



# LOUISIANA LITTLE LEAGUE® BASEBALL “COACH PITCH” OFFICIAL PLAYING RULES REVISED 2023



*The following rules were developed by the Little League® District Administrators to ensure that the playing rules for Minor League play using “Coach Pitch” are consistent throughout the state for leagues and/or tournaments involving teams from the Little League® Districts in Louisiana.*

## **Rule 1 – OBJECTIVES OF THE GAME 1.1 The Team**

- (a) All players must be League Age six (6), seven (7) and eight (8). League Age determination date shall be September 1 of the current year.
- (b) Each team must have four (4) coaches listed on the official roster.
- (c) If a team does not have or/ is unable to put **ten (10)** players in the batting order then the team must take an “out” for that spot in the batting order. Teams may start and end a game with nine (9) players.

**NOTES:** Participants league Age 6 are permitted to advance to Minor League “Coach Pitch” after participation in T-Ball for One (1) year. (P.25-Regulation I – Note 3)

## **1.2 Official Ball and Equipment**

- (a) The bat must be a baseball bat which meets the USA Baseball Bat standard (USABat). The bat diameter shall not exceed 2 5/8” in diameter and must have the USA Baseball logo. **P.66 Rule 1.10**
- (b) Baseballs approved by Little League® International shall be used.

## **1.3 Substitution/Mandatory Play**

- (a) Each player on the team roster will participate in each game for a minimum of every other inning. **(Continuous Batting Order)**

## **1.4 Ejections**

- (a) If more than one coach is ejected, the game shall be declared a forfeit and the opposing team shall be declared the winner.
- (b) Replacement managers/coaches cannot be made due to an ejection and/or suspension.

## **Rule 2 – GAME PRELIMINARIES 2.1 Regulation Game**

- (a) A Game will consist of six (6) innings or 1hr 10min time limit(no new inning with 5 min or less remaining in the game)
- (b) The Game becomes official when four (4) complete innings have been played OR three and onehalf (3½) if the home team is ahead;
- (c) Run Rule(s) will be enforced according to Little League® International Rules and Regulations.

## **2.2 Defense Alignment**

- (a) Ten (10) players listed in the batting order will be allowed to play defense.



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- (b) All defensive players must play his/her position. For safety precautions the First Baseman and the Third Baseman shall not play more than thirty (30) feet from their designated bag. The Shortstop and Second Baseman shall not play any closer than the pitching rubber.  
Outfielders shall play at least twenty (20) feet behind each base which shall be marked with a white line or hash marks.

### 2.3 Coaches

- (a) One manager and three coaches will be allowed in the dugout. All coaching must be done from the dugout area, not outside the fence or on the playing field.

**PENALTY:** The coach will receive a warning for unsportsmanlike conduct. On the next infraction the coach will be ejected.

- (b) The offensive team shall station two (2) coaches and a Pitcher “Coach” on the field while on offense. The coaches shall take their positions in the coaching boxes.

### 2.4 Team Time Outs

- (a) On Defense;

1. A team is allowed two (2) time outs each defensive inning.
2. On the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) defensive time out in an inning the pitcher must be removed from the mound, and cannot return to the pitcher position for the remainder of the game.

- (b) On Offense;

1. A team is allowed two (2) time outs each offensive inning. The umpire will **NOT** permit a third (3<sup>rd</sup>) time out. If the coach takes a third (3<sup>rd</sup>) time out, by calling the batter out of the batter’s box, coming down the baseline and talking to the batter without umpire permission, he/she will be given a warning.

**PENALTY:** On the first (1<sup>st</sup>) infraction the umpire shall call time, order the batter back into the box and award the batter a STRIKE. On the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) infraction the batter shall be declared out. On any subsequent infractions the coach involved shall be ejected from the game.

### Rule 3 – PUTTING THE BALL IN PLAY/BALL BECOMES DEAD Ball in Play

#### 3.1 Putting the

- (a) When all defensive players are in their positions in the infield and ready, the umpire shall announce “PLAY BALL”.

### 3.2 Ball Becomes Dead

**The Ball Becomes Dead when ANY of the following apply:**

- (a) Until the umpire grants and declares “Time”, the ball will remain live **and in play**.
- (b) When in the umpire’s judgment an infielder has control of the ball, “Time” will be called when **ANY** of the following apply;
- 1) The Lead Runner has stopped advancing, been put out, or scores.
  - 2) The **ONLY** time the lead runner will change during a play will be if extra base hits take place. It is in the umpire’s judgment when advancement has stopped with the ball being controlled in the infield.



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**NOTE:** Umpires need to be aware to watch the runners as they score and the lead runner changes.

(c) **RUNNERS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO RUN CONTINUOUSLY!**

**NOTE: ONLY THE UMPIRE(S) SHALL CALL TIME, NOT A PLAYER!**

(d) See Rule 5.1

## Rule 4 – THE BATTER

### 4.1 Batting Order

(a) All players present that are on the team roster, will be placed in the batting order (**Continuous Batting Order**) and will bat. However, after the offense has three (3) outs the side is retired and will then take their defensive positions on the field. Their next offensive at bat will continue with the next batter up in the batting order.

