

A-BALL LEAGUE 2013

2013 WEST LOS ANGELES LITTLE LEAGUE PLAYING RULES FOR A-BALL LEAGUE.

(These rules are in addition to Little League Official Rules, and to the extent the following playing rules are inconsistent with the Little League Official Rules these rules are controlling.)

WLALL Rules

The A-BALL Division is an instructional league. The goal is to prepare the players for the WLALL AA League by teaching baseball skills. The emphasis should not be on winning, but rather playing the right way. Teach good sportsmanship, consistency, hustle, and being a good teammate. Winning should be a by-product of those teachings.

All managers and coaches must be patient and exercise restraint with the Umpires. (Remember the code of Conduct is for the parents, players, managers, and coaches.) Any form of bad sportsmanship from the Managers, coaches, parents, or players will not be tolerated and can result in expulsion from the field and or the league.

General

1. All games will be played in accordance with the rules adopted by the West Los Angeles Little League. There shall be no exceptions to these rules (i.e. Gentleman's agreement). Any manager / coach that changes the rules without the consent of the WLALL Board or its President, will be subject to a forfeiture of the game and suspension or expulsion from the league.
2. Batting shall be done in a continuous order.
3. 10 players are allowed/required to play in the field, with the extra player in the outfield, not the infield. Outfielders must be at least 15 feet from back edge of infield dirt.
4. Any player who asks to pitch must get 2 chances in 2 games. The player doesn't have to complete the inning but must be given a chance to pitch.
5. The home team shall keep an official scorebook with pitch counts during all games. Official score, Lineup & Pitching disputes will need to be checked through the scorebook for accuracy/inaccuracy.
6. Stealing of 3rd base is allowed. If there is an overthrow, the runner may not advance to home. (The base runner may not leave contact with the base until the ball has reached the batter.) Stealing of 2nd base and of home base is NOT allowed.
7. Managers shall assemble all players before each game to recite the little league pledge. Please print the pledge out and give it to your kids as homework to learn.

I trust in God
 I love my country
 And will respect its laws
 I will play fair
 And strive to win
 But win or lose
 I will always do my best

8. Home team occupies the 3rd base side of the field.

9. 10 to 20 minutes prior to the start of the game or as soon as the infield has been dragged and the grounds keeper has chalked the field, the Visiting team shall take the field first for 10 minutes of field warm ups. Then the Home team for ten minutes. If there is less than the allotted time, the teams shall split the available time in half. Visitors first. Players from the team not taking fielding practice must be off the field. No exceptions. This is a safety issue. If the visiting team is not ready to take the field to warm up as soon as the field is chalked, it shall not affect the time set aside for the home team to use the field.

10. At least 5 minutes before the scheduled starting time, the umpires and managers shall meet at home plate and discuss the ground rules. Lineup cards must be exchanged by both teams and provided to the official scorekeeper of the league. The lineup cards must have each player's last name and number.

11. Only the Manager or acting Manager shall be permitted to engage the Umpires during the game. There must be a coach or manager in the dugout at all times.

12. It is the Manager's responsibility to control the coaches, parents and children on his/her team. Anyone ejected from the game that continues to interfere with the game shall cause the team to forfeit the game. An ejection from the game is punishable by a mandatory one game suspension for the person / player ejected from the game and that person / player is subject to further action by the Board of Directors.

13. There may be only 1 Manager and 3 coaches on the field during games. One coach or manager must always be in the dugout.

14. Visiting team is responsible for the scoreboard and announcing of the game.

Games

1. During the regular season, no new inning may commence after 1 hour and 30 minutes of official playing time. Umpires are instructed to notify both managers when the last inning begins. 4 innings must be played for the game to be considered a complete game. Get the kids on and off the field as quickly as possible.

2. All games shall start on time per the times in the schedule. Any team not ready for play 15 minutes after the scheduled starting time shall forfeit.

3. If the first 3 innings of play have not been completed in the first 60 minutes of official playing time, there shall be no defensive warm ups between innings for the remainder of the game. Pitchers may throw 3 pitches to get loose. Substitute pitchers entering the game in the middle of the inning are entitled to throw no more than eight (8) warm-up pitches. Such preparatory pitches shall not consume more than one (1) minute of time. The Pitcher who starts the inning should have warmed up in the bullpen prior to the inning.

4. In an effort to speed up play, when there are two outs, a courtesy runner may be used to replace a runner that will play the position of catcher in the following inning. The courtesy runner must be the previous batter in the line-up who is not on base.

