



## **Coaches Packet 2026**

***“A good coach can change a game, a great coach can change a life” – John Wooden***

**Practice schedule:** Preseason practice schedule will be given to all teams. This is a specific practice schedule designed to give equal field time to all teams at all levels including our partner leagues of Memorial and Benson. Once the season starts, most fields will be in use for game play. Recommend finding other locations to hold in season practices. Otherwise open fields and batting cages are first come first serve.

**Practice Plan:** Always come to practice with a defined plan on what you want to accomplish with your team. Little League has numerous practice drills that you can utilize. Go to: <https://www.littleleague.org/university/search/drill>

**Parent meeting/letter –** We HIGHLY suggest a parent meeting with all your parents at the 1<sup>st</sup> practice. This is where you need to go over all details about the season. This is very important so all parents know about everything that will happen during the season. This is also good so you can let parents know your expectations of the players and the parents. Below is a Parent Letter example and what we go over at a parent meeting.

### ***Softball/Baseball Parent Letter Example:***

*Welcome to Hillside Little League -*

*We are we are excited to be back on the fields and playing ball! Coaches contact information:*

*We use the GameChanger app for all communications, schedules, etc - please download this app ASAP so you are in the know of what is happening. We can assist you if you need at the first practice.*

***Weather Cancellations-*** *All cancellations will be sent out via the (App) and on the Hillside Little League Facebook page & Twitter. The league website (hillidelittleleague.org) will have an announcement at the top of the home page, as well. Cancellations are not decided until 4-4:30pm (weekday) and 9am or hour before game time (weekend) the day of the events.*

### ***Field locations: (We may not play all these leagues) (Baseball plays at Hillside and some games at Benson/Grover)***

*Memorial: Gallagher fields 54th & Maple. Upper/Lower field*

*Westgate/WWAA: 8121 D Street, go to 84th & Grover turn East, at the stop sign turn right, at the next stop sign you go towards the right, you are going under the interstate. Follow road around fields are on the right. Softball is always the 2 fields to the farthest east.*

*Keystone: 120<sup>th</sup>, between Fort and Maple St.*

*Carter Lake: 17th and Ave Q*

*Ralston: 82nd & Park Drive*

*Grover Little League: 6402 Grover St.*

*Suburban/OSAA: Lamp Park – 113 N. 114<sup>th</sup> St*

*Fremont: Schilke Fields, Fremont NE 68025 – Take HWY 275 towards Fremont. Exit at HWY 36. West on W Reichmuth Rd/Old HWY 275. Fields will be on the North side of Old HWY 275*

*Ft. Calhoun*

### ***Baseball/Softball Gear (can rent from Hillside):***

*You need to buy if you don't have:*

**Glove:** *appropriate size for child. Child should be able to close the glove when the hand is in it.*

Bat: child should be able to hold bat with dominant arm extended straight in front or to their side and doing a circular motion with the wrist. If they cannot hold the bat with one hand and turn it in a circular motion, the bat is too heavy for the child. For the length of bat there are 2 ways:

1. From center or ribcage (sternum) to fingertips- is the length needed
2. From the ground to top of hip

Batting Helmet: should be snug, it should be slightly hard to get on and off. The smaller children this isn't always possible so as small as possible. Often if they wear their baseball caps or visors backwards this can help create a tighter fit. Recommend that all helmets have a face mask or c-flap.

Shoes: with rubber cleats, any sporting store has.

### **SNACK SHACK & Volunteering hours**

It is required for all families to do 4 hours per child of volunteer hours. If you choose to not do the hours, then you forfeit your security deposit of \$200.00. Please do your hours, we would rather you do your hours then keep your check. Uniforms are not handed out until the check has been turned in. You will turn in your check at Uniform pick up.

The Snack Shack is a way to connect with some other parents and learn more about Hillside. The time goes by quicker than you would think.

Watch your email. You should receive an email with a link to 'Signup Genius'. You want to sign up earlier than later in the season. The Snack Shack gets very hot when the heat kicks in. There is a small window air conditioner, but it can only do so much.

If you are scheduled for hours and there are no games because of weather, you will need to sign up for new hours.

### **Uniform:**

Picture attached Ex.: Black pants & Lime green sock/belt (parents will need to purchase). We will also be getting visors. Uniform pick up will be April 11th (TBD)

Baseball and softball pants/belts/socks are available at this link and closes on March

22nd: <https://hillsideuniformpackage.itemorder.com/shop/home/>

These will be ready and available for pick up with your uniform top at uniform pick up day. Softball will be softball pants, not the ones pictured.

Softball – Black pants

All levels – fitted shirt with logo, team name and number

Minors/Majors/Jr/Sr -pants/belts/socks

**Pants/Belts/Socks packages from CI Shirts – store closes March 22nd-**

<https://hillsideuniformpackage.itemorder.com/shop/home/>

**Following our final game, we will have a tournament that runs from June 5/6<sup>th</sup> ish-June 25th.**

### **Other important dates:**

Get your Hillside apparel before the season! Back again this year is our refillable cup with an upgrade, check it out and get yours before the season starts! All orders must be placed by March 25th.

