



Bethlehem Little League Rules

It is the policy of Little League to play all players on a regular basis. All coaches are required to play each player in each game. The following rules will be followed to maintain this policy.

T-Ball League

General Rules

1. Players must be turning 4 before Sept 1 or not turning 7 until Sept 1 of the current year
2. All teams have minimum 5 players at a game. If for some reason, a team shows up with less than 5 because many are missing for whatever reason, both teams should just hold a joint practice.
3. Game time limit is 3 innings OR 1 hour 15 minutes from start time to end time. Both teams should bat 3 times. Both teams should play on defense 3 times.
4. There must be at least 1 adult in the dugout at all times (preferably 2)
5. Both teams must have the same amount of batters. *(Example Team A has 6 players. Team B has 7 players. Team A can bat an extra player each inning because they have 1 less player)*

Offensive:

1. All players will be in the batting order and the batting order shall not change during the game.
2. Batter has unlimited attempts to hit the ball off the tee into fair play.
3. There shall be a 15 foot semi circle arc drawn in front of homeplate connecting each foul line.
4. If a batted ball is in fair play but does not reach the chalk arc, it is a foul ball.
5. If a batted ball is hit and rolls and stops on top of the chalk line, it is a fair ball.
6. Once the ball is put into play, all base runners will continue until a defensive player has secured the ball in the infield dirt. At that point, all baserunners must stop running.
7. All batters and base-runners must wear a helmet.
8. When all players present have batted, the half inning is over and defense switches to offense.

NOTE: It is common that a t-baller skips his/her turn at-bat because they are in the bathroom or with parent because of some other need. Just skip the batter and move to the next.

Coach Pitch

General Rules

1. Players must be turning 6 before Sept 1 or not turning 9 until Sept 1 of current year OR must have played atleast 1 year of Little League T-Ball in order to be in Coach Pitch.
3. All teams have minimum 8 players for a game. If a team has less than 8 players, the game cannot start.
4. Game time limit 1 hour 30 minutes from start time to end time.
5. There must be atleast 1 adult in the dugout at all times.

Offensive:

1. All players will be in the batting order and the batting order shall not change during the game.
2. Offensive team has an adult pitcher STANDING OR KNEELING 36 feet away.
(Easiest way to measure is that the Little League pitchers mound is 46, just walk up 10 feet from that spot).
3. Coach MUST throw overhand to the batter. There is no underhand toss.
4. Batter will get 5 pitches to put the ball into fair play. If a batter fouls off the 5th pitch, it will not count as the 5th pitch. Another will be offered until the batter either hits it in fair play, swings and misses or does not swing.
5. If the batter does not put the ball into play after the 5th pitch, the batter will get 2 attempts using the tee.
If the batter does not put the ball into fair play after 2 attempts, it is recorded as an out and the next batter comes up. (The batter should not get unlimited tries to put the ball into fair play)
6. Once the ball is put into play, all base runners will continue until an **infielder** on the defensive team has secured the ball inside the basepaths.
7. All batters and base-runners must wear a helmet.

Defensive:

1. 3 outs by the defense or 5 runs scored by the offense will end each half inning.
2. The following inning will begin offensively at the spot where the lineup left off the inning prior (example: do not start every inning at the top of the lineup)
3. Defensive players will occupy positions P, 1B, 2B, 3B, SS. There shall be FOUR outfielders in the grass or atleast standing behind the edge of the infield dirt.
4. No player should sit on the bench 2 innings in a row and all players must play atleast 2 innings on defense during the course of the game.
5. The same players cannot play the positions of 1B and P in consecutive innings.

NOTE: Johnny plays P and Billy plays 1B in the 1st inning. They cannot play those positions again until the 3rd inning. They must play someplace differently on defense in the 2nd inning.

6. The play is over when an **infielder** on the defensive team possesses the ball inside the base paths. At that point, all baserunners must stop. If a baserunner has reached the chalk line at the halfway point, he/she may continue to the next base.
7. All overthrows at 1B are 1 base advancement max.
NOTE: If a defensive player throws the ball to 1B and it goes over his/her head, the baserunner may advance to 2B but must stop there).
NOTE: If the wild throw hits the fence, the baserunner is awarded 2B automatically.
NOTE: If the wild throw is secured by an infielder WITHOUT hitting the fence, the defense CAN attempt to get the baserunner out if the baserunner makes any advancement toward 2B.
8. All overthrows to 2B or 3B are live ball (baserunner can advance to 3B or home).

