

## FIRST GRADE RULES

*Revised date: April 2018*

1. **Competitive Principles:** This program is devoted entirely to developing skills, and not about competition.
2. **Fielding:**
  - a. **Number of Fielders:** ALL players field every inning.
  - b. **Location of Fielders:** There may not be more than one 1st baseman, 2nd baseman, shortstop and 3rd baseman and two pitcher's helpers in the infield (i.e., no player stationed ON 2nd base, no outfielder begins a play within 15 feet of any base path and no player catcher); the outfield will then be filled in with the balance of the players. If a player that is stationed on 2nd base makes any force out play (assist or putout) or if an outfielder that begins a play within 15 feet of any base path makes a force out play (assist or putout) at the two closest bases, the affected runners shall be safe. An outfielder that starts a play more than 15 feet away from a base path may make an assisting play at any base (that is, the outfielder can throw the ball to an infielder who makes the putout at a base). in the infield (no player catcher); the outfield will then be filled in with the balance of the players.
  - c. **Rotating Fielders:** The players are to be rotated amongst positions every game and throughout the season and encouraged to play every position. Each player MUST play the infield an equal number of times over the course of the season, and ideally each game if feasible given the number of players on the team. For this purpose, pitcher's helper constitutes an infield position. For first base, we suggest an adult (coach or parent) act as a backstop for the overthrows.
  - d. **No Blocking Runners:** Other than when fielding a ball, fielders are required to allow run space for the runner while in the base path. Other than when fielding a ball, fielders cannot stand in the base path and must make a reasonable effort to remove themselves from the runner's direction.
  - e. **Infield Fly:** The infield fly rule shall never apply.
  - f. **Substitutions:** N/A as all players field every inning.
  - g. **Pitcher's Helpers Must Wear Helmets and be No Closer to Batter than Pitcher:** Pitcher's helpers shall wear a batting helmet with a facemask and shall be positioned no closer to the batter than the front of the pitching mound, or if a field has no pitching mound, then no closer than the pitcher.
3. **Batting:**
  - a. **Batting Entire Lineup Each Inning:** ALL players bat every inning regardless of the number of players per team and even if there is a disparate amount on opposing teams and regardless of whether 3 outs are recorded.
  - b. **Outs:** Outs shall be made and encouraged. Players that are ruled out may NOT continue to run the bases.
  - c. **Lead-Off Hitter Changes Each Game:** The lineup shall be changed each game so that each player has the opportunity to bat at the top, middle and bottom of the order an equal number of times throughout the season.
  - d. **Consistent Batting Order:** The batting order must remain consistent throughout each game.
  - e. **No Bunting:** No bunting is allowed.
  - f. **No Bat Throwing:** No bat throwing. A thrown bat results in one warning per team. All subsequent

thrown bats by a player on the team that received a warning result in that batter being called out regardless of whether the ball is hit or missed, and shall not run the bases that at bat. In addition, for safety reasons, any player that throws a bat a third time in any game shall be removed from the batting order for the remainder of the game.

4. **Pitching**

- a. Coaches Pitch, Selective Use of Tees: Coaches will pitch when their own team is at bat. Pitching may be either underhand or overhand (standing or from a knee). If a player is having difficulty hitting a pitched ball, a tee—if available—should be used after a reasonable number of pitches so that the game proceeds at a reasonable pace.
- b. Pitcher Location: The pitcher may pitch from as close as he or she deems appropriate.
- c. No Strikeouts or Walks: There are no strikeouts or walks.

5. **Baserunning**:

- a. No Sliding or Contact: No sliding or contact - EVER.
- b. No Stealing or Leading: No stealing or leading is allowed.
- c. Advancing on Errors: Players must not advance beyond the next base on errors.
- d. No Tagging Up: Tagging up is not allowed.

6. **Equipment**:

- a. Balls: Use only balls approved for first grade Scarsdale Little League provided in your equipment bag.
- b. Helmets: Players must use helmets at the plate AND on the bases. No helmet - no batting or running the bases.
- c. Uniform: All players must wear their entire Scarsdale Little League uniform (cap, team shirt and baseball pants) at all times during the game. Players are encouraged to tuck in their team shirts.
- d. No Metal Cleats: No metal cleats are permitted.
- e. Bats: Wood bats or metal bats with the USABaseball stamp or with Bat Performance Factors of 1.15 or lower printed on them may be used (from January 1, 2019, only bats with the USABaseball stamp will be allowed). In short, bats allowed in the 2017 season are legal in 2018.
- f. Double First Base: A double base included in equipment bags shall be used at first base.
- g. Players Must Use a Tee: After 5 swinging strikes or 9 pitches, whichever comes first.

