

Land-O-Hills Baseball League
3rd-4th Grade (AA) Rules
2021 Season
(updated 5/20/21)

Note: *The purpose of the Land-O-Hills Baseball League is to allow the players to learn the game of baseball and have fun doing so. The league is not run for the benefit of the coaches or the parents of the players. The rules stated below are intended to help carry out this purpose. Should a situation arise not specifically covered in these rules, resolution of the situation should be made keeping this stated purpose in mind.*

It is also the intention of the league to maintain a fair level of play amongst all the teams within a community. Rosters should be balanced by age and talent. The commissioners will investigate all complaints and they alone will determine if and what disciplinary action will be taken. Your cooperation is appreciated to keep baseball fun, challenging and rewarding for all of our young players.

Please be aware of and follow each community's safety guidelines related to COVID-19 for the health and safety of everyone involved.

Game Rules

1. The Home Team will supply two new baseballs for each game.
2. The Home team will provide the home plate umpire or both umpires if both are paid.
3. Games start promptly at 6:00 pm. Teams arriving more than 15 minutes late shall forfeit the game; however, this rule may be waived by mutual consent of the coaches.
4. Visiting team gets the field for the 15 minutes immediately prior to the scheduled game start time.
5. No new inning may start 2 hours after actual game start time.
 - a. In case of a tie, the home team coach will determine if the game can be safely completed.
 - b. Both coaches can also agree to resume a tie game at a later date or end play with a tie score.
6. Games shall consist of 6 innings.
 - a. Three and one-half (3 ½) innings is considered a full game if the home team is ahead
 - b. Four (4) if the visiting team is ahead.
 - c. Score reverts back to the last completed inning for a game called in the middle of an inning.
 - d. A game can be considered over by the losing team if the winning team has a fifteen (15) run lead at the end of three innings or 10 runs after 4 innings.
 - e. There will be three (3) outs or a maximum of five (5) runs per inning, whichever comes first, except for the last inning in which case three (3) outs will constitute an inning.

Pitching

1. A pitcher will pitch no more than
 - a. three (3) innings per game or
 - b. six (6) innings in three consecutive calendar days
 - c. Pitching should be limited based on Calendar Days not on 24 hour periods.
2. Any pitch thrown by a pitcher in an inning constitutes a full inning.
3. No pitcher can re-enter a game as a pitcher once he is removed from that position.
4. Umpires must call balls and strikes from behind home plate.
 - a. Three strikes are an out.
 - b. Foul balls count as strikes 1 and 2 only.
 - c. No walks are allowed.
5. Each team will also designate an adult to pitch to their team.

- a. The adult pitcher will pitch overhand from a spot **no more than 5 feet** from the pitching rubber and can remain on the mound throughout the game in the background of the player pitcher.
 - b. The adult pitcher may use his glove for self-defense only.
6. 3-4 grade pitchers must maintain a proximity / location in relation to the coach pitcher of 6 feet to the left or right of the coach pitcher.
7. The adult pitcher will take over pitching as soon as the 4th ball is called by the umpire as no walks are allowed.
 - a. The adult pitcher will continue to pitch to that batter only.
 - b. The player pitcher will resume pitching to the next batter.
 - c. The player pitcher will always be in the game for defensive purposes.
8. The strike zone can be slightly expanded by several inches in all directions in order to allow the player pitchers to develop.
9. Pitchers may wear sunglasses. (New)

