

FPLL Triple-A Division

Rules & Guidelines

General Notes

- **Game Length:** Six innings maximum.
 - No new inning may begin after **1 hour 45 minutes**.
 - Once an inning begins, it must be completed unless stopped by the **umpire-in-chief** for darkness or weather (LL Rule 4.10(d)).
 - **Count:**
 - Four balls = walk
 - Three strikes = strikeout
 - **Field Dimensions:** 60-ft bases; 46-ft pitching distance (LL Rule 1.04).
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Game Administration

- **Pitch Count Tracking:**
 - The *official scorekeeper or designated pitch-count tracker* keeps the official pitch count.
 - The **home team** keeps the official score; the **visiting team** is encouraged to track pitch counts.
 - Managers may confirm pitch counts with the scorekeeper at any time.
 - If there's a disagreement, the **umpire-in-chief** decides the official count.
 - **Minimum Play Requirement (LL Reg IV(i)):**

Each player must play **at least six defensive outs** and have **one at-bat** per game.

 - If a game is shortened, the league may waive the penalty for the manager; however, the player must **start the next game** and make up any missed playtime *plus* the requirement for that next game.
 - **Suspended/Called Games (LL Rule 4.10):**
 - A game is regulation after **four innings** (or **three and a half** if the home team leads).
 - If called before regulation, it will resume later from the exact point of suspension.
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Mercy Rules

- **Run Limits (Local FPLL Rule):**
 - Maximum of **five runs per half-inning** for innings 1–5.
 - The **6th inning is an “open inning”** — no run limit.
- **10/15-Run Rule (LL Rule 4.10(e)):**

- Game ends if one team leads by **15 runs after 3 innings** (2½ if home ahead), or
 - **10 runs after 4 innings** (3½ if home ahead).
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Batting

- **Approved Bats:** Must display the **USA Baseball certification mark**. No altered bats, choke-knobs, choke-up assists, or thumb grips (LL Rules 1.10, 6.06(d)).
 - **On-Deck Batters:** Not permitted (LL Rule 1.08).
 - **Dropped 3rd Strike:** Batter is out (LL Rule 6.09(b); applies Majors & above only).
 - **Infield Fly Rule (LL Rules 2.00 & 6.05(e)):**
 - *In effect at AAA level.*
 - Applies when there are **runners on first and second or bases loaded with fewer than two outs**.
 - Batter is automatically out if, in the umpire's judgment, an infielder can catch a fair pop-fly with ordinary effort.
 - The ball remains **live**—runners may advance at their own risk.
 - **Helmets:** Required for all batters and baserunners (LL Rule 1.16).
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Illegal Bats

- **Regular Season (LL Rule 6.06(d)):**
 - Ball is dead unless defense accepts the play.
 - Offending bat removed; **batter and manager ejected**; offensive team limited to **one adult base coach** for remainder of game.
 - **Tournament Play (Rule 3):**
 - Batter = out; **manager removed from tournament; player ejected** from that game.
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Batting Order (Local Rule / LL Reg IV Note 2)

- FPLL uses a **Continuous Batting Order (CBO)** in all regular-season games.
 - All players present are listed in the lineup and bat in order, regardless of defensive position.
 - Free defensive substitutions are allowed.
 - Each player must still complete six defensive outs and one at-bat.

- Defensive outs do **not** need to be consecutive.
 - **Late Arrivals:** Players arriving late may be added to the end of the lineup without penalty, provided they have not yet missed their turn at bat.
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Base Running

- **Leading/Stealing (LL Rule 7.13):**
 - Runners may **not leave the base** until the pitched ball **reaches the batter**.
 - If a runner leaves early:
 - Play continues and any outs stand.
 - If no outs occur and the batter reaches base safely, runners return to the **unoccupied base nearest** the one they left.
 - **Sliding / Avoid Contact:**
Runners must slide or avoid contact on close plays. No **head-first slides while advancing** (allowed when returning).
 - **Interference:** Runner is out if interfering with a fielder making a play.
 - **Obstruction:** Umpire awards bases to **nullify the obstruction** (usually one base—judgment call).
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Pitching

Daily Pitch Count Limits (LL Reg VI(c)):

League Age	Max Pitches / Day
7–8	50
9–10	75
11–12	85
<i>(Pitcher may finish current batter when reaching the limit.)</i>	

Required Rest (LL Reg VI(d)):

Pitches Thrown	Rest Required
66 +	4 days
51–65	3 days
36–50	2 days
21–35	1 day

Pitches Thrown	Rest Required
1–20	0 days

No pitcher may pitch on **three consecutive days**, regardless of pitch count.

Other Pitching Rules

- Once removed, a pitcher may **not return** to pitch in that game.
- **Balks** are *not enforced* in AAA (start at Intermediate 50/70).
- **Warm-ups:** Up to eight pitches or one minute between innings; a new pitcher may take up to eight.

