
NWLL COACHES MANUAL

SPRING 2026

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2026 NWLL Board Of Director Contact List			
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President	Nick Cisler	nwll.us.president@gmail.com	616-893-4579
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Secretary	Abby Bishop	nwll.us.secretary@gmail.com	616-914-8248
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2026 Division Coordinators

Baseball Divisions

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Minor 1 Baseball (Machine Pitch) Contact: Brian Keur Email: nwll.us.youthdirector@gmail.com	Minor 2 Baseball (Kid Pitch) Contact: Daniele Boeskool Email: nwll.us.baseballdirector@gmail.com
Majors Contact: Daniele Boeskool Email: nwll.us.baseballdirector@gmail.com	Juniors Contact: Daniele Boeskool Email: nwll.us.baseballdirector@gmail.com

Softball Divisions

Minor 1 Softball Contact: Sarah Bertoia Email: nwll.us.softballdirector@gmail.com	Minor 2 Softball (Kid Pitch) Contact: Sarah Bertoia Email: nwll.us.softballdirector@gmail.com
Majors Softball Contact: Sarah Bertoia Email: nwll.us.softballdirector@gmail.com	Juniors Softball Contact: Sarah Bertoia Email: nwll.us.softballdirector@gmail.com

Baseball & Softball Coaches

First, we would like to thank you for volunteering as a coach. Without you, we as a league would not be able to operate. As a coach, you are representing not only yourself and your team, but also Northwestern Little League. Coaches should display proper sportsmanship both to the opposing team and their coaches as well as to the umpires. Please remember, the kids are here to have fun and learn the game of baseball.

Field Chalking

Properly chalking a field for play is quite easy, so don't be nervous, even if it is your first time. Once you do it once, trust us, it's easy and can be done in 10 minutes or less. We chalk each field for each game; however, sometimes the lines are still fine from the previous game, or you simply need a quick touch up...or perhaps nothing at all. If you need to chalk a field from scratch, here's some basic information:

- **How to Use the Field Chalker**
 - The field Chalker's are way more expensive than you might think, so we ask that you please take good care of them. If you need help using the field Chalker please contact a NWLL Board Member.
- **Batter's Box –**
 - Proper placement of the template is the MOST important step of chalking a field.
 - Why is that? Because proper placement of the batter's box will coincide with where your foul lines connect to the box marking fair and foul territory.
 - Batter's Box Templates are located in the sheds.
 - Our templates are different than the video below, but the idea is the same. Align the guide with home plate to make an impression on the ground. Reverse the guide to make an impression for the batter's box on the other side of the plate.
 - The light indentation in the dirt from the template is where you will apply the chalk.
 - WATCH - [Setting Up a Batter's Box](#)
- **Foul Lines / Base Paths –**
 - Base Paths will need to be re-chalked far more often than the foul lines due to the wear and tear from base runners, so most of the time, you will only need to re-chalk the 1st and 3rd base lines from home plate to the outfield foul lines.
 - You can run a string line for the foul lines and we do have them in the shed, but is it needed? Not really, just eyeball it and try to keep straight. It's Little League, not the Major Leagues, so if your lines aren't perfectly straight, so be it.
 - WATCH - [How to Apply Foul Lines](#)

Field Maintenance Equipment

We are proud of our fields and have invested tens of thousands of dollars over the years in their construction, maintenance, and upkeep. Additionally, NWLL has invested thousands of dollars into high quality, professional field maintenance equipment and tools.

Our goal is to provide outstanding field conditions for our players and coaches, so we ask that you please take special care of our equipment when using it. If you are unfamiliar with some of the equipment and want to learn more, we ask that you please reach out and we will gladly walk you through what each piece of equipment is for and how it is used in maintaining the fields.