5. Extra innings shall be played to declare a winner, subject to any time limit.

Sliding

1. Sliding is permissible but not mandatory. Teach your players to slide on any close play.

2. There is never any situation in which a runner is required to slide. The relevant rule is:

FROM LITTLE LEAGUE RULE BOOK

7.08(a)(3) -- Any runner is out when ... the runner does not slide or attempt to get around a fielder who has the ball and is waiting to make the tag;

First, notice that the runner has two options -- he or she may slide, or he or she may attempt to get around the fielder. The choice is up to the runner. Second, notice that the rule says that, if the runner does not elect to slide, that he or she must attempt to get around the fielder. It does not say that the runner must not contact the fielder. Consider a common play:

The catcher is standing just off the line as the runner approaches. The catcher fields the ball, and starts to step across the line to tag the runner. The runner swerves to his right, trying to avoid the catcher, but the catcher continues his motion toward the runner, and the two collide.

The fact that contact occurred does not mean that the runner is automatically out. In this situation, by swerving, the runner satisfied the rule -- he or she attempted to get around the fielder. Of course, if the runner goes more than three feet to either side attempting to avoid a tag, then he or she can be called out under Rule 7.08(a)(1), but that is another matter entirely.

Finally, read the last half of the rule again. For this paragraph to even apply, the fielder must have the ball and be waiting to make the tag. Thus, for example, if the runner arrives just as the ball is hitting the catcher's glove, this rule probably doesn't apply either. Only once the catcher is in position to make the tag does the runner acquire the obligation to slide or attempt to avoid. In fact, if contact occurs before the fielder has the ball, then the fielder is probably guilty of obstruction.

Little League has made this abundantly clear in Make The Right Call, a Little League publication with commentary on how the rules should be applied. In there, it says:

There is no "must slide rule." The rule is, "slide or attempt to get around." The key in this situation is "fielder has the ball and is waiting to make a tag." If the fielder (any fielder, not just the catcher) does not have the ball, and there is a collision, you CANNOT call the runner out. However, if the umpire determines that the runner deliberately attempted to injure the fielder, the umpire could eject the runner for unsportsmanlike conduct.

3. There is absolutely no headfirst sliding allowed going towards a base. A runner is allowed to slide headfirst back into a base (i.e. pick off play or when the runner has overrun a base.)

Mercy Rule

1. Four runs per inning is the maximum allowed until the last inning of the game.
2. If after the completion of 4 full innings (3 1/2 if the home team is winning) a team is ahead by 15 runs or more, or if after the completion of 5 full innings (4 1/2 if the home team is winning) a team is ahead by 10 runs or more, the game shall end and the team ahead shall be declared the winner without the completion of the rest of the game.
3. The mercy rule applies during the playoffs.

Pool Players

1. All teams must have 9 players in order to commence play.
2. If a team has fewer than 9 players anytime during the game, that team shall forfeit.
3. If a Manager knows that he is going to have fewer than 9 players for a game, he should contact the A-BALL Commissioner to arrange for a pool player to be selected. He may not solicit pool players without the approval of the League Commissioner.
4. If the manager does not obtain approval for the use of the pool player from the A-BALL Commissioner or the league President, the game will be forfeited.
5. Once a pool player arrives at the field, he or she must play in the entire game regardless of how many players show up late for that team, subject to the league substitutions rules.
6. The pool player may not play the position of pitcher, catcher, or play the infield, and must bat last in the batting order. (Exception: If there are more than 4 pool players then a pool player may play infield, but not pitch or catch.)

Safety

1. Players coaching 1st or 3rd base must wear a helmet.

2. When using the bull pens in right and left field, an additional player with a mitt and helmet must be in position in front of the bull pen mound to protect the pitcher and catcher warming up.
3. There is no on-deck circle. All players must remain in the dugout during an at bat.
4. All male players must wear athletic supporters. Male catchers must wear the metal or plastic type cup and a long-model chest protector. See rule 1.17.

Substitutions

1. No player shall sit out consecutive innings. When a player has been out for 3 consecutive outs, that player must play in the field the next three consecutive outs. A player who is out of the game (not playing defense) may enter the game at any time for any player other than a player that sat out the previous inning. Every player must sit out three consecutive outs prior to any player sitting out a 4th out.
2. All players must play a minimum of 4 innings of a regulation 6 inning game. Should a player not get to play the minimum in a game for any reason other than a game shortened by rain, due to the mercy rule, or a drop dead time limit, that player shall start in the field of the next game, satisfy his missed time from the previous game, and then play at least the minimum 4 innings of that next game.
3. Any violation of the substitution rules shall be immediately corrected and the offending team will be penalized in the next at bat by starting an inning with one out.
4. All managers should fill out a “grid” or chart indicating where each player is playing every inning, keeping track of the substitutions to avoid any issues or questions regarding an invalid substitution.
5. Batting order is continuous. Everyone bats. If a player arrives after the game starts, that player is placed at the end of the batting order.