<https://hillsidefanspring26.itemorder.com/>

May 2nd - Picture Day

May 29th - Hillside Carnival - Great night to enjoy the Hillside Family

June 12th - Hillside Night at Storm Chaser game - More information to come

**Practice Schedule: See app**

**Game Schedule: Coming Soon!**

Everything that happens, happens because of VOLUNTEERS and most of them have families, jobs and other household responsibilities. Our job as Little League coaches is simple: help young kids have fun while learning the fundamentals. Our goal is, by season's end, your player improved, they enjoyed the experience, and you did as well.

**We are in need of volunteers for our Board – All positions on the board are volunteer. We have many positions open so please reach out if you would like to help in any way.**

**Softball Commissioner- Crystal Anderson [softballcommish@hillidelittleleague.org](mailto:softballcommish@hillidelittleleague.org)**

### **Hillside Player Expectations**

- \*Exhibit the positive attitude of a team player. Be a team player.*
- \*Be on time to meetings, practices and games.*
- \*Be at every practice. Contact your coach if you are unable to attend in a timely manner.*
- \*Respect fellow players, equipment, the game and yourself by having pride in Hillside Little League and your appearance.*
- \*Be respectful to umpires, opposing players, coaches, fans and other field/Hillside personnel at all times. Unsportsmanship behavior will have consequences.*
- \*Understand no player is guaranteed playing time. The coaching staff will decide on playing time based on established criteria (i.e. attitude, hustle, communication)*
- \*Understand everything the coaching staff does has a purpose: to make the team and you better.*
- \*Players will remain in the dugout during the game. You will help with after game clean up: -bases put away, field raked, dugout trash cleaned up.*

### **Parent Expectations for Hillside Little League**

- \*Have player to all practices/games by the time the coach requests. If you are unable to attend, please notify the coaches in a timely fashion. Line ups are constructed based on attendance marked in the app. Please let coaches know if your player will not be in attendance.*
- \*Be positive and support all team members. Do not criticize a coach or team member with destructive comments.*
- \*Respect the decisions of the officials and coaches*
- \*Respect the opponents' fans, coaches and players.*
- \*If issues arise, encourage your player to speak with their coach. If issues remains unresolved, contact the coach after 24 hours has elapsed and not on game day.*
- \*Understand the coaching staff is concerned with making all players not only better athletes but better people, a concern that may take precedence over winning.*
- \*Allow the players to play, the coaches to coach and the officials to officiate.*
- \*If you are asked to leave/or ejected at a game due to your behavior, you are suspended for 1 game following the date of the ejection. If needed, we will have our disciplinary committee get involved and they will take action.*
- \*Parking: Parking past the Snack Shack to the north should be angled on all sides and end in the middle at the last yellow barrier. **PLEASE pull all the way up to the barrier!!** Please be sure you are driving slowly and safely through the park at all times.*
- \*When entering/exiting the park please follow the signs posted!! We are a full circle drive, please do not park in front of red shed a block the circle drive!!*
- \*Smoking/Vaping is not permitted near any field at Hillside. Smoking/Vaping should only occur by the Red Shed or dumpster.*
- \*No alcohol allowed on Hillside Property*
- \*Dogs are allowed in the ballpark but please clean up after them. Dogs must be on a leash at all times.*
- \*Please pick up your trash after your games, including around and under bleachers.*
- \*Children should not be climbing fences or trees at Hillside Park as it is a safety issue.*

If you have any questions, please reach out. Thanks-Coach!

**Recommendation for all levels: All players should be in the batting order and all players should be playing as equal innings in the field as possible. This helps all players develop. The goal is to provide as fun an atmosphere as possible for the kids. (and their parents who paid to have them play for Hillside)**

Farm: rotate your line up so that the same player isn't always top of the lineup – suggestions go in # order for regular season play and the last out of the game is where you start the line up the next game (e.g. your 4<sup>th</sup> batter makes the last out of the game. The 5<sup>th</sup> batter will lead off the next game, assuming you maintain the same order) Every player should try to pitch (practice and or game)

Minors: Players should not sit two consecutive innings. Constant position rotation is key to keeping them engaged at this level. Encourage every player to try and pitch. (at least once)

Majors: Players should not sit two consecutive innings. Players can start settling into positions based on ability and skill level

### **How to's at each level (rotations/what needs to be taught)**

Farm 7/8 year old: Players should play all positions; batting orders should be switched at each game (i.e. same player should not lead off every game)- Play lots of catch. This develops the basic skills of the game. Work on the simple mechanics of fielding ground balls, hitting and basic rules of the game.

Minors 9/10 year old: Players will start playing consistently the same couple of positions – All players should sit out as equal as possible; batting orders should change throughout season but can start to become more consistent based on your hitters. No lead offs, stealing when ball crosses the plate. Home closed.

