcher). Managers are encouraged to develop pitchers in all age groups, keeping in mind the 9 year olds and 11 year olds who could qualify for the League district tournament team or have the potential to pitch in the following season(s). *If these regulations are not complied with for any reason, except injury or illness, managers will be subject to review and possible disciplinary action by the League, which may include suspension from League play.*

Clarification: Opposing manager should lodge an official protest with the umpire prior to the umpire(s) leaving the field of play and then in writing to the League president within 24 hours. Game umpire shall submit a report to the umpire in chief who will then notify the league representatives. If protest is upheld, manager will be suspended from the next physically played game. All Little League officials are urged to take precautions to prevent protests. *When a protest situation is imminent, the potential offender should be notified immediately.*

Example: Should a manager, official scorer, league official, or umpire discover that a player has not fulfilled their mandatory play obligation, during the game or at the start of the next inning of play, the fact should be brought to the attention of the manager of the team involved. Such action should not be delayed until the infraction has occurred.

Fall League only: *Each player on the game roster shall during each game play at least one full inning at an infield position (includes catcher position).* In assigning players to infield positions, managers should seek to place each child, to the extent reasonably possible in sole judgement of manager, in position(s) where excessive exposure to risk of injury to the child is lessened, given such factors as age, ability, size, weight, agility, quickness, and playing experience of the child. The Executive Committee of the League

will consider special exemptions, on a case by case basis, from the requirement for the minimum one inning of infield play (only) for players whose parents submit a written request to the League requesting that their child not be required to play an infield position each game. If these regulations are not complied with for any reason, except injury or illness, Managers will be subject to review and possible disciplinary action by the League, which may include suspension from League play. Please see *Clarification* and *Example* above.

19(b.). Regulation VI-Pitchers limits the number of pitches a pitcher may throw during a game and also specifies the number of required days of rest needed. These rules have changed for 2009. A copy of the updated rule is attached. The updated rule increases the maximum number of pitches a pitcher could deliver and still be permitted to become a catcher in that day and provides two options for required rest. The Bellaire Little League Board of directors has selected “Option 2.” Accordingly, all rest will be on a calendar, rather than game, basis and pitchers must adhere to the following rest requirements:

- If a player pitches 61 or more pitches in a day, four (4) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 41 - 60 pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 21 - 40 pitches in a day, two (2) 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.

Further, a pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day. Regulation VI-Pitchers contains additional rules and requirements which should be understood and followed.

These Regulations will be managed and administered by a designated coach on each team, the umpire in chief of the game and official scorekeeper. At the end of each half inning the designated coaches charged with counting pitches will confer with the umpire in chief to determine the number of pitches thrown. From this information, the umpire in chief will inform the official scorekeeper of the number of pitches officially charged to a pitcher. However, the Manager is responsible for knowing when his/her pitcher must be removed in accordance to Regulation VI-Pitchers, specified in the Official Little League Regulations and Playing Rules.

Managers are to report the number of pitches thrown by each pitcher within 24 hours after each game played to their League Rep., who will track these numbers and days of rest needed.

20. Because the League has invoked the continuous batting order option under Rule 4.04, Rule 7.14 (special pinch – runner) of the Little League Playing Rules shall not apply to play in the Majors division only of the League. The Minors division in both Spring and Fall shall use a special pinch runner for the catcher when two out have been recorded. **Fall League only** In both Major and Minors, if there are 2 outs, the manager shall replace the catcher with a pinch runner. The pinch runner shall be the player who recorded the immediately preceding out.

21. Any player, coach or manager intentionally throwing, hitting, or propelling any ball, glove, bat, equipment, concession, food, rocks, or other object into or across any streets or other public thoroughfares adjacent to the playing areas will be subject to review and possible disciplinary action by the League, which may include suspension from League play.

22. Team meetings at the top or bottom of each inning shall be conducted either in the team dugout or in foul territory on the team’s side of the field. These meetings shall not under any circumstance cause any delay of the game.

23. During the pendency of the game only umpires, uniformed players, one Manager, and two coaches for each team will be permitted within the field of play (i.e., inside the fences, including dugout and bull pen areas). Each team's manager and coaches will remain on their side of the field during the game except when occupying the opposing team's baseline base coacher's box. During play of the game managers/coaches shall remain behind the dugout fence or in the coach's box, as applicable.

Under revised LL Rule 4.05, managers or coaches may act as base coaches at both 1st and 3rd base, *as long as another adult remains in the dugout*. All players acting as base coaches shall wear an approved batting helmet at all times while acting as a base coach. See Rule 1.16.