Mound Visits (LL Rule 8.06 – Minors):

- Two visits to the same pitcher in one inning = must remove pitcher on the third.
 - Three total visits in a game = must remove pitcher on the fourth.
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Catchers

- **Catcher → Pitcher:** If a player catches **four or more innings**, they may **not pitch** that day.
- **Pitcher → Catcher:** If a pitcher throws **41+ pitches**, they may **not catch** that day.
 - *Exception:* If they reach 41 pitches during an at-bat, they may finish that batter and still catch.
- Catcher must wear full gear: helmet + throat guard, chest protector, shin guards, and (for males) a protective cup.

Coach Warm-Ups (LL Rule 3.09):

- **Regular Season:** Managers or coaches may warm up pitchers at any time.
 - **Tournament Play:** Managers or coaches may **not** warm up pitchers (LL Tournament Rule 3).
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Defense

- Teams must field **nine players** (LL Rule 4.16).
- Defensive coaches must remain **inside the dugout** (Local Rule).

- All players must meet the **6-outs / 1-at-bat** requirement.
 - FPLL encourages rotating players through multiple positions for skill development (not enforced by umpires).
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Dead-Ball Situations

- **Overthrow Out of Play (LL Rule 7.05(g)):**
 - First throw by an infielder → 2 bases from **time of pitch**.
 - All other throws → 2 bases from **time of throw**.
 - **Hit By Pitch (LL Rule 6.08(b)):**
Batter awarded 1st base unless they swing or fail to avoid a pitch in the strike zone.
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Umpire Mechanics (for Reference)

Two-Umpire System:

- *Plate Umpire* – Balls/strikes, fair/foul, plays at home, secondary base coverage.
- *Base Umpire* – Covers steals, force/tag plays:
 - No runners → Position A (foul side of 1st)
 - Runner on 1st → Position B (between 1st & 2nd)
 - Runner on 2nd or 3rd → Position C (between 2nd & 3rd)

One-Umpire System:

- Works behind plate for pitches; moves into infield on batted balls.
 - Responsible for all calls; should pause and ensure best angle before making close calls.
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Safety & Conduct

- **Jewelry:** Allowed unless the umpire deems it unsafe or distracting. **Medical-alert jewelry** always permitted (LL Rule 1.11(j)).
 - **No on-deck batters** (LL Rule 1.08).
 - **No food, seeds, or gum** in dugouts or on the field.
 - **Sportsmanship:** Coaches, players, and spectators must maintain respectful conduct at all times.
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Key Takeaways for Coaches

1. **Every player plays.** Six defensive outs + one at-bat = mandatory.
2. **Mind the pitch counts.** Track diligently and check with the scorekeeper each inning.
3. **Keep the game moving.** No new inning after 1:45; finish the current inning unless dark/weather.
4. **Know your run rules.** Five-run limit except the 6th inning.
5. **Continuous batting.** Everyone bats; free defensive substitutions allowed.
6. **No head-first slides advancing, no on-deck batters, proper helmets always.**
7. **Be respectful.** Umpires' judgment calls stand—support them and model sportsmanship.

Appendix A - Charts

Pitch Count – Daily Limits (AAA ages)

League Age	Max Pitches / Day
7–8	50
9–10	75
11–12	85

Notes

- A pitcher may finish the current batter even if the limit is reached during the at-bat.
 - Pitchers may not pitch on three consecutive days (any pitch count).
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Required Rest (calendar days)

Pitches Thrown	Required Rest
1–20	0 days
21–35	1 day
36–50	2 days
51–65	3 days
66+	4 days

Pitcher ↔ Catcher Restrictions

Scenario	Eligibility Rule
Catcher → Pitcher	If a player catches four or more defensive innings, they cannot pitch that day (even one pitch in an inning counts).
Pitcher → Catcher	If a pitcher throws 41+ pitches, they cannot catch that day.

Scenario	Eligibility Rule
41-Pitch Exception	If the pitcher reaches 41 during an at-bat, they may finish that batter and still be eligible to catch if removed before the next batter.

Umpire Positioning — Two-Umpire System

Situation	Base Umpire (BU)	Plate Umpire (PU)
No runners	A position (foul side of 1B)	Plate, fair/foul, home
Runner on 1st	B position (between 1B & 2B)	Plate; help on bases if blocked
Runner on 2nd or 3rd	C position (between 2B & 3B)	Plate; fair/foul
Bases loaded	C position; forces/tags at 2B/3B	Plate/home plays

Umpire Positioning — Single-Umpire System

Situation	Single Umpire Duties
No runners	Call from plate; on batted ball move toward mound area for angles on bases.
Runner on 1st	Trail the play; be ready for force at 1st/2nd and steals/pickoffs at 2nd.
Runner on 2nd	Step up 3B line to improve angle on steals/pickoffs and plays at 3rd.
1st & 2nd / Bases loaded	Move toward middle infield (SS area) after contact; cover multiple bases; don't overrun the play; pause, then signal.