Majors 11/12 year old: Play a consistent position, batting orders will most likely stay consistent. No leadoffs, but can steal once pitch crosses the plate. Home is open.

Jr/Sr/Reserve 13/18 year old: Play consistent positions and batting order stay consistent. Lead off allowed (Baseball). Steal on the pitch.

### **Rules for each level of play (see attached)**

#### **Picture Day**

Your coach will pick a time that will work best for the team and you will all meet at that time at our picture location. Once the entire team has arrived you will line up with the help of someone from the picture company. We need all players and coaches at picture day as we use these pictures for our sponsor plaques.

#### **Game Day Plate meeting information:**

**\*\*this is information that should be discussed at every plate meeting with both head coaches and umpires for the game\*\***

- \*\*\* Define your strike zone to coaches \*\*\*
- Pitch counts reported at game end (Baseball ONLY)

Pitch Count Limits: Baseball only
0-20: No days rest
21-35: 1 day (e.g. 28 pitches on Sat, can throw again on Monday)
36-50: 2 days
51-64: 3 days
65+: 4 days

\*recommend if a pitcher gets to 30 pitches in one inning, they should be removed from pitching another inning

- **NO on-deck batter during play \*\*Little League Rule, please follow\*\***
- Ask coaches: "Are your players legally & properly equipped?"
- No lead offs
- Slide to avoid contact (otherwise may be called out)
- One DEFENSIVE coach outside the dugout during play
- ONLY Head Coaches can address the umpire AFTER time has been called

For your information:

- Farm – Ball is “dead” when it hits the field of play – no runners may advance
- Players in the field should not be blocking the running path of the base runners
- Uncaught 3rd strike valid only if
  - 1st base is UNOCCUPIED (0 or 1 out)
  - 2 OUTS (does not matter if 1st base is occupied)
- Run rule
  - 15 run gap after 3 innings
  - 10 run gap after 4 innings

	Farm	Minor	Major	Jr/Sr	Res	JV
Time/Inn Limit:	1:15/6	1:30/6	1:30/6	1:30/6	1:50/7	1:50/7
Home Open:	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Infield Fly:	N	N	N	N	Y	Y
Check Bats:	Y	Y	Y	N/A	N/A	N/A
Max Fielders:	10	9/10	9	9	9	9
Uncaught 3rd:	N	N	Y*	Y	Y	Y
Run Max:	6	6	8	8	N/A	N/A

\* effective May 1st for baseball (always in effect for softball)



USA logo to be checked on all baseball bats before each game. Reserve/JV BB bats can have a BBCOR logo instead.



Be loud & confident with "every" call. Use right hand to motion all strikes. Base ump's should use a clicker, also.

**Discuss at plate meeting:**

- \*\*\* Strike zone: chalk to chalk, armpits to knees \*\*\* (except Reserve/JV)
- Ask coaches: "Are your players legally & properly equipped?"
- **Get game ball from the AWAY team**
- (Softball ONLY) No crow hops or sidearm pitches
- NO on-deck batter **DURING PLAY** (except Reserve, JV & Jr/Sr)
- Slide to avoid contact (otherwise may be called out)
- Hit by pitch: batter must try to evade or ball is called

**\*\*\* For your information:**

- Uncaught 3rd strike valid only if
  - 1st base is UNOCCUPIED (0 or 1 out)
  - 2 OUTS (does not matter if 1st base is occupied)
- Run rule
  - 15 run gap after 3 innings (Reserve: 15 after 4 innings)
  - 10 run gap after 4 innings (Reserve: 10 after 5 innings)

Version: 4/13/24

## Post Season Tournament

Post season tournament for these levels of play – Farm, Minors, Majors, Jr/Sr (baseball and softball). This is an in-house league tournament Hillside puts on at the end of the season. This tournament begins middle of June and will end on Championship night. **PLEASE make sure all parents are aware there will be games following the final game on the schedule.** Schedules for the tournament are not released right away at the beginning of the season as we take some items into consideration when making the tournament schedule. Reserve Baseball will have a post season tournament as well. Any post season tournament game that is tied at the end of regulation play will then utilize the “California Rule” in extra innings.

## All Stars timeline (Baseball ONLY)

Starting May 15<sup>th</sup>, nominations need to be considered and given to the player agent. All nominations need to be finalized by June 1<sup>st</sup>.

Nominations for the following:

- Farm 7's
- Farm 8's
- Minors – In district team and out of district team
- Majors – In district team and out of district team

As a coach, we ask you to nominate your top 2-3 players from your team or other teams you play. This information is given to the player agent, and they will proceed with the process (parents should not be told yet at this time). We will have you ask parents, at a specific time, of those you nominate to be available for practices post season and until tournament play is over. All Star tournaments will start around July 6<sup>th</sup> and run through July 19th but could have tournament play after that date for those older groups.

There is a new uniform and hat players will have to purchase for All-Stars – Cost is typically \$40-\$45