

Point Loma Little League

2026 Playoff Supplemental Rules

American League Division

All 2026 Little League Baseball Official Regulations and Playing Rules apply except as modified below. [2026 Little League Baseball Official Regulations and Playing Rules](#) are available online and via an app for IOS and Android devices.

I. Safety Rules

A. Apparel:

1. **Shoes.** All players, coaches, and managers must wear shoes for games. Flip flops, sandals, and open-toed shoes are not permitted on the field during games or pregame warmups.
2. **Jewelry:** Jewelry can now be worn; however, any jewelry worn by a player that poses harm to injury will be subject to removal - *Rule 1.11 (j)*
3. **Sleeves:** Are allowed to be worn by all players (including pitcher) without being covered, so long as they are solid in color and not white or grey (i.e. the same as long sleeve shirts) - *Rule 1.11 (a) (3)*
4. **Sunglasses:** Are permitted by any player, including the pitcher; however it is up to the umpire's discretion on whether or not they are distracting and should be removed.
5. **Eyeblack:** Little League does not have a formal policy on the use of eye black. It is up to the discretion of the manager; however, it should not be excessive, distracting, or used to intimidate.

B. Equipment:

1. **Bats.** Please review *Rule 1.10* regarding bats in Little League.
 - a) **Change/New Addition: A.R. 2** — No bat, in any level of Little League Baseball, is permitted to be altered. Products such as, but not limited to, choke-knobs, choke-up assists are considered alterations or modifications to the bat and are not permitted. *thumb protectors are now permitted*
2. **Helmets.** All batters and base runners must wear a helmet.
 - a) **At practices.** Remember to follow this rule at practices as well (for example, if you're working on base running, sometimes kids will forget to put on their helmets, so be alert for that).
 - b) **Update:** Helmet stickers are allowed, so long as they are not "excessive."
 - c) **If a player is coaching a base.** Player base coaches must wear helmets.
 - d) **Catcher during pregame warmup.** If a player is catching for a coach who is hitting warmups to the team, that player must wear a catcher's mask. This is not in the rulebook, but has been widely published by Little League.
 - (1) **Note: This is an insurance thing.** If a kid gets injured by a coach swinging a bat, YOU ARE NOT COVERED.
3. **Catcher's equipment.** Male catchers must wear a cup. All catchers must wear approved protective gear: helmet with face mask and throat guard, chest protector, and shin guards. Catchers must wear a catcher's glove, they cannot use a first baseman's mitt or fielder's glove. - *Rule 1.12*
 - a) **Athletic cup.** While it's only officially required for the catcher, all male players should wear a cup at all games and practices. (It's smart, and an important habit for them to learn; plus, you never know who may end up catching in a particular game so it's good practice to require your players to simply wear a cup to be prepared.)

C. Dugout rules.

Players must be in the dugout, and coaches and managers in or next to the dugout (in the little painted square). Specifically:

1. **Players.** When the team is batting, all players except the batter must be in the dugout. When the

team is on defense, any players who are on the bench must be in the dugout.

2. **Coaches and Managers.** Coaches and managers (when not base coaching or feeding a pitching machine) must be in the dugout or behind the out-of-play line for their dugout area. Coaches should not be standing next to the fence while the kids are in the batter's box or standing in foul territory.
3. **On-deck batter.** There is no on-deck circle in Little League (Majors and below) and swinging a bat in foul territory while waiting to hit is forbidden. Only the current batter is allowed to be holding a bat. Bats stay in the rack until the player steps up to the plate; they are never allowed in the dugout. The "on-deck" batter should, however, have his or her helmet on and be at the front of the dugout, ready to step up to the plate.
 - a) Note: Batting donuts are not allowed in Little League.