**PENALTY:** Batting out of order will be assessed as per minor league rules in the Little League® rulebook.

### 4.2 Batter

- (a) The batter will receive three (3) strikes or six (6) pitches. **ONLY swing and misses and Foul Balls will be called as Strikes.**
- (b) When the batter has accumulated three (3) strikes, the umpire shall declare him/her out. The batter is not entitled to a certain number of physical swings at the ball. He/She is only entitled to three (3) strikes.
- (c) If the batter does not swing or swings and misses at the sixth pitch the batter will be called out.
- (d) A batter cannot be called out for hitting a foul ball, **regardless of the pitch count.**

### 4.3 Base on Balls/Hit By Pitch

- (a) There are NO walks, including Intentional Walks, allowed.
- (b) If a batter is Hit by a Pitch they will continue to bat until they either reach first base safely, strike out, or are called out by the umpire.

### 4.4 Bunting

- (a) Bunting is allowed including fake bunts, slap bunts, and slap hitting.
- (b) NO full swing shall be allowed when the batter is “showing” bunt. The batter cannot show bunt and then swing away.

**PENALTY:** The batter shall be called out and the ball is dead and ALL runners return to their original base.

**SEE SAFETY CODE #1**

### 4.5 Infield Fly

- (a) The Infield Fly Rule will apply to the “Coach Pitch” division.



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#### Rule 5 – THE RUNNER      5.1 Stealing Bases

- (a) There is NO Stealing of bases allowed including passed balls, wild pitches or the returned pitched ball from the catcher to the pitcher. **Base Runners must stay in contact with base until the ball is hit!**

The ball becomes live only when put into play by a fair batted ball.

**PENALTY:** For stealing and/or runner leaving the base early;

1. First offense, the player will be sent back to the base;
2. Second offense, the coach will be warned;
3. Third and subsequent offenses **the coach shall be ejected.**

#### Rule 6 – THE PITCHER      6.1 Pitcher

- (a) The Coach Pitcher will be **40 feet; measured from the apex** of home plate. **There shall be a ten foot (10') diameter circle around the pitcher's plate;**

- (b) There will be a straight line running through the center of the pitching rubber seven and one-half feet toward first and third base. The pitcher (player) must remain behind this line until the ball has been pitched by the Coach. After the ball is pitched the pitcher (player) may cross the line.

**PENALTY:** If the pitcher crosses the line prior to the ball being pitched, the offense will have the choice of either taking the at bat or **replaying the last pitch.**

#### 6.2 Ball Striking Pitcher “Coach”

- (a) Any ball that is put into play (a batted ball) that strikes the Pitcher (Coach), the ball will be DEAD. The batter will be awarded first base. Other runners will only advance one base if forced to do so. Meaning only if first base is occupied.
- (b) Any ball that is LIVE and in play that is thrown by a defensive player and strikes the Pitcher (Coach), the ball will be DEAD and ALL base runners will be awarded one base past their last legally touched base provided the runner was halfway to that base.
- (c) If a thrown ball is caught and/or stopped by the Pitcher (Coach), it shall be declared a dead ball. The runner(s) will return to their last legally touched base.

#### 6.3 Pitcher “Coach”

- (a) The Pitcher “Coach” shall pitch the ball using an overhand delivery at a speed which will challenge, but not overwhelm, the players.

**PENALTY:** The ball will be declared dead and a strike awarded to the batter.

**NOTE:** It is suggested but not required that the adult pitcher throw the ball while on one knee to help eliminate an arc. The pitcher's front foot must be on or behind the pitching line, if standing. If the coach kneels his/her knee must be on the pitching line.

- (b) The Pitcher “Coach” shall not be allowed to instruct/coach base runners. The Pitcher “Coach” shall only be allowed to instruct/coach the batter prior to the ball being pitched.

**PENALTY:** For the first offense the Pitcher “Coach” shall receive a warning for Unsportsmanlike Conduct. On any subsequent offenses the Pitcher “Coach” shall be

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ejected and replaced from the coaches listed on the team affidavit. If more than one ejection occurs, the game shall be declared a forfeit and the opposing team will be declared the winner.

**Rule 7 – SAFETY CODE**

- (a) When a batter shows signs of bunting, defensive players for first base and third base are not allowed to advance no further than half way to home plate designated by a half way chalk line.  
**PENALTY:**
1. First offense: Dead Ball, No Pitch – Defense and Coaches SHALL be warned.
  2. Second & Subsequent Offenses: Dead Ball, No Pitch – Manager SHALL be **EJECTED.**
- (b) All offensive players must wear a NOCASE approved batting helmet prior to taking their position in the batter’s box. **It is recommended that the batting helmet have an attached protective face guard. A C-Flap protective face guard is acceptable for the purpose of this rule.**
- (c) On Defense **it is recommended that** the pitcher **wear** a NOCASE approved batting helmet with an attached protective face guard or a protective face guard (Softball Style). **A C-Flap protective face guard would not be acceptable on defense.**
- (d) Batting Helmets must have a non-glare surface and cannot be mirror-like in nature. Rule 1.16
- (e) No one other than the players and coaches are allowed on the field or in the dugout during a game. **EXCEPTION:** League and/or District officials may enter the playing field and/or dugout in the event there is an injury that must be attended to.



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**THE ABOVE RULES WERE APPROVED BY THE VOTE OF ALL LITTLE LEAGUE® DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS IN LOUISIANA ON APRIL 30, 2022.**

**THESE RULES WILL NOT CHANGE FOR THREE (3) YEARS UNLESS THERE ARE SAFETY ISSUES THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED OR LITTLE LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL RULES & REGULATIONS ARE CHANGED!**