Minor Division

General Rules

1. AGE – To be eligible for the Minor division, players need to be league age 8, 9, 10, or 11. This means players must be born BETWEEN August 2017 to Sept 2013. Players who are currently age 11 cannot turn 12 before Sept 1. (A player age 12 can play in the Minor Division upon approval of a waiver to do so.).
2. TIME LIMIT – The game will end after 6 innings or 1 hour 45 min time limit from start to end.
3. INCLEMENT WEATHER – In the event of inclement weather, a completed game can end after 3 ½ innings if the home team is winning or after 4 innings if the visitor team is winning. If the game is rained out BEFORE the home team gets to bat in the 3rd inning, the game does NOT count.
4. RUN LIMIT – An inning ends when the defense records 3 outs or when the offense scores 5 runs.
5. LEAVING EARLY – If a runner leaves the base too early, it is the umpire's discretion to send he or she back. A baserunner CANNOT be called out for leaving the base too early. If the baserunner leaves the as early and the batter gets a hit, baserunners are awarded 1 base.
NOTE: Johnny is on 1B and leaves early. Billy hits the ball to the fence. Johnny must stop at 2B and Billy must stop at 1B.
6. CATCHER – Catcher cannot block the base path leading to home plate if he or she is not in possession of the ball. Catcher CAN block the base path if he/she is IN POSSESSION of the ball.
7. PLAY END – The play ends when the defensive team has returned the ball to the pitcher and the pitcher is standing on the pitching rubber. Baserunners can continue to advance until this moment.

8. **MERCY RULE** – The game is over after 3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead by 10 runs or more. The game is over after 4 innings if the visitor team is ahead by 10 runs or more. Same rule applies in the 5th inning.

9. **COACH VISITS** - If a coach visits the pitchers mound twice in an inning, the coach must remove the pitcher. If a coach visits the mound the 3rd time during the course of the game, the coach must remove the pitcher. A “visit” constitutes the stoppage of play to do so and the coach crossing over the foul line into fair play. Uniform malfunctions, mud in cleats, pitching rubber equipment failure and injury do not constitute a “visit”. A base coach may only call “timeout” when their team is on offense two times per inning.

10. **PACE OF PLAY** - When the defensive team gets the 3rd out in a particular inning, the next inning has just begun. Coaches should not have extended huddles on the field in between innings. No huddle should be longer than 1 minute. After 2 minutes have elapsed, the defensive team should be ready as well as the offensive team.

NOTE: After repeated offences from the defensive team, the umpire can award BALL 1, BALL 2, and so on if the defensive team is not ready. After repeated offences from the offensive team, the umpire can award STRIKE 1, STRIKE 2, etc, if they are not ready for play after the PLAY BALL signal.

NOTE: There have been too many occasions in the past where minor division game pace of play as significantly slowed down because of repeated extended “huddles” in between innings. These penalties will take place moving forward at the umpire’s discretion.

Offensive:

1. **LINEUP** – All players will be in the batting order and that order shall not change during the game.

2. **LATE PLAYER** – If a player in the lineup is not present when the game begins, that player can remain in his lineup spot until the spot comes up to bat. If that player is not present at that time, he is crossed off and placed at the bottom of the lineup. (Example: Johnny is batting 6th, his team bats in the first inning and the 6th spot does not come up. Johnny arrives in the 2nd inning, he still bats in the same spot)

3. **SICK / INJURED PLAYER** – If a player leaves the game due to illness, injury, or any other reason, that team should not be penalized when his spot comes around in the lineup again. That spot is just SKIPPED OVER.

4. **HEAD FIRST SLIDE** - Baserunners may not slide into a base head first. Baserunners MAY return to a base sliding head first. Sometimes a baserunner falls or stumbles and grabs the base in a head first motion. It will be at the umpire’s discretion as to whether or not the baserunner purposely slid headfirst. Headfirst slides will be counted as an OUT and all other baserunners will remain on the bases that they are currently on.

5. **RUNNER ASSISTANCE** - Coaches may not touch, grab, push, pull back or guide a runner to the next base or back to a base while the ball is in play. If an umpire sees a coach doing so, that runner will be called out and the coach could be ejected.

6. COACHES INTERFERENCE - Coaches may not come in contact with a ground ball that has been hit and has not reached the base yet. Coaches MAY pick up a ground ball IN FOUL TERRITORY that has stopped moving. If a foul ball is hit IN THE AIR, coaches must make their best effort to get out of the way so the fielder has an opportunity to catch the ball. Coaches who sit on a bucket or stand near the gate of the dugout, if a thrown ball from the defensive makes contact with a coach or the bucket OR if a wild pitch makes contact with a coach or a bucket, the ball is ruled DEAD and ALL baserunners advance 1 base.

