

West Deptford Little League Spring 2026

Rookie 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. Game play should last an hour with as many innings as can be accomplished.

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 (1) after scheduled game start if the second game is scheduled on the same field that day.

GENERAL:

- Rookie Baseball is intended to be a hybrid of both Tee Ball and Coach Pitch. Players shall work towards hitting live pitching while still developing good baseball mechanics with teaching and instruction interspersed throughout play.

OFFENSE:

- All player bats must meet USA Baseball standards set by Little League.
- Teams shall use a soft-core baseball similar to what is used in Tee Ball.
- 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 five (5) pitches to make a hit. Following the fifth pitch, a tee shall be placed for batters to hit.
- 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 on the bases
 - The offense has scored three (3) runs
 - Each batter on the offensive team has had one at-bat
- With the exception of a ball hit into the outfield, base runners should be coached to advance only one base. Try to enforce fundamentals without getting overly aggressive and taking advantage of players struggling in the field.
- 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. 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 will not provide a catcher. One (1) coach from the defensive team shall serve as the catcher.
- Teams can play with a minimum of 5 players. Infield positioning should be a prime focus with players learning positions. Outfielders should remain in the grass for backup purposes only.

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.
- Headfirst slides are not permitted. Feet first slides should be discouraged.
- 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.