2025 DLL Minor/Major League Rules

Unless otherwise stated, please refer to the Official Little League Rulebook or the Little League Rule Book App

Coach/Team Responsibilities

- **Home team arrives early to make sure field is in playable condition, this includes:**
  - Home team coach is responsible for communicating with assistants if unable to make it. Most of the time, the only thing needed will be the batter's box/foul line, but the following protocols should be observed:
    - If assistants are unable to make it, home team coach is responsible for asking visiting team for help, or having some contingency plan ready (trustworthy parent, board member, coach from another team, etc)
  - Raking and lining the batter's box and base lines, spraying foul lines if necessary
  - Filling in hole in front of pitcher's rubber with mound clay (if dirt mound)
    - Use mound clay - spread clay/water with hose, tamp, rake dry dirt on top.
  - Obtaining 2 game balls
  - Removal of minor amounts of water on field, if needed
- **Visiting team to provide volunteer to run scoreboard**
  - Make sure the scoreboard is turned on and functioning
  - This is accomplished by turning on the light switch labeled "scoreboard" in the press box.
  - Adults should run the scoreboard, NOT children. If no adults are available, no children under the age of 12 unless they are responsible and experienced with the scoreboard
  - There should never be multiple children in the press box without a responsible adult
  - Trash should be cleaned up after the game
  - Any music played should be kept between innings or during timeouts/pitching changes. Music should be appropriate for all ages, including no music with profanity or that might be considered inappropriate for ALL children
- **Both teams should keep score in the GameChanger app**
  - This should be performed by a parent or an assistant coach
- At the completion of each game, winning team should notify the division director the outcome and score of the game if the score is not visible in GameChanger
  - League commissioner should collect the scores and enter into Blue Sombrero

The Pitcher

- Please refer to the Little League rulebook or Little League Rulebooks App for more information on pitch counts and days of rest
  - Max pitch counts (**according to league age)**
    - 11-12 85 pitches per day
    - 9-10 75 pitches per day
    - 6-8 50 pitches per day
  - Days of rest (by # of pitches)

        - 1-20, 0 days' rest
        - 21-35, 1 days' rest
        - 36-50, 2 days' rest
        - 51-65, 3 days' rest
        - 66+, 4 days rest
- Any player who has played the position of catcher for more than 3 full innings is not eligible to pitch that day
    - A catcher that has been moved to the pitcher position may not return to catcher if he or she has pitched more than 20 pitches
- A pitcher who was thrown more than 40 pitches in a game cannot play catcher
- Minor leaguers aged 12 are not permitted to pitch
- Once removed from the mound, a *starting pitcher* may return to the position of pitcher, provided that he/she has *continued to play defense*. A pitcher who sat the bench for 1 defensive out or more may not return to the game as pitcher

The Catcher

- A pitcher who was thrown more than 40 pitches in a game cannot play catcher
- When *previous* inning's catcher is on base with 2 outs, a courtesy runner may be used for that player so he or she may apply the catcher's gear (see "The Runner")
    - Courtesy runner must be the player who was last out

The Runner

- Steals: a runner cannot leave base until the ball has been delivered and has reached the batter
    - No lead-offs/pick-offs
- Base path: Base path is established when a tag attempt occurs and is a straight line from the runner to the base
    - Runner is out when running more than 3 feet away from a tag unless it is to avoid interfering with a fielder making a play
- Courtesy Runner: when *previous* inning's catcher is on base with 2 outs, a courtesy runner may be used for that player so he or she may apply the catcher's gear
    - Must use a player that is currently not in the game. If all players are batting, the player from that team who recorded the last out is used
- Interference
    - If a 1st or 3rd base coach touches a base runner in order to influence his/her path, that base runner is considered out
    - The runner will be called out for offensive interference when the runner fails to avoid a fielder who is actively making a play on a batted ball. All other runners will return to the last base that was touched legally
    - The runner will be considered out if contacted by a batted ball in fair territory
    - If a fielder not making an attempt on a batted ball makes contact with the baserunner (who is appropriately within the runner's lane), that runner will be avoided the next base on defensive interference, provided that the runner attempts to go to the next base and doesn't turn back

Bats

- USA baseball bats only (no USSSA bats)
    - Any player who receives a pitch using a non-sanctioned bat will be considered out
    - A second offense will result in the loss of one base coach. A player will substitute in the role (must wear helmet)

Batting/Fielding Lineup

- All players present at game (and not sick or injured) must be in batting lineup (continuous batting order)
    - Continuous batting order allows for free defensive substitutions. When all players bat, there is no minimum play rule
- Minors: during the regular season, 10 players are allowed on defense (4 outfielders) if coaches so choose. During the league tournament, only 9 players are allowed on the field in order to prepare players for the district tournament
- Majors: only 9 players allowed on defense during regular season and tournament

