

# Capitol Hill Little League

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## Juniors Softball Division

### Rules



These division rules include a mixture of CHLL-specific House rules and Little League rules that have been selectively highlighted for the convenience of managers and coaches. Managers and coaches should be familiar with the rules included in this document as well as all relevant Little League rules for their division.

### General Game Rules & Format

- The playing rules are governed by the most recent Little League Baseball Rulebook, including updates, as modified and interpreted by the CHLL House Rules included in this document.
- Juniors Softball is the most competitive CHLL softball division, but it continues to include a focus on developmental play.

Key Feature	Description
Run Limitations	5-run limit unless otherwise negotiated
Number of Defensive Players	9 players
Pitching	Player pitch only
Final At Bats	If the 1 hour and 45 minute time limit is reached during an inning, the home team should still take its at bats in the bottom of the inning to advance the development of the players.

- Games are 7 innings long, with a time limit of 1 hours and 45 minutes.
  - An inning in progress at the 1 hour and 45 minutes mark may be completed, but no new full inning can begin after reaching the 1 hour and 45 minutes mark.
  - A game that reaches the 1 hour 45 minutes mark is considered a complete game, regardless of the number of innings played.
- If a game is called due to weather, a game is declared official if (1) the home team is ahead after 4 1/2 innings or the visiting team is ahead after 5 innings, or (2) the 1 hour and 45 minutes mark has been reached, regardless of the number of innings played.
- Team managers must confer at the end of each inning to agree on the score. If there is a dispute, it shall be resolved by the umpire.
- Any manager who knows s/he will not have at least 9 players for an entire game should refer to the CHLL Player Pool Policy to request one or more players.
- In accordance with Little League Rule 4.16, each team must have at least 8 players and 1 coach for the entire game.
  - A team has a 10-minute grace period from the scheduled start time of the game to meet the minimum roster number.
  - If a team does not have at least 8 players, teams can choose to scrimmage. There is no penalty if one or both teams choose not to scrimmage.

- The distance between the bases shall be 60 feet and the distance from the middle of the plate to the middle of the pitching rubber shall be 43 feet. There is an eight-foot radius pitching circle.

## Pitching

- According to Little League Regulation VI(b), there are no pitching restrictions on the number of innings pitched. There are no days of rest requirements.
- According to Little League Regulation VI(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 from which she was removed.
- According to Little League Regulation VI(d), no more than five pitchers per team shall be used in one game. In the case of illness or injury to a fifth pitcher, an additional pitcher may be used.
- Per Little League Rule 3.09, managers or coaches are permitted to warm up a pitcher at home plate, in the bullpen, or elsewhere at any time, including for in-game warm-ups and pre-game warm-ups. They may also stand by to observe a pitcher during warm-up in the bullpen.
- Per Little League Rule 1.11(a)(3), any part of a pitcher's undershirt exposed to view must be of a solid color. If a pitcher's undershirt sleeves are exposed, they shall not be white or gray. Neoprene sleeves and play calling bands are permitted under specific circumstances.

## Batting

- An on-deck batter is permitted.
- Teams will use a continuous batting order that contains the entire roster of players.
  - According to Little League Rule 4.04, If a player arrives after the start of the game, the player should be added to the bottom on the batting order, regardless of where the team is in the batting order (e.g., if there are 11 batters in the batting order, the late player should be added as the twelfth batter).
  - In accordance with Little League Rule 4.04 (Note 3), if a team is playing with only eight players, each time the batting rotation reaches the ninth batter's spot, the ninth batter will be skipped without penalty.
- The dropped third strike rule is in effect, meaning players (including the batter) may advance on a third strike that is not caught in flight by the catcher, unless first base is occupied before there are two outs, according to Little League Rule 6.05(b)(2).
- According to Little League Rule 2.0, if a batter foul tips a third strike and the catcher drops it, that pitch is considered a foul ball. However, if a catcher holds onto a foul tip third strike, the batter is out.
- Little League Rule 2.0 defines a foul ball as a batted ball that settles on foul territory between home and first base, or between home and third base, or that bounds past first or third base on or over foul territory, or that first falls on foul territory beyond first or third base, or that while on or over foul territory, touches the person of an umpire or player, or any object foreign to the natural ground.
  - A foul fly ball shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, including the foul pole, and not as to whether the fielder is on foul or fair territory at the time the fielder touches the ball.

- o A batted ball that hits home plate is not a foul ball. For the purposes of a fair/foul determination, home plate is no different from the ground. All of home plate is in fair territory, so if a batted ball touches it, it has merely struck part of fair territory.
- A pitch that bounces in front of the plate can be hit. If a pitch bounces, the only thing that changes is that it can no longer become a called strike. With this single exception, the pitch is alive and in play.
  - o If the batter swings at the pitch and misses, it is a strike.
  - o If the batter hits the ball in fair territory, the batted ball is alive and in play.
  - o If the batter hits the ball foul, it is simply a foul.
  - o If the bounced pitch hits the batter, all the standard hit-by-pitch rules apply.
- The concession rules (commonly referred to as the 8-run, 10-run, and 15-run rules) included in Little League Rule 4.10(e) do not apply.