Base Running

1. Players must wear helmets at all times while in the field of play.
 - a. Intentional removal of a helmet while baserunning when the ball is live shall result in the runner being given a warning for the first such incident or being declared "OUT" for any further incidents.
2. If the ball is out of play, the runners shall be awarded the base to which they were headed plus one base.
 - o Example #1 - An overthrow out of bounds while a runner is going from first base to second - the runner is awarded third base.
 - o Example #2 - An overthrow out of bounds while a runner is heading back to first base after going part way to second - the runner is awarded second base.
3. A courtesy runner is allowed at any time for the catcher – provided the catcher is the catcher of record of the previous inning.
 - a. Any courtesy runner utilized should be the last out recorded.
 - b. A courtesy runner for the catcher is recommended after two outs.
4. If a play is made at home plate, the runner must slide.
 - a. It is a judgment call by the umpire if the play is close enough to require a slide.
 - b. The umpire must call the runner out if the runner does not slide when the umpire decides a slide was required.
 - c. The catcher cannot block home plate or make a play for the runner if he does not have the ball or will not have the ball before the runner reaches the base.
 - d. The umpire shall warn the catcher for the first infraction and can eject the catcher from the game for flagrant or further infractions.
5. No lead-offs until the ball is hit.
 - a. A runner is allowed one grace step if he leaves before the ball is hit if the batter swings and misses.
 - b. Except in the case of a swing and a miss noted above, the umpire will call out any runner taking more than one step from the base before the ball is hit.
6. Head first slides are NOT permitted at all bases.

Batting

1. No designated hitter.
2. All players present at the game must bat in a continuous batting order.
3. No walks.
4. No bunting or fake bunting (eg squaring around to bunt).
5. Batters must wear a batting helmet.
6. The batter will be called out if he fails to swing at a 3rd called strike.
7. An inning ends when a team has scored five runs (3-4th Grade 5 run limit).
8. A team will be permitted to score more than five runs if trailing by five or more runs in the final inning of the game.
9. Batter interference is subject to umpire judgment.

Equipment

1. Metal spikes are not allowed.
2. Catchers must wear a protective helmet, facemask, throat protector, shin guards, chest protector and cup.
3. There is no bat restriction.

General Rules

1. Players in this league must be in 3rd or 4th Grade when registration takes place in order to play.
2. Each team must share a lineup prior to the start of each game – including player numbers.
3. The home team will keep the official scorebook for both teams . If the score is disputed and the coaches cannot resolve it, the umpire will be the final decision maker.
4. The home team is responsible for reporting the score to ballcharts.com/LandOHills within 24 hours of the completed game. Login: Coach's Last Name Password: LOH2021
 - a. Click Admin button to add/edit game scores
5. Scheduled games can be cancelled or postponed only because of weather related conditions by 5pm of game day.
 - a. The home coach is responsible for verbally talking with or texting the visiting coach—no emails, no postings on websites.
 - b. Rain out games will NOT be rescheduled or made up during the shortened 2020 season, unless the coaches make a field arrangement and an umpire for an alternative date.
 - c. The home team coach will decide when a game shall be suspended or discontinued due to bad weather.
 - i. In no case shall a game start or continue when there is lightning in the area.
 - ii. Games may resume after 30 consecutive minutes without lightning or thunder
 - d. The home team from the original game will be responsible for baseballs and umpires.
6. No protests allowed.
7. Players can be called out or ejected for throwing equipment. This decision is up to the umpire, although the umpires should first give a warning unless the incident is intentional or flagrant.
8. Coaches are responsible for the conduct of their team and fans.
9. Heckling by players or fans is not allowed.
 - a. Arguing umpire calls will be considered unsportsmanlike conduct and after one warning, may result in ejection.
 - b. Continued incidents will result in a game forfeit. It is the responsibility of each community commissioner to give a copy of these league rules to every umpire they expect to use.
 - c. Umpires regardless of age are expected to read and understand these rules. Questions can be forwarded to the League Committee if need be.
10. All umpire calls are final.