7. ON DECK CIRCLE - There is NO on deck circle in Little League. Some players who play Travel may be used to that but all batters must remain in the dugout until it is their turn to come to bat.

Defensive:

1. POSITIONS – Players will occupy these positions on defense: C, P, 1B, 2B, 3B, SS, LF, CF, RF. A coach can position any of these players in these positions in any general location during the course of the game depending on the score, inning, or situation.

NOTE: Johnny playing CF can stand right behind 2B if he wants to but must keep in mind that he is leaving a huge area behind him with no defender.

2. SUBSTITUTIONS – No player should sit on the bench two innings in a row. All players must play at least 2 defensive innings in each game.

3. CATCHER TO PITCHER – Any player who plays the position of catcher for more than 3 innings cannot pitch in that same game. If a catcher comes out in the 4th inning and catches just 1 warmup pitch, he is ineligible to pitch in that same game.

4. PITCHER TO CATCHER – Any player who pitches more than 40 pitches in any game cannot move to the position of catcher during that same game.

NOTE: If Johnny starts the batter with 38 pitches and throws 4 pitches to that particular batter for a total of 42. It will revert back to 38 where the pitcher started the batter which means that the Pitcher WOULD be allowed to go and play catcher.

5. OVERTHROWS - All overthrows are live ball. There are no restrictions as to when a runner has to stop.

6. CATCHER – Catchers in the minor division must wear a catcher's mitt. Catchers cannot wear a fielders mitt. Catchers must wear helmet, chest protector, and shin guards.

7. PITCH COUNT REST TIME - If pitcher throws 20 pitches or less on Monday, he can pitch on Tuesday.

If pitcher throws 21 - 35 pitches on Monday, he can pitch on Wednesday.

If pitcher throws 36 - 50 pitches on Monday, he can pitch on Thursday.

If pitcher throws 51 - 65 pitches on Monday, he can pitch on Friday.

If pitcher throws 66+ pitches on Monday, he can pitch again on Saturday.

Pitch Count Limits: 8 Year Old – 50 9-10 Year Old – 75 11 Year Old – 85

Major Division

Refer to all rules in the Minor Division EXCEPT for these:

1. RUN LIMIT – Each inning ends when the defensive team records 3 outs or when the offensive team scores 7 runs.

2. DROPPED 3RD STRIKE – Regardless if the batter swings and misses or is called out on strike 3, the batter can advance to 1st base and the catcher must either tag him out or throw to 1st base.

This rule ALWAYS applies when there are two outs – regardless of who is on which base.

This rule ONLY applies when no runner is on 1st base with 0 outs or 1 out. If a runner is already on 1st base with 0 outs or 1 out, the batter is recorded as out. Base runners may advance at their own risk on a dropped 3rd strike.

3. PITCH COUNT REST TIME - If pitcher throws 20 pitches or less on Monday, he can pitch on Tuesday.

If pitcher throws 21 - 35 pitches on Monday, he can pitch on Wednesday.

If pitcher throws 36 - 50 pitches on Monday, he can pitch on Thursday.

If pitcher throws 51 - 65 pitches on Monday, he can pitch on Friday.

If pitcher throws 66+ pitches on Monday, he can pitch again on Saturday.

Pitch Count Limits: 9-10 Year Old – 75 11-12 Year Old – 85

Senior Baseball Division

1. ELIGIBILITY – To be eligible for Seniors baseball, a player needs to be age 13, 14, 15, or 16 year olds (not turning 17 before Sept 1, 2025). Players must be turning 13 before Sept 1, 2025.

2. TIME LIMIT – Game is over after 7 innings or 2 hours and 15 minutes limit from start to end.

3. PITCH LIMIT – 13-16 year olds may throw 95 pitches max in a game.

4. PITCH COUNT REST TIME - If pitcher throws 30 pitches or less on Monday, he can pitch on Tuesday.

If pitcher throws 31 - 45 pitches on Monday, he can pitch on Wednesday.

If pitcher throws 46 - 60 pitches on Monday, he can pitch on Thursday.

If pitcher throws 61 - 75 pitches on Monday, he can pitch on Friday.

If pitcher throws 75+ pitches on Monday, he can pitch again on Saturday.

BETHLEHEM LITTLE LEAGUE 2025