## Base Running

- According to Little League Rule 7.13, when the pitcher is in the eight-foot radius circle and in possession of the ball, the base runner(s) shall not leave their base(s) until the pitched ball has been released by the pitcher. The intent of this rule does not mean the defense simply has to return the ball to the pitcher to have the umpire call the play dead. If a base runner is in motion when the ball gets back to the pitcher, she can continue. If the pitcher attempts to make a throw to a base, the play continues. Once all runners stop advancing, the pitcher has the ball on the mound and has turned to face the next batter, the previous play is considered over, and all runners must remain at their current base.
- There is no leading off the base. As discussed in Little League Rule 7.13, the base runner(s) shall not leave their base(s) until the pitched ball has been released by the pitcher.
- Stealing of any base is allowed.
- Teams are encouraged to use a courtesy runner for their catcher or pitcher. If the next inning's catcher or pitcher is on base with 2 outs, the player who was last out should be used as substitute runner as described in Little League Rule 7.14(b). In addition, if the next inning's catcher is on base after the fourth run has scored in an inning, the player who was last out, or if no outs, who last scored, may be used as a substitute runner. The latter rule may be adjusted to reflect the cap on runs per inning being used for a game.
- When a fielder has the ball and is waiting to make the tag, the runner approaching that fielder has three options:
  1. Slide feet first, OR
  2. Attempt to get around the fielder; OR
  3. Retreat to the previous base.
    - o There is no "must-slide" rule. (See Little League Rule 7.08.)
    - o Sliding is only one of the three options for the runner that comes into play when the fielder has the ball and is waiting to make the tag.
    - o If the fielder (any fielder, not just the catcher) does not have the ball, and there is a collision, the runner cannot be called out because of the collision.
    - o The player will be called out only if the umpire determines that the runner deliberately or maliciously attempted to contact the fielder. If such a determination is made, the umpire could eject the runner for unsportsmanlike conduct.

- According to Little League Rule 7.08(a)(4), a player may slide headfirst when returning to a base or advancing to a base. Feet first sliding also is permitted at any base to which a runner is advancing or returning.
- As explained in Little League Rule 7.08(b), a runner is out if he/she (a) intentionally interferes with a thrown ball or (b) hinders a fielder attempting to make a play on a batted ball.
  - A runner who is adjudged to have hindered a fielder who is attempting to make a play on a batted ball is out whether it was intentional or not.
- As explained in Little League Rule 7.08(f), any base runner touched by a live batted ball has committed interference and is out. The ball is dead. The batter is awarded first base and other runners advance only if forced. The runner is not out, however, if s/he is touched by a batted ball after it passes through or by an infielder, except the pitcher.
- No base coach can physically assist a runner in returning to or leaving first or third base. As explained in Little League Rule 7.09(h), this would be considered coaches' interference and result in the base runner being called out.

## Defense

- If a player arrives after the start of the game, the player must be inserted into the defensive lineup by the next full inning following his/her arrival and completion of warm-ups.
- In accordance with Little League Rule 7.11, the players, coaches, or any other member of an offensive team shall vacate any space, including both dugouts, needed by a fielder who is attempting to field a batted or thrown ball.
  - If a person fails to move out of the way, interference shall be called and the batter or runner on whom the play is being made shall be declared out.
- In accordance with Little League Rules 2.0 and 7.06, a defensive player without the ball may not fake a tag, shout out or otherwise try to trick a base runner to induce an unnecessary slide or cause him/her to return to the previous base. This is considered obstruction. The runner is safe, and a delayed dead ball shall be called.
- Catchers and defensive players will not block a base, home plate, or the base line without possession of the ball. This is considered obstruction and the runner will be called safe at that base and a dead ball will be called in accordance with Little League Rules 2.0 and 7.06(b).
- The infield fly rule is in effect. (For more information about the infield fly rule, see Little League Rule 2.0.)

## Sportsmanship Rules

All players, coaches, and parents will learn and follow principles of good sportsmanship, which include respecting umpires, teammates, coaches, the fields, and especially players and coaches on the opposing team.

- All players and coaches from opposing teams will shake hands after each game. They also will thank and/or shake hands with the umpire(s).
- Each team is responsible for cleaning up their bench areas after the game. The home team is responsible for field preparation prior to games and providing game balls for the game. The visiting team is responsible for field clean up, including raking the field and returning equipment to the shed and locking up. For interleague games hosted at CHLL "home" fields, the CHLL team playing in the game is responsible for field preparation, game balls, and field clean up.
- Players and coaches will encourage teammates.