7. **Scoring**:

- a. Game Length: Game length shall be based on the amount of time the coaches believe the players will best tolerate, subject to field availability. Ideally, both teams will have the same number of turns at bat.
- b. Weather Delays: Once thunder is heard or lightning is seen, all players must immediately leave the field and move under cover (i.e., sit in cars). They are not to sit in dugouts. Players shall not be permitted to return to the field until 20 minutes have elapsed since the last thunder clap was heard or lightning bolt seen.
- c. No Runs: No run tally will be kept.
- d. No Win/Loss: No win/loss tally will be kept.

8. **Coaches' Roles**:

- a. Location on Defense: A maximum of two coaches may supervise the team in the field, and one of those coaches may be on the infield.
- b. Location on Offense: On offense, there may only be one coach in each of the first and third base coach's boxes, one as catcher and one pitching. All other coaches must be on the bench or otherwise

in the dugout area.

- c. Catcher: A coach shall act as the catcher to help with the batters particular needs, catch the pitched balls and make plays at home plate. The catcher may be provided by either team depending on the number of available coaches, but ideally a coach for the team hitting shall catch, to provide instruction on hitting to his or her own players.
- d. No Plays in the Field: Coaches are not permitted to make plays in the field.

9. **Setup and Organization:**

- a. Distance of Bases: Bases shall be placed on the beginning of the dirt cutouts on the field closest to the infield, or if no such cutouts exist on the field, then roughly 50 feet apart.
- b. Setting Up Field, Warm-Ups: Home team is responsible for setting up the field (bases and pitching rubber) and supplying game balls. Home and away teams split time on the field for warm-ups during the 15 minutes before game time.
- c. Location of Non-Players/Coaches: As coaches will be pitching and catching, they should encourage other parents of players to help coach the bases, get kids ready for at bats, keep kids on the bench behind fences, etc.
- d. Location of Batting Team: The batting team is to be kept behind fences and in the dugout area while waiting to bat. All players that are sitting out shall be behind fences and in the dugout area.
- e. No On-Deck Batters, Do Not Use Bats When Not Hitting: There is no "on deck" hitter. Swinging bats other than in the batter's box is not permitted during the game. No player may hold a bat unless at the plate.
- f. Clean-Up: Both teams are responsible for dugout and field cleanliness at end of game. Coaches are required to monitor trash and equipment left behind. All trash must be placed in receptacle at end of each game.

10. **Sportsmanship:**

- a. No Arguing: No arguments are to be had by players, coaches, parents or other spectators.
- b. Resolving Rule Questions: Before each game, a representative of each team shall meet (together with any umpire(s), if applicable), to discuss the ground rules for the field and go over the rules of play. If there is a question about the application of a rule, the coaches ONLY are to meet outside of earshot of parents, spectators and players and communicate civilly with one another to resolve the question. If the coaches are unable to resolve the question very promptly, play shall continue and a grade coordinator shall be notified by both coaches promptly after the game so that the question can be clarified prospectively.
- c. No Unsportsmanlike Behavior: Poor behavior, name calling or other unsportsmanlike behavior will not be tolerated from any player or adult. Players are not to comment on others' plays. No one, including spectators, should attempt to influence umpires calls (if an umpire is present)—for example, by shouting "out" or "safe" at the time an umpire must make a call on a play. Players are accountable to all coaches, not just their own. The coaches shall promote good sportsmanship at all times. It is the coaches' responsibility to monitor the parents', spectators' and players' behavior. Coach, parental, spectator or player misbehavior will result in punitive action at the discretion of Scarsdale Little League. There will be zero tolerance for poor sportsmanship at any level.
- d. Shake Hands After Games: Teams line up at the end of every game to shake hands.
- e. Reporting Violations of Rules: All violations of these rules and other inappropriate conduct shall immediately be reported to the grade coordinator and to Scarsdale Little League.