

West Deptford Little League Spring 2026

Coach Pitch Baseball Rules



Games will begin at scheduled start time unless agreed to otherwise by both coaches prior to the game and confirmed with the league director. The goal is to play six (6) innings, but a game may be called after an hour and a half by agreement of both coaches providing that both teams have batted the same number of innings.

COACHES:

- Home team shall be responsible for field set-up and cleanup. At a minimum, the batter's box and bases shall be raked clean of potential hazards.
- Each coach shall supply at least one (1) new and one (1) used game ball for the start of the game. Four (4) balls shall be used in each game. League supplied game balls should be used at all times.
- No inning shall start more than an hour and a half (1.5) after scheduled game start if the second game is scheduled on the same field that day.

OFFENSE:

- All player bats must meet USA Baseball standards set by Little League.
- Coaches pitch to their own batters. Pitching from the knee is encouraged to replicate arm angle players will see in player pitch.
- Each batter will receive no more than eight (8) pitches to put the ball in play. If the batter fouls off the 8th pitch or any pitch after that, they will be afforded an additional pitch to put the ball in play.
- A three game grace period will be used at the start of the season for first year Coach Pitch players and those more inexperienced players who are adjusting to hitting live pitching. Those players will be given the opportunity to swing at all pitches if they choose to do so. However, once three strikes have occurred the out will count. The at bat will conclude after one of the following occurs:
 - The batter does not put the ball in play and the bat is over after 8 pitches
 - The ball is put in play and all runners advance and the outcome of the play will stand but the recorded out from the 3 strikes will still count. In this instance all base runners can remain at the base they advanced to, including the batter.
 - The ball is put in play and a put out is recorded in the field. If the put out occurs at first base or a fly out then the result of this play will stand and the out at first base will cancel out the strikeout that was recorded. This play will not result in two outs being attributed to the batter.

- The ball is put in play and a put out is recorded in the field at any other base aside from first base, then that out is recorded in addition to the strike out and two outs will be recorded for the inning. The batter can remain at first base.
- If there are two outs and the batter gets three strikes during the 8 pitches but the ball is put in play, the play will be executed in the field, but the inning will end regardless of the outcome of the ball in play. In this instance the recorded out due to the strikeout will serve as the third out of the inning.
- Coaches will be responsible for properly applying this rule to their own batters and can extend the grace period if needed for players who may warrant this exception. Coaches are responsible to communicate to the other team prior to the game.
- The use of a tee for hitting will not be permitted in Spring play
- There will be no called strikes or walks granted.
- The side will be retired and the half inning over when one of the following conditions has been met:
 - Three (3) outs have been recorded
 - The offense has scored four (4) runs
 - Each batter on the offensive team has had one at-bat
- Runners may advance at their own risk until the ball is in possession of an infielder in the infield. At that point, any runner who is not more than halfway to the next base must return to the previous base. Taking of extra bases is at the coach's discretion but should be limited.
- With the exception of a ball hit into the outfield, base runners should be coached to advance one base to prevent the creation of a 3-ring circus. Try to enforce fundamentals without getting overly aggressive and taking advantage of players struggling in the field.
- Runners must remain within the baseline and will be called out if they take an excessive path out of the basepath to avoid being tagged out.
- The coach may substitute another runner for a catcher with two outs in order to speed up the gameplay.
- Tag rule is in effect except for at home plate.
- No leads and no steals.
- No infield fly rule.
- No bunting.
- If a batted ball hits a coach, it is considered a live ball.
- All teams will use continuous batting.
- One coach or parent must be in the dugout at all times.
- Offense may use two (2) adult coaches total in the field (other than pitcher) – one at first base and one at third base.

DEFENSE:

- The defense shall field no more than four (4) infielders plus a pitcher & catcher. 1B – 2B – SS – 3B
- The defense shall field a pitcher for defensive purposes, but the pitcher must play behind the pitching mound.
- All defensive pitchers MUST wear a Heart Guard Protector during defensive play. The use of a mask is encouraged but not mandatory.
- The defense must provide a catcher unless the team has fewer than nine (9) players in which case a coach will act as the catcher.
- One (1) coach from the defensive team shall back up the catcher.
- Playing with less than seven (7) defensive players is not recommended but can be done if agreed upon by both coaches.
- A maximum of four (4) players shall be positioned in the outfield grass as outfielders – LF – LCF – RCF – RF. All outfielders must be positioned in the outfield grass until the ball is put in play. Outfielders are encouraged to allow infielders to play balls that remain in the dirt.
- Once a ball is in play, that play ends when an infielder possesses the ball and the defensive coach declares the play dead by raising his hands.

SAFETY:

- Only players, managers, and approved coaches are permitted on the playing field during game play and practice sessions.
- Batters and base runners are required to wear a helmet at all times.
- Catchers must wear a catcher's helmet (with face mask and throat guard), chest protector, shin guards, and a cup.
- Headfirst slides are not permitted. Feet first slides are permitted at each base.
- Regulations prohibit on-deck batters. No player should handle a bat until it is his/her time to bat.
- All bats should be kept on the outside of the dugout area during game play.
- Players may not wear watches, rings, pins, jewelry or other metallic items.
- There will be no tag out plays at the plate. All plays at the plate will be considered "force" plays regardless of whether there are additional runners behind the scoring runner.
- A player is not allowed to wear metal spikes.
- If a player is injured, no matter how minor, an incident report must be completed and turned in by the manager (forms will be located at the concession stand and can be turned in there).

All other rules are by the Little League Rulebook.