24. Except for rainouts and other rescheduled games, each team will be limited to not more than (4) four touches per week. A touch is defined as a game or practice, or any other time when a manager or coach, together with 2 members of a team (other than family members of the manager or coach) are together for the purpose of baseball instruction, practice or play in any one given day, without prior BLL board approval. **Fall League only:** Except for rainouts and other rescheduled games, each team will be limited to not more than (2) two touches per week.

25. Dead Ball Areas. The following areas at Horn and Carter Fields will be considered "Dead Ball" areas: (I) All areas outside a line along the first and third base fence lines beginning with the last fence post of the sideline fence along the baselines and extending to the last (nearest) fence post of the outfield fence; and (II) the pitchers and catchers "cutouts" of the bullpen area along the first base side of Horn Field [defined by a straight line from the 6 foot fence post to the 4 foot fence at the entrance to each area at the front of the pitcher and catcher cutouts. Umpire can award bases, put runners back or award outs if a ball goes into Dead Ball Area by virtue of Interference. i.e. dugout gate is left open during a live ball situation.

26. Home Run: A batted ball that hits the painted yellow line or yellow fence protector, and stays in the field of play is considered a "live ball." A batted ball must go over the fence, in flight while over fair territory to be considered a home run.

27. Tobacco, Alcohol & Profanity: The use of tobacco in any form is prohibited on the playing field, benches and dugouts. Smoking is not permitted on League facilities. The use of alcoholic beverages or profanity is prohibited anywhere at the League's baseball complexes.

28. Intentional Delay or Otherwise Making a Travesty of the Game.

Players, managers, coaches, parents, or observers making a travesty of the game will not be tolerated. If it is in the opinion of the umpire that any player, manager, coach, parent, or observer is making a travesty of the game, said individual or individuals shall be immediately ejected from the game and required to leave the game site and the game shall be replayed from the point of infraction without regard to the outcome of any play which occurred during or as a consequence of the offending conduct; provided, however, that if, in the judgment of the umpire, the offending conduct was engaged in by a player due to youth or inexperience, the offending player may be issued a warning for the first infraction. Causing players to intentionally perform poorly (including intentionally striking out, intentionally being put out, intentionally failing to record an out, or intentionally making wild pitches or throws) for the purpose of extending or shortening a game, or otherwise engaging in any action whose purpose is to manipulate the time or duration of the game (including repeated and unwarranted timeouts or replacement of players (including catchers)), shall be considered making a travesty of the game. Willfully and knowingly disregarding the requirements of these Ground Rules and other applicable rules also shall be considered making a travesty of the game. In addition to ejection, additional penalties (up to and including forfeiture of a game and/or disqualification of the team, managers or coaches from further league or tournament

participation) may be imposed if, in the opinion of the Disciplinary Committee of the Board of Directors of the League, such additional penalties are warranted in light of the offending conduct and other relevant considerations the Committee may consider in its judgment.

All other rules are Official Little League rules.

Post-Season Tournament

To the extent there is a post-season tournament scheduled, the following additional rules shall apply unless otherwise amended by the League Representative or the Vice President of Operations of the Board of Directors of the League, who shall be the Tournament Official.

1. Except as reflected, below all games shall be played based on the Major or Minor League ground rules (as applicable) and applicable Little League Rules, with no exceptions or changes. The first game of the day will start when the schedule indicates; subsequent games will start 20 minutes after the conclusion of the proceeding game or at the time the schedule indicates, whichever is earlier
2. Seeding will be based on regular season records (other than in the Fall, in which case the League Representative will determine seeding). In the event of a tie, ties will be resolved (a) first head-to-head and (b) second by coin toss.
3. Highest seed to elect Home or Visitor.
4. Except as stated below, there shall be no time limits for any tournament game.
5. Instead, the mercy run rule of 4.10(e) is in effect for the tournament, i.e., if after four innings (3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead) one team has a lead of 10 runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede the victory to the opponent. The Championship Game mercy run rule will be 15 runs after 3 ½ innings. Note: If the visiting team has a lead of 10 (15, for the Championship Game) runs or more, the home team must bat in its half of the inning.
6. Each player on the game roster must play a minimum of six defensive outs, which may be non-consecutive outs. If this rule is not complied with for any reason, except for injury or illness, said player/players must start the next game and play the entire game and the Manager is subject to discipline, up to and including forfeiture of the game. Each team will be allowed unlimited (open) substitutions, and there is no requirement that all players sit (or play IF) and a player may sit twice (or more) without other players sitting.
7. All games shall be completed before 10:00 PM, and shall be considered final if it has become a regulation game under Rule 4.10(c); provided that no game shall end in a tie. Tie games shall be continued until a winner is determined in accordance with the Rules.
8. Regulation VI-Pitchers will apply and will be strictly enforced. For example, a pitcher who throws 41 pitches or more must have three (3) calendar days rest, even if those pitches were thrown in a regular season game to make him ineligible for a post-season game (the calendar does not reset).
9. No maximum run limit for any inning of play.

