

Yucaipa Valley American Little League

2026 Minors League Local Ground Rules

The Board of Directors from the American League considers the **primary goal** of the Minor League program is to teach players the fundamental skills of Little League Baseball. A higher priority shall be given to achieving this goal than to winning games.

Yucaipa Valley American Little League considers SAFETY TO BE A PRIORITY. As such we expect all managers, coaches and volunteers to follow the rules as stated:

- No on-deck circle will be allowed.
- No players climbing on fences or dugouts.
- A batting helmet **MUST** be worn by any player that has a bat in their hand.
- A supporter (for boys) **MUST** be worn in order to participate in games or practices.
- A catcher's mask with a throat protector, chest protector, shin guards, and a hard cup (for boys) must be worn while in the catcher's position.
- Head first slides into any base while advancing are not allowed, and the player will be called out after the head first slide.
- There must be an approved coach or volunteer in the dugout with the players at ALL times.
- Any manager, coach or volunteer that is in the dugout or on the field for the team, shall give their **UNDIVIDED** attention to the players of the game (i.e. NO scorekeeping, emails, or texting by these individuals).
- No smoking, vaping, or alcohol use permitted while on YVALL premises.

Age Restriction: The Minors Division will be played by players league age 8-10, with exceptions, based on board approval.

The Board of Directors from the American League has determined that the Minor League Division will play its season in accordance with the official playing rules of Little League Baseball Rules and Regulations 2026, subject to the following additions and amendments:

- 1) The batting order shall be all the players on the team roster present for the game, batting in order, throughout the game.
 - a) Players not present at the game must be listed on the batting lineup (at the bottom) and marked as absent.
- 2) Every player present at the start of a game will play a minimum of six (6) defensive outs and bat at least once per game. Defensive substitutions and re-entry are allowed at every position throughout the game, with the exception of the pitcher. Managers must make every effort to comply with this rule, even in a potential "15-run rule", "10-run rule", or "8-run rule" game. If a manager or coach fails to comply with the above rule, then the player(s) who did not play the minimum amount of time will be required to start the next game and play a minimum of six (6) defensive outs and bat at least one time before being removed from the game. Managers or coaches who continue to break this rule will be sent to the Disciplinary Committee.
 - a) **All managers and coaches are required to play all players a minimum of 1 inning in the infield during each game they are present for, during the first half of the season. All managers and**

coaches must sit out various players during the first half of the season (the same players cannot be the ones on the bench every game). During the second half of the season, managers and coaches should rotate all players in various positions and have all players sit out when there are too many players to place on the field.

