

Trumbull Little League
2023:
U7/U8 Division Guidelines

Welcome to the Trumbull Little League Fall Baseball Season. The U8 Spring Season is intended for 8 year olds to continue to advance their development and understanding of the game and introduce 7 year olds to their first experience of organized baseball and game situations. Coaching and development is at the forefront of this season while letting the kids have fun playing baseball in a positive learning environment. Scores, records and standings are not kept or tracked by TLL in this age division. There are no playoffs in U8.

- 1) The rules listed below are specific to the Trumbull Little League 7/8 Division and are a supplement and/or provide additional rules to the 2022 Little League Official Regulations with Playing and Tournament Rules ("Green Book"). In the absence hereof, the 2022 Official Regulations shall be followed.
- 2) Games are 6 innings or have a time limit of 1 hour 45 minutes (Hard Stop). Please be considerate to teams playing after you and conclude your game prior to the start time of the next game.
- 3) There will be nine (9) defensive players on the field without a catcher to start the season. The minimum number is 7. The 9th player must be an outfielder (not standing on 2nd base). **All (4) outfielders must be on the outfield grass.**
- 4) **There is no on deck batter. The next batter should be at the end of the bench with the helmet on ready to go. Keep bats along the fence until the player goes up to bat. During the game, no player should have a bat in his hands to warm up or take practice swings on or off the field until it is his/her turn to bat. Please strongly communicate this to players at your first practice that no player is to be swinging a bat unsupervised by a coach during games or practices. Please train all players to look all around them prior to swinging a bat.**
- 5) Coaches will pitch the entire game until notified by the league commissioner (we will target the 3rd week of the season). Coach pitch is used in order to maintain a controlled scrimmage and to develop confidence and encourage swinging at a pitched ball. Coaches will pitch to their own team and call their own balls and strikes.
- 6) The U8 pitching distance is approximately 42' (for point of reference, the regulation LL pitching distance is 46' from home-plate to the pitching rubber). Base distance is 60'.
- 7) A defensive player will stand on one side of the coach, but not playing too far away (i.e.; the defensive pitcher will cover the normal area around the pitcher's mound and not other positions).
- 8) During coach pitch, the manager/coach will continue to pitch to their batter until the ball is hit into play or the player strikes out. The player cannot advance to first base if the coach's pitch hits the player. There is no walking. Coach pitch style/form is at the coach's discretion (standing, one knee, etc. is permitted).

- 9) During coach pitch, the coach on the mound will act as umpire for their team calling balls and strikes as well as all plays in the field. After four (4) balls, the batter will not walk. The manager/coach will continue to pitch to their batter until the ball is hit into play or the player strikes out. The player cannot advance to first base if the coach's pitch hits the player.
- 10) During coach pitch, players do strikeout after three strikes (swinging or called). **NOTE: Do encourage players to swing and do not discourage players by calling them out on strikes on marginal pitches.** To keep the pace of the game going, please limit the number of extra strikes a batter may receive to 1 or 2 maximum (consider the strike zone hitter friendly during coach pitch and pitcher friendly during player pitch).
- 11) **Player pitching:** Player pitch will begin after notification by the commissioner targeting the 3rd week of the season. However, coaches will pitch the first 3 innings of the game and the players will be designated to pitch the final 2-3 innings of the game (time permitting). Pitchers are limited to one inning pitched, if you don't have any available pitchers, the coach will pitch. During player pitch, after 4 balls (or if the batter is hit by the pitch) the coach comes in to pitch and continues to count balls and strikes (the count does not reset). We encourage players to hit off other players; however, if the pitcher walks four (4) batters in a row or if the pitcher hits two (2) batters, then the pitcher must be replaced. During player pitch, the coach for the team that is batting will call balls and strikes from behind the pitcher's mound. **The strike zone should be fair and include called 3rd strikes.**
- 12) Any player hit by an opposing player will then have his coach pitch to him; as if it were a ball four call. The pitcher must be replaced if he hits any two (2) players in one inning.
- 13) Pitchers (Players and Coaches) must pitch from the rubber which is located 42 feet from home plate (for point of reference, the regulation LL pitching distance is 46' from home-plate to the pitching rubber). It is strongly recommended that pitchers are limited to 1 inning.
- 14) The team at bat can score a maximum of four (4) runs per inning. Three (3) outs and the inning are over.
- 15) **No player can advance more than two bases per at bat (AB), unless a home run is hit over the fence on fields where there are fences.** This rule applies to overthrows to a base that are not dead balls. If a defensive player makes an attempt to get the runner out, after the runner reached his second base, the player cannot advance. The runner may be tagged out. This rule is to encourage players to make the right play without worrying about all base runners scoring.
- 16) Only one base is allowed on an overthrow, which is ruled to be dead. If a ball is lodged (stuck) underneath the backstop, it is considered to be a dead ball.
- 17) **Sliding is permitted.** No headfirst sliding except back to a base. Any runner is out if he or she does not slide or attempt to get around the fielder who has the ball and waiting to make the tag (only if it affects the play). If a fielder is blocking the path of the runner and does not have the ball, the runner will be called safe or awarded the next base. Any intentional running into a defensive player is an automatic out and possible ejection. **Coaches, please take advantage of any and all opportunities on the field to explain rules regarding fielding and base running.**

- 18) OBSTRUCTION and INTERFERENCE: These are the two most misunderstood rules in baseball mostly because they are made at the umpire's discretion. This rule comes into play more often than you think in the 8U division due mostly to fielders not giving runners right of way and runners not avoiding fielders when they are making a play. The full rule is long and complicated but what players need to be taught is this:

Fielder – cannot block the path of the base if they aren't making a play on a ball and must be clear of baseline when runner is approaching (example: first baseman standing on bag when there is no play). The runner may think they have the right to 'bowl over' an obstructing fielder but that is not permitted and will result in the runner being called out. They must be taught to avoid contact. Enforce this by calling out obstruction on the fielder.