Special Rules

- Dropped Third Strike **(Majors only)**
    - Batter can advance on a dropped third strike when (1) first base is unoccupied with any number of outs, (2) first base is occupied with 2 outs
- Infield Fly **(Majors only)**
    - Fair fly ball that can be caught by ordinary effort by an infielder with 0 or 1 outs, runners on 1st and 2nd, or with bases loaded - batter is out. Umpire must immediately declare infield fly when ball is batted. **Rule does not apply when there is only a runner on 1st base.**
        - **Ball is considered live and runners may advance. If the ball is caught, players would need to tag as per usual.**
        - If first declared an infield fly the ball then bounces foul, it would be considered a foul ball. Alternatively, if the ball lands foul, and bounces into fair territory before 1st or 3rd base, the ball would be considered an infield fly

Game Duration

- 6 inning games
    - Minor league: no new inning to start after 1 hour 30 mins
    - Major league: no new inning to start after 1 hour 45 mins
    - Tournament championship games: no time limit
    - Umpires and coaches should be aware of when the time limit is approaching and the last inning should be declared
- No new inning may start after 10:00pm

Mercy Rule

- 6 run limit per inning (INCLUDES 6th inning, unless tournament game)
- Major/Minor: 13 runs after 4th inning, 7 runs after 5th inning
- Little League has adopted a new run rule for the Little League District Tournament. We will continue to observe our local league mercy rule.

- During the regular season, should the visiting team obtain a lead of 7 or more runs and either (1) time has expired or (2) the game has reached the top of the 6th inning, the home team should still be allowed to bat despite not being able to win for the purpose of run ratios and tournament seeding
- Tournament games: run rule still applies, unlimited runs allowed in 6th inning for either team

Rain/Weather Delays/Lightning

- If the field is in playable condition and the intensity of rain isn't so great as to make game play difficult, games will continue as long as possible.
    - If a game is stopped due to rain and 3 full innings (or at least ½ the time of the game) have been played, this will be considered a full game and no makeup game will be scheduled.
    - Make-up games will be scheduled only as much as to meet the minimum number of games mandated by Little League International (12 games)
- The decision whether or not to play a game based on rain depends on (1) the amount of rain, (2) the duration, (3) the condition of the fields before the rain, and (4) the availability of help to dry the fields before game time
    - Conversations involving the coaches, league commissioner, and president of the league will take place prior to game time to make a decision
- Lightning: 30 minute delay
- Thunder: 15 minute delay

Tournament Rules

Regular league rules apply for tournament games unless otherwise mentioned below.
Tournament rules apply to both major and minor divisions unless otherwise mentioned

- The tournament will be single elimination
- Tournament seeds will be determined using regular season records
    - The first round of games will not count toward standings. Specifically, each team will play each other once, after which all games will be used to determine tournament seeds
    - If the order of the opening round games is disrupted, the standing from each teams **first encounter** with each other team will still be used
    - Tournament seeds will be determined using the following criteria for use in case of need for tiebreaker: win/loss record (win percentage), head-to-head, lowest runs allowed ratio (runs allowed/runs scored)
    - If all results are even to this point, blind draw or coin flip will be the determining factor
- Higher seed will be considered home team throughout the tournament, including championship game
- For both the major and minor division tournaments, only 9 players allowed on the field at any given time
    - Minor division: 10 players are acceptable during the **regular season only, not tournament**

UMPIRE'S QUICK REFERENCE CARD:

Pitching/Catching

- Max pitch counts (according to **league age**)
    - 11-12 85 pitches per day
    - 9-10 75 pitches per day
    - 6-8 50 pitches per day
- Catcher can only move to pitcher if he has caught 3 innings or less and can only move *back* to pitcher afterward if 20 pitches or less were thrown.
- A pitcher who was thrown more than 40 pitches in a game cannot play catcher
- Once removed from the mound, a pitcher cannot return again to pitch

Courtesy Runner

- When *previous inning's* catcher is on base with *2 outs*, a courtesy runner may be used for that player so he or she may apply the catcher's gear
    - The player from that team who recorded the last out is used

Steals

- Runners cannot leave base until ball has been delivered and has reached the batter
- No lead-offs/pick-offs

Base Path

- Base path is established when a tag attempt occurs and is a straight line from the runner to the base
    - Runner is out when running more than 3 feet away from a tag unless it is to avoid interfering with a fielder making a play

Out-of-Play

- Overthrows that go out of bounds: runners are awarded one extra base

Infield Fly **(Majors only)**

Fair fly ball that can be caught by ordinary effort by an infielder with 0 or 1 outs, runners on 1st and 2nd, or with bases loaded - batter is out. **Umpire must immediately declare infield fly when ball is batted.**

Dropped Third Strike **(Majors only)**

- Batter can advance on a dropped third strike when (1) first base is unoccupied with any number of outs, (2) first base is occupied with 2 outs

Bat Violations

- All bats must have USA Baseball logo
    - Batter is out if receiving a pitch with non-sanctioned bat
    - Second offense: offending team loses 1 base coach, player (with helmet) may coach base

Time Limits

- 6 inning games
    - Minor league: no new inning to start after 1 hour 30 mins
    - Major league: no new inning to start after 1 hour 45 mins for major
    - Tournament championship games: no time limit
- 6 run limit per inning (INCLUDES 6th inning, unless tournament game)
    - Run rule (season): 13 runs after 4th inning, 7 runs after 5th inning
    - Tournament games: run rule still applies, unlimited runs allowed in 6th inning

Weather Delays

- Lightning: 30 minute delay
- Thunder: 15 minute delay