II. Participation Rules

- A. **Players of league age 9 through 11 are eligible to play in the American Division.** Players who have played in the National Division for two years are eligible to be drafted to the American Division even though they may not meet the above age criteria under certain circumstances – either:
 1. when one of their Parents are the Manager of the team, or
 2. when they are deemed by the Player Agent or Board of Directors to be a safety risk for the younger league. Parents of 9-year-old players will be required at registration and before the draft to indicate whether or not their child is eligible to be drafted into the American Division. Eleven-year-old players who have a “hold down” request and/or are not drafted into the Majors or Intermediate division and are automatically eligible for the American Division draft. Any 9-year-old player who is ineligible to be drafted into the American Division at the draft shall not be eligible to be brought up to an American Division team for the remainder of the season.
- B. Position Rules & Restrictions.
 1. **Pitching.** See 2026 Official Little League Rule Book, Regulation VI, Pitchers. **Managers must remove the pitcher when said pitcher reaches the limit for his/her age group as noted below.**
 - a) 11: 85 Pitches per Day
 - b) 9-10: 75 Pitches per Day
 2. Pitchers are subject to rest requirements based on the number of pitches thrown in a game (see Official Little League Regulations and Playing Rules book). **The “Exception” described in Regulation VI(d) Note 1 which allows a pitcher to cross a rest threshold while finishing a batter (without needing the day's rest required by the next threshold) WILL apply to this division.** All pitchers in the Intermediate Division shall not be permitted to throw more than 85 pitches in any game, other than necessary to finish the pitcher’s final batter. The managers of each team are responsible for knowing and complying with pitch count rules.
 - a) Pitchers Rest Requirements (from the Little League Rule book)
 - (1) 66 or more pitches in a day, four (4) calendar days
 - (2) 51-65 pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days
 - (3) 36-50 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days
 - (4) 21-35 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar days
 - (5) 1-20 pitches in a day, no (0) calendar days
 3. A pitcher once removed from the mound cannot return as a pitcher.
 4. **Catching/Pitching Restrictions.**
 - a) Any player, who has played the position of catcher in four (4) or more innings in a game, is not eligible to pitch on that calendar day. The definition of “four (4) or more innings” is ANYTHING over three innings, so three innings and one pitch in the 4th inning, the catcher cannot pitch the rest of the day. Warm-up pitches do not count, only when the ball is live will the pitches count towards innings caught.
 - b) A pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher

for the remainder of that day. **Furthermore, a player is not allowed to exceed a combination of three (3) innings at the position of catcher and >41 pitches as a pitcher at any time during a single game.**

(1) **Note:** If the pitcher reaches the 40-pitch limit while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch, and maintain their eligibility to return to the catcher position, until any one of the following conditions occur:

- (a) that batter reaches base;
- (b) that batter is retired; or
- (c) the third out is made to complete the half-inning or the game.

c) A player who played the position of catcher for three (3) innings or less, who moves to the pitcher position, and delivers 21 pitches or more in the same day, may not return to the catcher position on that calendar day.

(1) If the pitcher reaches the 20-pitch limit while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch, and maintain their eligibility to return to the catcher position, until any one of the following conditions occur:

- (a) that batter reaches base;
- (b) that batter is retired; or
- (c) the third out is made to complete the half-inning or the game.

5. **Outfielders.** Not allowed to be used as extra infielders by rushing to an infield position on a hit ball. Before each pitch they must take a position at least 25 feet beyond the edge of the outfield grass on the Minor Field, and at least 15 feet beyond the edge of the grass on the Major Field (usually a chalk arc will be drawn on the field to mark this distance, and outfielders may not cross this line until the ball is hit). If an outfielder is playing too close to the infield and is party to an out unfairly, the umpire can rule the play as a non out and instruct the offending player to take a proper defensive position. This rule is intended to encourage all managers to teach kids proper skills and an understanding of the game.
- C. **Borrowing players.** A team must have at least 7 players in order to start a game. If a team knows it's going to be short one or more players for a game, the team may borrow up to as many as 2 players to satisfy the 9-player minimum; the roster of the borrowing team must consist of no less than 7 of its original players.
- 1. **The borrowed player** (a) shall be the player who made the last out(s) during the opposing team's previous at-bat, and (b) plays one or more of the three outfield positions.
 - 2. **While on offense**, only players on the shorthanded team will bat on that team, the "borrowed" players will only be playing defense. If the last batter of the inning is going to be coming into the game as the pitcher the next inning, they do not have to play defense, in that case the second to last batter will be used.
- D. **Batting order.** All players in attendance will participate in the batting order. All players bat in the batting order (consecutive batting order).
- a) **If a player is injured or has to leave early**, that spot can be skipped without penalty.
 - b) **Late arriving players** are added to the *bottom* of the batting order regardless of where the team is currently hitting in the order.
- E. **Courtesy Runner:** with two outs, coaches are encouraged to have a courtesy runner ready for the catcher.
- F. **Minimum/Maximum play.** All players play a minimum of 4 defensive innings, one of which must be at an infield position. Exceptions to this rule include the following: injury to a player, absence or late arrival of a player, or disciplinary reasons.
- 1. There is free substitution in this league. As a result, the manager may elect to alternate players every inning defensively. In the event that a game is called before a player has completed their

four (4) defensive innings, that player must start and complete five (5) defensive innings during the next scheduled game. If for some reason (shortened game or manager error) a player did not get their one inning in the infield during a game, the player will have to get in a minimum of two innings of infield in the next game.