- **Field Maintenance Supplies**
 - Field maintenance supplies are located in the NWLL Shed and are available for use in preparing the fields for games. As a league, we spend almost \$2k annually for field maintenance supplies, so we ask that you use them sparingly.
 - Field Chalk.
 - Field Dry.
 - Mound/Batters' Box Clay.
 - If you are unfamiliar with how to use Field Dry and/or Mound Clay, we ask that you please refrain from using or ask to be trained on their respective use and application. Excessive use of Field Dry can be harmful to the overall condition of the infield skin.
- **Field Maintenance Equipment:**
 - Drag Mats, Leveling Bars, and Finishing Drags.
 - Hand Rakes - All Varieties.
 - Leveling Boards.
 - Field Chalker.
 - Mound and Batter's Box Tamps.

Field Setup / Clean Up

Coaches are responsible to make sure that the fields are cleaned up after their game. Please arrive early and make sure the fields have been chalked and are ready for play.

- **Field Setup (Home Team Responsibility but Both Teams can help if Available)**
 - Remove Tarps from Pitcher's Mound and Home Plate Areas- if needed.
 - Bases are in sheds nearest field.
 - Rake Infield, Batter's Box, and Pitcher's Mound Area If Needed.
 - Put Bases Out.
 - Place softball pitching mound if needed.
 - Minor 2: 35 ft
 - Major: 40 ft
 - Juniors: 43 ft
 - Chalk/Line Field including Foul Lines and Batter's Box.
 - Batter's Box Template is Located Inside Shed.
- **Field Clean Up (Both Home and Away Teams)**
 - Put Bases Back in shed.
 - Rake Infield, Mound and Home Plate Areas.
 - Make Sure Dugouts are Free of Garbage.
 - Replace Tarps on Home Plate Area and Pitcher's Mound- if needed.
 - Make Sure Tarp Does Not Overhang onto Grass.
 - Put Any Rakes/Rollers/Tractor/Equipment/etc. Back into Shed.
 - Make Sure Side and Overhead Doors to Shed are Closed and Locked if last Game/Practice of the Evening.

First Aid

- Each coach is given a first aid kit at the start of the season. If you need to restock supplies, please contact our equipment director for guidance.
- For home games- additional Ice packs can be found at the concession stand.
- AED machine is located inside of the concession stand at CPHS.

Game Rules

- Northwestern Little League follows all Little League International Rules as well as agreed upon interleague guidelines. Please refer to your Coach's Rule Book for any questions or contact your division coordinator.
- You can access the Little League Rule book and our local interleague guidelines by division by clicking below.
 - [NWLL RULES](#)
- Substitute Players: Contact your division coordinator to find sub players that you can use. These players will bat at the end of your lineup and cannot pitch.

Game Schedules

All game schedules will be released in Mid-April. Yes, we know this is very close to the start of the season and parents will be getting antsy, but it takes a lot of time to coordinate with other leagues for interleague play for those divisions that do interleague.

First games will be the week of April 20, 2026. T-ball and Junior Baseball/Softball start later than other divisions.

- **Where Can I Find My Game Schedule?**
 - All game schedules will be posted to the nwll.us website and available to view under the Team Central heading in the navigation menu. You can also view your game schedule on your Team Directory page when logged in.
- **Automated Game Notifications**
 - All parents/guardians who are registered as a primary or secondary account holder will be notified 2 days prior to each game via email showing the date, time, and location of the game from the Sports Connect platform.

Makeup Games

- If your game is canceled, please contact your division coordinator to try to reschedule. Makeup games are not guaranteed.

Player Forms

- Each player needs to have a completed Medical Release form prior to the first game.
- Each player needs to have a signed Concussion Information Sheet prior to the first game.
- These forms need to be with you at every game for each player in case of injury.
- Code of Conduct must be signed by parent and players prior to playing in first game.