- i) **If a manager or coach fails to comply with the above rule, those player(s) that did not get minimum play in the infield must start the next game that they are present for in the infield for a total of 6 consecutive defensive outs.**
 - ii) **If a manager or coach fails to comply with the above rules, then they shall be sent to the Disciplinary Committee.**
 - iii) **If there is a safety issue making the above rule hazardous, the parents, Safety Officer and/or Minor Representative must be notified on a weekly basis until the player is no longer a safety issue. It is the manager's ultimate responsibility to coach these players and help them improve their playing abilities so that they do not remain in the outfield the entire season.**
- 3) Little League International Rules will govern in regards to pitching, which include:
- a) The number of pitches which may be thrown in any given time period & mandatory rest periods.
- 4) When pitching from a portable mound pitchers are HIGHLY encouraged to wear turf/tennis shoes in place of their plastic cleats. No metal spikes are allowed.
- 5) **All teams must pitch a 9-year-old or younger player for a minimum of six (6) defensive outs, not required to be consecutive (or maximum pitch count, whichever comes first) in a calendar week (Monday – Sunday).**
- a) If a team only has one (1) scheduled game in a calendar week, the minimum number of outs required are reduced to three (3).
 - b) A manager may satisfy the minimum number of outs with multiple 9-year-old players.
 - c) If a 9-year-old player starts pitching at the beginning of an inning and continues throughout that inning and the inning ends due to the local five (5) run scored per inning rule, this shall count as pitching the 9-year-old for 3 outs.
 - d) Managers must make every effort to comply with this rule, even in a potential “15-run rule”, “10-run rule”, or “8-run rule” game – there are no exceptions.
 - e) If a 9 year old pitches and only records 3 outs in a game, a different 9 year old needs to pitch the remaining 3 outs for the calendar week. This will help promote the development of more pitchers.
- 6) If possible, each team will field ten (10) players, 6 on the infield and 4 in the outfield. Outfielders will be positioned in an umbrella style in the outfield grass (i.e. equal distance between Left, Left Center, Right Center and Right). There is NO rover allowed. (If less than 10 players, 8 or 9 players may field the game.) Players may not rotate positions in the field, unless there is an injury or a pitching change.
- 7) The offensive team’s time “at bat” ceases when:
- a) Three (3) offensive players have been legally put out, or
 - b) Five (5) runs have been scored (excluding the last inning, which is open). The last inning is open, and is determined by the scorekeeper, umpire, and team managers. Please note that the “15-run rule”, “10-run rule”, and “8-run rule” still apply.
 - 1 **First half of the season:** All innings will be played with the 5 run rule in effect.
 - 2 **Second half of season and end of season tournament:** The YVALL board will aggregate the average number of innings played in each game during the first half of the season and

determine when the “open” innings will be in effect for the second half of the season and tournament play

- 8) Tee-ball bats are NOT allowed to be used in this Division. The bat must be a Little League approved bat.
- 9) Should a player arrive after the game begins, all mandatory playing time rules will apply and the player will be placed at the end of the lineup submitted prior to the start of the game.
- 10) A team must have a minimum of eight (8) players (healthy & capable) present at the start & completion of the game for it to be considered an official game. Should a team have insufficient players to field a team, pool players may be assigned randomly or the opposing team will provide the other team player(s) to play defensively. These players will only play outfield positions starting with right field and will be the last batters scheduled to hit. **Specific Pool Players may NOT be requested by a Manager.** When playing with only 8 players, the team may skip over the ninth (9th) and tenth (10th) position in the batting line-up without penalty and no out will be called for the missing ninth (9th) or tenth (10th) position.
- 11) Outfield markers (Fence or Cones)
 - a) Home Runs – A ball must fly over and land on the other side of the fence or cones to be considered a Home Run. The cones shall be placed at 180’-0”, unless playing on a standard Little League field with a 200’ fence.
 - b) Ground Rule Double – A ball must roll or bounce (touched or untouched) past the cones or fence to be considered a Ground Rule Double and runners advance two bases.
 - c) During weekday games, cones shall be utilized to mark off the outfield (placed where the fence should go) at 180’-0”.
- 11) "15-run rule" – If after three (3) innings or two and one-half innings if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of fifteen (15) runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede the victory to the opponent.

“10-run rule” – If after four (4) innings or three and one-half innings if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of ten (10) runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede the victory to the opponent.

“8-run rule” – If after five (5) innings or four and one-half innings if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of eight (8) runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede the victory to the opponent.
- 12) A regulation game consists of six (6) innings, unless extended because of a tie or if shortened because:
 - a) The “15-run rule”, “10-run rule”, or “8-run rule”;
 - b) The home team doesn’t need any runs in its ½ of the sixth inning;
 - c) The umpire calls the game;
 - d) The time limit has been reached (see item 13). All games will be played until a winner is determined unless:
 - i) The umpire calls the game;
 - ii) The time limit has been reached (see item 13).

- e) If, in the Umpires judgment, playing conditions are unsafe, the game shall be suspended and rescheduled for completion.
- f) If a game is called, it is considered a regulation game if four (4) innings have been played (three and one-half (3 ½) innings if the home team is ahead).
- g) If a game is called before it has become a regulation game, but after one (1) or more innings have been played, it shall be resumed (at a later date) exactly where it left off. (All records, including pitching shall be counted). The balance of the game will be scheduled to resume immediately before the next scheduled game between the two teams involved.
- h) If a game is canceled before it begins, it will be re-scheduled for play at the discretion of the board.