2. **Lineup matrix.** Prior to the game, Managers shall exchange defensive matrixes which meet the above minimum play requirements. **Moving players between different positions during the midst of an inning shall not be permitted** other than as necessary to accommodate any pitching changes or any injuries that might occur.
3. **Lineup matrix.** The league has a [Google Sheet](#) document that calculates compliance with these rules. You can use that file, or a method of your own. In any case, you should print out at least 3 *copies* of your lineup (batting order and defensive positions by inning) for each game: one for the other team, one for your scorekeeper, and one for you.
 - a) **Making changes during the game.** You are not bound by the defensive positions in the matrix you hand out. If you decide to make some changes to your defense before a particular inning starts, that's perfectly fine as long as you're still in compliance with the rules above.

III. Ground Rules

- A. **Inning Run Rule.** All games played 5-run limit per inning. **6th inning is open.** There is no run limit in the 6th inning or extra innings.
- B. **Adults on the field.** Maximum of three adults should be available for each game: the manager and 2 coaches.
- C. **Base coaches.** Adults may coach base at 1st and 3rd. These coaches must abide by rules pertaining to base coaches: Base coaches must stay in or near the coaching box, should not interfere with any thrown or batted ball, and may not assist runners by holding or pushing them in the correct direction; doing so may result in an interference ruling with the player being called out.
 1. **Note:** Players may also serve as base coaches, abiding by the same rules. Also, as stated in the *Safety* section, player base coaches must wear a helmet.
- D. **Pregame warmups: No mitts!** Managers and coaches—and well-meaning parents—are not allowed to have a mitt on to play catch during a game or warmups, with 2 exceptions: (1) *a coach may wear a glove and catch balls from players if simultaneously holding a bat and hitting with his/her other hand* or (2) *Managers and coaches are permitted to warm up a pitcher at home plate or in the bullpen or elsewhere at any time including in-game warm-up, and in other instances.* This is another topic you may need to finesse with the parents on your team, as they often show up and want to play catch with their kid before the game (and often in sandals, also a violation). Tell them these are District rules we must abide by. Also, only the manager and coaches are allowed on the field during warmups (though a parent can substitute temporarily for a late-arriving coach).
- E. **Time limit.** All games shall consist of 6 innings. Specifically:
 1. **Saturday games.** Each game shall complete 6 full innings or until a winner is determined in extra innings. No new game should begin after 6pm. In this case, the game will be rescheduled to Sunday.
 2. **Weekday games or the last scheduled weekend game.** Each game shall complete 6 full innings or until a winner is determined in extra innings. In the case of a game being stopped for darkness, the game will be resumed the following day at the exact point where it stood upon being stopped for darkness (pitch count, baserunners, outs etc).
- F. **Tie Games/Extra Innings.** Play out ties if time permits, with time limits as described above. A tie game is

recorded as 1/2 win and 1/2 loss in the standings.

G. Balks. Not to be enforced at this level.

H. Safety Base: All games will be played with an orange safety base.

IV. Sportsmanship Rules

- A. Players.** These rules are intended to teach the players good sportsmanship as their skill level grows. Violations can cause the player to be called out or removed from the game.
- B. Must slide/avoid.** When a defensive player has the ball waiting, a base runner must either slide, avoid contact, or give himself up for an out.
- 1. Note:** The point is, we want to avoid collisions. And on that point, please also teach your players not to stand in the way of a baserunner—for example, the 3rd baseman standing on or right in front of the bag when there is no play, obstructing the runner from rounding 3rd to come home.
- C. Fake tag.** A defensive player may not induce a base runner to slide unless the defensive player has the ball. A one base penalty can be awarded if/when a fake tag occurs.
- D. Player throwing equipment accidentally.** For incidental throwing of equipment (most commonly, a batter accidentally throws the bat), on the first offense the umpire should give the player and manager a warning. If the same player does it a second time, it's cause for ejection from the game. (If batting, the player would be called out, and any runners would be returned to the bases they were on.) Note: A lot of kids tend to throw the bat now and then, so watch for this, work with them on it, and be a bit forgiving in games unless it's flagrant.
- E. Player throwing equipment in anger.** A player who throws equipment in anger can be immediately removed from the game. No warning needs be given.
- F. Adults.** Keep your cool! As stated under *Sportsmanship Rules* above, a player can be removed from the game without a warning for throwing something in anger. It's even worse when an adult does this, or swears in anger, or yells at a junior umpire, because coaches and parents are role models and need to behave with dignity and set an example. Violators may be ejected and will be reported to the Board.
- G. Only managers talk to umpires.** If there's a bad call or other issue, the manager should ask for time out and then talk to the umpire with courtesy and ask him to check with the other umpire if need be. Coaches should not go to the umpires directly; they should call the issue to their manager's attention, and the manager can then take it to the umpire.
- H. Think about your goals.** What's *your* mission statement? Do you want to teach kids baseball, have fun with them, help them grow and develop self-confidence, instill a love of the game? What else? Keep your goals in mind at practices and games and be sure your actions are moving you toward them.