- *Only head coaches may ask for an explanation, and the other head coach may be present for the explanation.*
 - *Once an umpire declares a call final, the play will stand.*
 - *Coaches should apply common sense and set an example for players and parents once a call is final.*
11. Umpires may eject coaches for negatively interacting with players of the opposing team.
 - *Umpires should give an initial warning.*
 - *Additional interactions will result in an ejection.*
 12. Umpires should avoid standing by either team's bench for any extended period of time between innings.
 13. Game play shall be governed by the rules of Major League Baseball – except for rules highlighted specific to Land of Hills.
 14. All players present at the game must play at least two innings in the field, with the following exceptions:
 - Coaches and umpires must be notified if a team member will not participate due to disciplinary actions or injury.
 - Ejections for unsportsmanlike conduct - failure to comply will result in forfeit of the game.
 15. No infield fly rule.
 16. A team will consist of ten (10) rostered players with four (4) outfielders.
 - a. In the case of an injury, a team will be allowed to continue with eight (8).
 - b. A team will also be allowed to start a game with less than 8 players upon agreement between the two coaches.
 - c. In the event, an extra player becomes available, then that player may be added to the bottom of the batting order.
 17. All LOH 3-4th Grade league teams may share players in order to avoid a forfeited league game due to lack of players.
 - a. If a team requires a sub from another LOH 3-4th grade team, then they must play with no more than 10 players.
 - b. Coaches using substitute players must notify the opposing coach of the use of the substitutes.
 - c. Substitute players may not pitch or catch in a LOH league game AND must hold the last batting order positions.
 - d. A maximum of two substitute players may be used.
 - e. Substitute players cannot play for, or be rostered on a select team; however, players from a league team may play on a non-LOH, tournament only team.
 18. Injury rule for taking outs for injury vs. player leaving for other reasons.
 - a. If a player leaves the game due to an injury or illness, there is **NO** automatic out for that player.
 - b. His spot is then skipped on subsequent at bats. This player may NOT return to this game.
Note: Opposing coaches should discuss with the umpire and agree upon the final disposition of the player and his removal from the game. Any exceptions made to this rule must be agreed upon by opposing coaches and umpires in the spirit of good sportsmanship.
 19. All players must have the same uniform (hats and shirts), if possible.
 20. Any local or "house" rules must be declared prior to the start of a game. No "house" rule will permit a game to unfairly end with a half inning played.

Field Preparation

1. The home team is responsible for having the playing field in good condition.

2. Bases and pitcher's rubber must be staked down.
 - a. Bases are 60 feet.
 - b. Pitcher's rubber is 46 feet from home plate.

Rosters: Each league head coach MAY receive a copy of all league rosters – upon request. Coaches may compare these rosters to game lineups. Players may be added to the roster up to June 15 by submitting a roster change request to the League Committee. The request must include the reason for the roster change (ex. Replacing injured player, player moved into community, etc.).

League Tournament: The League playoffs will take place between July 16-18. The League will supply 1st and 2nd place trophies after completion of all playoff games. 3rd Place teams will receive medals. All regular season games that have a potential impact on playoff seeding must be played by July 14, 2021. Regular season games not played by July 14 do not have to be played. All teams will be seeded by their regular season league records.

If a tie exists for any of the seeds after all league games are completed then the seeding for tied teams will be determined first by head to head results, second by fewest runs allowed, third by most runs scored and finally by a coin toss. All decisions on seeding by the LOH Commissioner are final. For tournament play after July 14th, the number one seed will play the worst seed and so on. The tournament will be single elimination.

All league rules apply to all games with the following exceptions/additions:

- 3 innings per pitcher per game
- 6 innings per pitcher for the tournament
- Games will not start an inning 90 minutes following the time of the first pitch.
- Tournament championship games will not be subject to the time limit.
- Violation of pitching rules will result in forfeiture of game by the offending team.
- No substitute or non-rostered players from other LOH teams may be used
- Extra innings will invoke the California Tie Breaker Rule:
 - Each team on offense will put the batter who is scheduled to bat last in that respective half of the inning on second base and will start the half inning with one out.
 - Play will continue until a team is ahead at the end of an inning.
- As a courtesy, each team should supply one game ball for each game.
- Non-host LOH communities will offer umpires the opportunity to umpire tournament games
- The winner of the tournament is the winner of the league.