



## *Minor League Single-A Baseball Division Introduction to Player Pitching*

### **Local Rules – Effective Spring 2026**

The 2026 Little League Baseball rulebook will govern all play not specified below.

#### **Mandatory Play**

- No player shall sit out two (2) consecutive innings, nor shall any player sit out a second inning prior to all eligible players having sat out one (1) inning. No player shall sit out a third inning prior to all eligible players having sat out two (2) innings.
- All players must play at least two (2) innings in the infield and one (1) inning in the outfield. If a player does not have an opportunity to fulfill these requirements due to a shortened game, it must be fulfilled in the 1st inning of the subsequent game.
- Infield positions are defined as 1st, 2nd, and 3rd bases, as well as shortstop and pitcher. For mandatory play purposes, catcher is neither an infielder nor an outfielder position.
- Game may start with eight (8) players. Note that this is the exception and not the rule. Teams who will be at roster sizes of 10 and below for a given game should use pool players as first option. When starting with 8 players an out is called for 9th player.

#### **The Defense**

- The defense shall field a maximum of ten (10) players. The extra player must be positioned in the outfield. All outfield players shall be positioned at least 20 feet beyond the outfield grass cut.
- A player in the outfield may not make a put out in the infield unless acting as a back-up on a run down. The outfielder must throw the ball to an infielder for an out.
- During coach-pitched innings, the pitcher shall be positioned even with and within three (3) feet on either side of the pitching plate.
- The catcher shall wear all regulation protective gear to include a catcher's mitt and be positioned properly behind the plate in the catcher's box.
- During coach-pitch innings, one (1) coach may be positioned behind the catcher to retrieve balls and improve pace of play.
- During player-pitch innings when the bases are loaded, one (1) coach may be positioned behind the catcher to retrieve balls and improve pace of play.
- No other coaches are permitted to be positioned in the field of play.

#### **The Pitcher**

- Player pitch will be done throughout the entire season.
- The 1st and 2nd innings are designated as player-pitch innings. For the 3rd and subsequent innings, the coach will pitch to the batters on their own offensive team.

- Players are limited to one (1) inning as a pitcher for each calendar week. This is defined as Sunday through Saturday. This does not supersede the days of rest requirements set out in the Little League Baseball Rules and Regulations.
- **\*\*On or after May 1, 2024 (to include post-season playoffs), the LSL Board of Directors may, at its discretion, modify this rule to increase the number of player-pitched innings. If the number of player-pitched innings is increased, standard pitch count rules set out in the Little League Baseball Rules and Regulations shall govern all participation and activity as a pitcher.**
- The coach that is pitching shall be positioned within five (5) feet of the pitcher's plate in a straight line between home plate and second base. Coaches are encouraged to throw from one knee or sitting on a bucket, as opposed to fully standing. Pitches shall be made using an overhand throwing motion; **underhand or soft-toss pitches are not permitted.**
- The coach that is pitching may instruct the batter in between pitches but may not coach/instruct after delivery of the pitch.
- If the batted ball makes contact with the coach, the ball is considered live and in play.

### The Batter

- During coach-pitched innings, the batter shall be given a maximum of six (6) pitches. If the batter does not swing at the 6th or subsequent pitch, the batter shall be called out. A foul ball on the 6th or subsequent pitch cannot be counted as the last pitch.
- Strikes shall be called during coach-pitched innings. There are no walks or bases awarded due to the batter being hit by a coach-pitched ball. However, the batter will be called out upon three (3) strikes.
- Bunting is not permitted during coach-pitched innings. Bunting is permitted during player pitched innings.

### The Runner

- Runners may advance one (1) base on an overthrow at their own risk with only one advance on an overthrow on the same play per runner. If the defensive team chooses to try and make a play on the runner taking the additional base which results in ANOTHER overthrow, one additional base may be taken for each subsequent attempt made against a runner.
- Runners cannot advance to another base once the ball reaches the kid pitcher and is under their control while positioned on the pitching mound (even during coach pitch). Runner may continue to the next base in this situation but must return to the previous base if they were no more than half the distance to the advancing base at the time of the ball is under the pitcher's control.
- Runners may not advance on an overthrow while attempting to steal.
- Runners are not permitted to steal during coach-pitched innings.
- Runners are not permitted to steal home.

### Courtesy Runners

- **Courtesy Runners:** A courtesy runner may be used for the catcher at any time and for the pitcher only when there are two outs. The courtesy runner is the player who made the last out. If there have been no outs in the inning, use the last out from the previous inning. If there have been no outs in the game, the team must wait until the first out is recorded. If both the pitcher and catcher reach

base with two outs, courtesy runners are assigned in the order the runners reached base, using the most recent outs.

### The Offense

- Each half of a player-pitched inning is limited to three (3) runs or three (3) outs, whichever comes first.
- For innings other than the sixth inning, each half of a coach-pitched inning is limited to five (5) runs or three (3) outs, whichever comes first. Each team may continue rotating through their batting order until either three (3) outs or five (5) runs are scored – in other words, a batter may make more than one plate appearance in each half inning.
- In the sixth (6th) inning and subsequent innings, each half inning shall end after three (3) offensive players are legally put out, called out by an umpire, or when all players on the roster have batted **one time only** in the half inning. It does not matter if the teams have a different number of batters. (No five-run limit)

### Starting and Ending the Game

- For purposes of time limits, the game immediately starts at the conclusion of the plate conference.
- No new inning may start after 1 hour and 45 minutes.
- The game will end and there will be no pitch after 2 hours.
- An inning begins immediately upon the end of the preceding inning. Play should begin within two (2) minutes after the start of the inning.
- There will be no time limit in playoff games.

\*\*\* **Double First Base – Safety Bag:** When a double first base (orange safety bag) is present, it is in effect and must be used in accordance with LL Rule 7.15.