ADDITIONAL GROUND RULES FOR MINOR LEAGUE ONLY

1. No new inning will start after one hour and 30 minutes unless the game is tied and then no new inning will start after one hour and 35 minutes. All games will end one hour and 55 minutes after official start time or at 10:00 pm, whichever is first. The score of any game ending with an incomplete inning will revert back to the score of the last completed inning unless the home team is at bat and (a) the home team is ahead at that time or (b) the home team has come back to tie. If there is a tie, then each team will be awarded a half (.5) win and a half (.5) loss.
2. A game is considered complete after 3 innings for the Minor League. All Minor league games are complete after six (6) full innings, or 5 ½ innings if home team has the lead, irrespective of time remaining to begin a new inning. There are no extra innings in Minor league baseball.
3. Under Rule 4.04 of the Little League Playing Rules, the League has invoked the optional rule that all Major League teams must use a “continuous batting order” to bat all players, in their respective spot in the batting order on the game roster. Open substitutions are permitted, however, no player may sit two (2) consecutive innings, and must start and finish each inning played (subject to exception for injuries or disciplinary action). Each player must meet the requirements of Regulation IV (i) (mandatory play – each player on the game roster must play a minimum of six defensive outs, provided, that pitcher substitutions must still comply with the limitation of Rule 3.03(3) (once removed as pitcher, the player may not return to the lineup as a pitcher). Managers are encouraged to develop pitchers in all age groups, keeping in mind the 10 year olds who could qualify for the League "all star" tournament team or have the potential to pitch in the following season(s).

Except as provided below, each player on the game roster shall during each game and in no event later than the conclusion of the fourth (4th) inning play at least one full inning at an infield position (includes catcher position). Additionally, no player may sit two (2) defensive innings until all players on the game roster have been out of the lineup for one (1) defensive inning. In assigning players to infield positions managers should seek to place each child, to the extent reasonably possible in sole judgment of manager, in position(s) where excessive exposure to risk of injury to the child is lessened, given such factors as age, ability, size, weight, agility, quickness, and playing experience of the child. Exception: The Executive Committee of the League will consider special exemption from the requirements of this paragraph, on a case by case basis, for players whose parents submit a written request to the League requesting that their child not be required to play an infield position each game. If the requirements of this paragraph are not complied with for any reason, except for injury, illness or absence, said play/players must start the next game and play the entire game consistent with this paragraph. *If these regulations are not complied with for any reason, except injury or illness, Managers will be subject to review and possible disciplinary action by the League, which may include suspension from League play.*

Clarification: Opposing manager should lodge an official protest with the umpire prior to the umpire(s) leaving the field of play and then in writing to the League president within 24 hours. Game umpire shall submit a report to the umpire in chief who will then notify the league representatives. If protest is upheld, manager will be suspended from the next physically played game. All Little League officials are urged to take precautions to prevent protests. *When a protest situation is imminent, the potential offender should be notified immediately.* **Example:** Should a manager, official scorer, league official, or umpire discover that a player has not fulfilled their mandatory play obligation, during the game or at the start of the next inning of play, the fact should be brought to the attention of the manager of the team involved. Such action should not be delayed until the infraction has occurred.

4. Minors Division baseball is a developmental league; accordingly, it is recommended that managers develop pitchers in all age groups, keeping in mind the 9 year olds who could qualify for the League tournament team or have the potential to pitch in following season(s).
5. Make up games will be played as determined by the scheduler.
6. In the event games are postponed due to inclement weather, and the games can not be reasonably rescheduled during the regular season, each effected team will be awarded a half (.5) win and a half (.5) loss at the end of the regular season.
7. A maximum of 5 (five) runs may be scored by each team in each of the first 3 (three) innings of a game. Specifically, the home and visitors teams may each score up to 5 (five) runs in their respective half of each of the first three innings of each game. After three (3) innings, the number of runs that may be scored in each half inning is unlimited.
8. The mercy run rule of 4.10(e) is waived.
9. All protests lodged shall be resolved prior to the next pitch or play (see Rule 4.19 (g)).
10. During the regular season, except for rainouts and other rescheduled games, each team will be limited to not more than (3) three touches per week. **Fall League only:** Except for rainouts and other rescheduled games, each team will be limited to not more than (2) two touches per week.