- Players, coaches, and parents will recognize good play by the opposing team and, in all instances, refrain from shouting at, taunting, attempting to distract (e.g., the catcher may not speak to an opposing batter), or making disparaging comments (such as “no batter”) directed at players on the opposing team.
- If spectators are sitting in bleachers positioned behind the backstop, they should take care not to distract the pitcher or other players. If there is no permanent seating provided behind the backstop, spectators are not to sit behind the backstop because doing so distracts the players, especially the pitcher.
- When a batter is hit by a pitch, the batter and pitcher will shake hands.
- At no time will any player, coach, or parent curse or use abusive language.
- Little League Regulation XIV(a) notes that the actions, on or off the field, of players, managers, coaches, umpires, and league officials must be above reproach. Any player, manager, coach, umpire, or league representative who is involved in a verbal or physical altercation, or an incident of unsportsmanlike conduct, at the game site or any other Little League activity including through online or social media, is subject to disciplinary action by the local league Board of Directors
- Penalties are enforced solely by the umpires.
- Players, coaches (except as noted below), and parents are not to question the umpire's call of balls and strikes, fair and foul, or safe and out. Coaches may ask umpires before the start of a game to describe the strike zone that will be used during the game and communicate that information to the players.
- Players will not argue with an umpire. A coach who has a question about an umpire's call may ask for time and in a calm and respectful tone ask the umpire to explain the call. At no time is a coach to raise his or her voice and argue. If a coach believes that an umpire has improperly interpreted the rules, the coach has the right to continue to play a game under protest and/or report the matter to the Division Commissioner.
- According to Little League Rule 4.07, if a manager, coach, or player is ejected from a game, they shall leave the field immediately and take no further part in that game. They may not sit in the stands and may not be recalled. A manager or coach ejected from a game must not be present at the game site for the remainder of that game. Any manager, coach, or player ejected from a game is suspended for his or her team's next physically played game and may not be in attendance at the game site. This includes pregame and postgame activities. CHLL rules further note that, if an ejected player's parents or guardians are not present at the time the player is ejected, the player must remain supervised in the dugout until being released to his/her parent or guardian (or other responsible adult).
- In accordance with Little League Regulation XIV(e), the possession and/or use of firearms, tobacco products, cigarettes (including e-cigarettes and vapors), controlled substances, and alcoholic beverages in any form is prohibited on the playing field, benches, dugouts, or bleachers. Alcohol is prohibited at the game site. CHLL house rules extend this ban to all CHLL games, scrimmages, practices, and clinics.

## **General Safety Rules**

- The home team is responsible for having the first aid kit in their dugout during the game.
- All injuries where a player is unable to return to a game or practice or must seek outside medical assistance must be reported by the team manager/coach to the Safety Officer, Division Commissioner, and the CHLL President within 48 hours of the incident. An incident form must also be completed and submitted to the Safety Officer.

- Little League Rule 3.17 notes that players and substitutes shall sit on their team's bench or in the dugout unless participating in the game or preparing to enter the game. No one except eligible players in uniform, a manager, and not more than two coaches shall occupy the bench or dugout.
- Little League Rule 1.16 requires the use of a helmet by the batter, all base runners, and any players serving as base coaches. Per CHLL rules, all softball players must wear helmets with face guards for batting, base running, and base coaching. Use of a helmet by an adult base coach or any defensive player is optional. If a player, during play, removes his/her helmet or causes his/her helmet to come off, he/she shall be warned not to intentionally remove his/her helmet and, if it continues, the player may be removed from the game for unsportsmanlike conduct, as this can cause an unsafe condition.
- Per CHLL rules, all softball pitchers at the AA level and higher must wear defensive face masks. For any position other than the pitcher at the AA level and higher, parents may determine whether the player will wear a defensive face mask.
- In accordance with Little League Rule 1.17, all catchers with male anatomy must wear a protective cup. CHLL further requires all players with male anatomy at the Juniors level and above to wear a protective cup, regardless of the position they play.
- Little League Rule 1.11(j) prohibits players from wearing jewelry such as, but not limited to, rings, watches, earrings, bracelets, necklaces, or any hard cosmetic/decorative items. This rule applies regardless of the composition of such jewelry, hard cosmetic item, or hard decorative item. Hard items to control the hair, such as beads, are permitted. In addition, jewelry that alerts medical personnel to a specific medical condition is permitted.
- In accordance with Little League Rule 1.11(k), casts may not be worn during the game by anyone on the field. Persons wearing casts, including managers and coaches, must remain in the dugout during the game.
- As stated in Little League Rule 1.11(h), shoes with metal spikes or cleats are not permitted. Shoes with molded cleats are permissible. Players wearing shoes with metal spikes or cleats will not be permitted to play in a CHLL game.
- Batters shall not throw their bats. The first time a player throws a bat, the batter should be given a warning by the umpire. If the batter throws a bat after a warning, the umpire shall bench the player for the remainder of the game.