Runner – cannot interfere with a fielder trying to make a play on a hit ball. Runner is even permitted to run out of the baseline to avoid contact with fielder, if the runner makes deliberate contact with the fielder they should be called out. Coaches need to recognize these situations, make the correct call, stop the game and explain it to all of the players.

- 19) No leading, stealing or bunting allowed at any time.
- 20) Bases can be coached by adult coaches along the First and Third Base dugouts. There is a maximum of three coaches per team in the dugout. An adult must always be on the bench or in the dugout with the players. If you do not have three adults then you may put a player in to coach a base. NOTE: The player must wear the catcher's mask while coaching a base.
- 21) A play is over when the ball returns to the area of the pitcher who is on the mound. A runner can advance to the next base only if he or she is more than halfway there when the ball reaches the mound area.
- 22) If the batter throws his bat, the team will be given a warning. If it happens again, by any player on the team, the batter is called out. This rule must be enforced for safety!
- 23) Base runners can tag up on fly balls. There is NO Infield Fly Rule.
- 24) Coaches must rotate players throughout the season, and give them an opportunity to play both infield and outfield. **Each player must play two (2) full innings at an infield position (i.e. P, C, 1B, 2B, SS or 3B) in each game. Each and every player MUST PLAY A MINIMUM OF FOUR (4) INNINGS PER GAME! No player will sit on the bench for two consecutive innings. There are no exceptions! All catchers must wear full protective gear including athletic cup.**
- 25) Offensively there will be a continuous batting order.
- a) If, for example, you have 12 players on your team your batting order is 1-12. Then game two the number 2 batter leads off the game and the number 1 batter for the last game bats last. A player arriving after the start of the game (the first pitch thrown) must be placed in the last position of the batting order. Players all know that if they are batting second they will bat first the next game and will have an incentive to show up.
 - b) If a player can't come to their game to lead off, allow them to hit lead off the next game.
 - c) This batting order rotation WILL NOT CHANGE during the regular season. Each game the batting position of each player will rotate. This rule is for the purpose of all players getting equal at bats in the regular season.

- 26) When the batting team has two (2) outs if the catcher of the batting team is on base a pinch runner is recommended (whoever made the last out) so the catcher can get on his/her gear to be ready at end of inning to keep the game moving along/maximize playing time.
- 27) **Coaches and parents are prohibited from warming up pitchers. All players must wear at least face mask and cup when warming up a pitcher. Try to designate a scheduled bench player each inning to warm up pitcher while catcher is gearing up.**
- 28) Managers, please meet with each other prior to the start of your games to review rules and discuss any special considerations that a player may need. Any differences are to be settled by these guidelines. Please promote a positive learning experience for all players and stress good sportsmanship. Remember, this is *Little League*
- 29) All players, coaches, parents, and spectators must follow the TLL Code of Conduct at all times as posted on the TLL website.
- 30) Managers and coaches from both teams are required to remove all trash from the field, dugouts and surrounding area at the end of their game.
- 31) All Coaches should have ID badge with them at all times
- 32) **If you are the last game on any of the Unity fields or no team is waiting to play after your game, you are asked to cover home plate and the pitcher's mound with the tarps (the 2 tarps are typically located behind one of the dugouts). Rain outs can be prevented with this simple effort to cover the fields.**
- 33) **In the event that lightening is detected in the area all players, managers and coaches are to immediately get off the field and out of the dugouts. Everyone is to wait in their cars for 30 minutes for the lightening to pass.**
- 34) All Bats must be USA approved

REGULATIONS FOR PITCHERS:

Any player on a regular season team may pitch at the coach's discretion based on player safety, ability to reach home plate, throw strikes, and not be too wild.

There is no limit to the number of pitchers a team may use in a game.

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 maximum; 8 and under: 50 pitches maximum

- No pitcher can pitch in 3 consecutive days regardless of how many pitches are thrown.
- Only 2 visits per inning or 3 per game before the pitcher must be removed.

(1 inning is recommended with a 2 inning maximum for U8)

Exception: If a pitcher reaches the limit imposed in the Regulations for his/her league age while facing a Batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until that batter reaches base or is put out. (Or in TLL-U8: 4 balls or if the batter is hit, the pitcher must move aside & let the coach pitch.)

Pitchers league age 16 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, no (1) calendar day of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 1-20 pitches in a day, no (0) calendar day of rest must be observed.

Example: if Johnny pitches 75 pitches on Tuesday his 4 days of rest start on Wednesday and he cannot pitch again until Sunday.