Ice Pack Rule

If the batter is available and doesn't bat due to injury etc., the at bat is an out. If the player leaves the game for the remainder of the game, it is not an out.

Field Maintenance

1. The Home team is required to rake and/or drag the field after each game, especially the area around each base, home plate and the pitcher's mound. The tarps must be placed over the pitcher's mound and the home plate area.
2. Both teams are responsible to clean up the garbage from their dugout. Failure to follow this rule will result in forfeiting a turn at bat in the beginning of the next game.
3. Repeat offenders will be subject to a double penalty and possible suspension by the

Board of Directors.

Manager/Coaches

1. Only the Manager and the 3 WLALL Board approved assistant game coaches are permitted in the dugout. All other parents, practice coaches, scorekeepers, siblings, etc. should watch the game from the bleachers.
2. Managers/Coaches may not enter the field of play during the course of the game, except for the following: to coach the bases, to attend to an injured player, or after a time out has been called.

Call Ups From Coach Pitch

1. If a team from A-BALL loses a player for justifiable reasons (subject to approval by the Board of Directors), the A-BALL manager, with assistance from the A-BALL Commissioner, may call up a replacement player from Coach Pitch if the A-BALL waiting list has been depleted. Only with the approval of the president of the league may an A-BALL team be allowed to carry fewer than 13 players.

Playoffs

1. Every team makes the playoffs. The regular season record determines the seeding in the playoffs.
2. A round-robin tournament will be played.

Pitcher Rules

1. No player may pitch more than 3 innings in a game. One pitch constitutes a whole inning pitched.
2. Pitchers will pitch from a rubber at the front of the mound circle or approximately 41" from the back of home plate.
3. A-BALL is kid pitch, but will utilize "coach-pitch" as relief throughout the pre-season and for the first 7 games or first half of the regular season. If the pitcher "walks" a batter (throws 4 balls), the 3rd or 1st base coach will come in and throw 3 pitches, one of which must be hit fair. A foul ball on the 3rd pitch entitles the batter to an additional pitch. Additional pitches will be awarded if the batter continues to hit foul balls. If the batter again does not put the ball in play, the batter will be called "out." After the 7th game of the regular season and throughout the playoffs, kids will pitch and walks will be allowed.

FROM THE LITTLE LEAGUE RULE BOOK **Regular Season Pitching Rules – Baseball**

VI – PITCHERS

(a) Any player on a regular season team may pitch. (**NOTE:** There is no limit to the number of pitchers a team may use in a game.)

(b) A pitcher once removed from the mound cannot return as a pitcher.

(c) The manager must remove the pitcher when said pitcher reaches the limit for his/her age group as noted below, but the pitcher may remain in the game at another position:

League Age

9-10 75 pitches per day

7-8 50 pitches per day

Exception: If a pitcher reaches the limit imposed in Regulation VI (c) for his/her league age while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any one of the following conditions occurs: 1. That batter reaches base; 2. That batter is put out; 3. The third out is made to complete the half-inning. **Note 1: A pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day.**

(d) Pitchers league age 14 and under must adhere to the following rest requirements:

- If a player pitches 66 or more pitches in a day, four (4) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 51 - 65 pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 36 - 50 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 21 - 35 pitches in a day, one (1) 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.

Exception: If a pitcher reaches a day(s) of rest threshold while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any one of the following conditions occurs: 1. That batter reaches base; 2. That batter is retired; 3. The third out is made to complete the half-inning. The pitcher will only be required to observe the calendar day(s) of rest for the threshold he/she reached during that at-bat, provided that pitcher is removed before delivering a pitch to another batter.

Pitching Mound Visits

1. The manager or one of the 3 designated coaches may visit the mound to speak with the pitcher after a time out is granted by the umpire. A manager/coach is permitted to make two trips to a pitcher in an inning. Upon the third trip in the same inning (for the same pitcher) the pitcher must be removed. The manager/coach is permitted a total of three trips per pitcher over the course of the entire game. Upon the fourth trip in a game, the pitcher must be removed.