13) Time Limit:

The Umpire will announce, and the Scorekeepers will record, the official start time of the game.

NO new inning can begin after 1 hour and 30 minutes. An inning begins the moment the 3rd out is made completing the preceding inning.

- a) In the interest of keeping the game moving, pitchers will be allowed only 8 warm-up pitches within 1 minute. If the catcher is putting on his gear, a manager or coach may warm-up the pitcher.
- b) A courtesy runner can be used for the catcher if the catcher reaches base when there are 2 outs or the second out is recorded at a point in time when the catcher is on base.

NOTE: If the Umpire determines that a Manager is purposefully delaying the game in order to artificially reach the 1 hour 30 minutes mark, disciplinary action may be taken against the Manager by the Board's Disciplinary Committee.

14) Little League Rule 6.02(c) shall be implemented. The rule states: After entering the batter's box, the batter must remain in the box with at least one foot throughout the at bat. Exceptions:

1. On a swing, slap, or check swing.
2. When forced out of the box by a pitch.
3. When the batter attempts a "drag bunt".
4. When the catcher does not catch the pitched ball.
5. When a play has been attempted.
6. When time has been called.
7. When the pitcher leaves the dirt area of the pitching mound or takes a position more than five feet from the pitcher's plate after receiving the ball or the catcher leaves the catcher's box.
8. On a three-ball count pitch that is a strike that the batter thinks is a ball.

15) Balls or Strikes, Fair or Foul, Safe or Out are all judgment decisions. All Umpire judgment decisions are final. No manger, coach, spectator or player shall object to any judgment decision.

16) Should the Manager have reasonable doubt in an Umpires decision, as it relates to the rules, the manager may appeal the decision and ask that a correct ruling be made. All protests will be attempted to be resolved immediately by the board member(s) on duty from the league(s). Should a manager believe that the ruling is still uncorrected, the following will take place:

- a) The Scorekeeper will record the time/place of the protest.
- b) The manager will file an official protest. The matter will be reviewed by the Rules Committee as soon as possible. Should the Rules Committee determine an incorrect ruling was made, the game will

be scheduled to resume (at the point the protest was recorded in the earlier game) immediately before the next scheduled game between the two teams involved.

- c) If a manager protests a judgment call play after a game protest has already been filed, the Umpire will eject that Manager from the game.

17) The home team is responsible for setting up the field of play and the visiting team is responsible for clean-up. When setting up the field, please use the designated bases for the specific field you are using (the field number matches the number on the bottom of the bases). During an interleague game, the team playing on their home field is responsible for both setup and clean-up. **Both teams are responsible for cleaning up their dugouts and stands**

18) At the end of the season, there will be a double-elimination tournament that all teams shall participate in. The rules shall be the same as above.

- a) The teams shall be seeded by the best record in the second half of the regular season with the following point system determining the best record.

- i.) 1 point for a win, .5 points for a tie, and 0 points for a loss.

- ii.) In the event of a tie, the Tie Breaker Policy will be utilized.

- b) This means for the first half of the season, no official records will be kept. Scorekeepers are still needed, and the score will still be kept and pitch count will still be maintained. However, there will be no wins, losses, or ties recorded.

- c) Managers and coaches should rotate players in various positions and use the beginning of the season as instructional.

- d) In the event of an "if necessary" game due to both teams having one loss, the home/visitor team will be determined by a coin toss (Board Member present) 1 hour prior to the final game.

Managers, Coaches, Umpires and Players shall conduct themselves in a courteous and respectful manner at all times and shall promote sportsmanship and a sense of fair play at all times. Conduct to the contrary will not be tolerated in any form.