Player Misconduct

- Coaches are responsible for the actions of their players and fans. Abusive language towards another team, its members, fans, or the umpires must not be tolerated.
- Code of conduct

Practices

- Once games start, coaches are responsible for scheduling their own practices using the NWLL Practice Scheduler. Generally, practices only occur up to the regular season opener. But coaches can make the call on if more practices are desired.
- Practice Field Availability will be on a first come, first served basis.
- Official cancellation of practices due to cold/hot temperatures or poor field conditions will be made by NWLL President, Vice President, and Field Maintenance Team. Coaches are free to cancel practice in other circumstances as needed.

Practice Equipment

NWLL offers a variety of practice equipment to our coaches to assist with developing our players' skill sets. All practice equipment is in the NWLL Sheds and is available for use to all teams. Please return the practice equipment to the shed when done using it.

- **Shared Practice Equipment**
 - 70' Batting Cage w/ Hitting Mat and Protective Pitching Screen.
 - Pitching Machine (Baseball and Softball Options. Please ask for help with training before use).
 - Hitting/Practice Tees.
 - Practice Balls.
- **Pitching Machine Use**
 - All coaches must be trained on the proper use of the Pitching Machine before using. If you would like to learn how to set up and use the Pitching Machine, please send an email to nwll.us.president@gmail.com or nwll.us.vicepresident@gmail.com and we will schedule a time to go over.

Practice Plan Ideas For New Coaches

When your team is formed and the season nears, it's important to put together practice plans for each practice. Keep in mind, Little League is a developmental program. Be sure to structure each practice to include fundamentals – proper hitting, fielding, base running, etc.

Try to structure your practices with little down time to keep the players' attention. And be sure to have fun and allow for plenty of water breaks. First and foremost, our goal as coaches is to make sure that the kids are having fun while they are learning the game ...win, lose, or draw.

For those volunteering at the Tee Ball or Coach Pitch Baseball levels, Little League International has created some easy-to-implement curriculum and practice ideas. Keep in mind these are simply ideas/drills, you don't need to follow them to a T (no pun intended) but will give you some good starting points.

- **Little League University**
 - The Little League website is full of great information, articles, and training videos to help you become the best coach you can be and has an entire section of the website dedicated to this.



[Tee Ball Training](#)



[Coach Pitch Training Program](#)



[Little League University - For Coaches](#)

Shed Access

- For all games and practices held at CPHS, NWLL coaches are responsible for field setup, cleanup, and put away.
- Shed codes for sheds are listed below:
 - Fields #1, 2, 5, 4, & 7 – 1975
 - Field #6 – Contact NWLL President
 - Field #3 – Contact NWLL President

Team Communications

Communications to and from your team can be done through the NWLL website (nwll.us) by clicking the “Login” button at the top right of the website. You will be redirected to the Sports Connect platform where you can login to your account.

- **Sending Emails via Sports Connect:**
 - From the login screen, click the “Visit Team Page” link located under the participant’s section.
 - On the Team Directory Page, click the “Email” Heading.
 - Generate Email and Select Recipients or Click Select All Checkbox.
 - Click Send.
 - Emails will be sent to all parents/guardians who are registered as a contact for the team member.
 - Adding Additional Contacts to a Team Member
 - As a coach, you cannot simply add additional parent/guardians to the email list, this MUST be done by the primary account holder of the team member.
 - **Instructions For Primary Account Holder to send Invite to add contact.**
 - Go nwll.us and click the login button in top right.
 - Once logged in, click the sprocket icon in the top right to edit account information.
 - From the edit account information page, there is a button at the bottom to "Add Associated Account Holder" which is where the parent/guardian would invite the additional account holder by email.
 - Once invited, you will receive an invite to create a username and password that will give you access to the joint account. The invite will come from postmaster@bluesombrero.com so be sure to check your spam folder as well if you don't see the invite.

Umpires

- These young men/women are just that, young, and need help/guidance as well. If you see something that they may have missed, please present it in an encouraging way vs “hey, you missed that”.
- Coaches should approach umpires only between innings. If there is a questionable call, ask the umpires to consult with each other before making a final judgment. If you still do not agree, you may either protest the game or ask to have the field director to become involved. Please remember that only the umpire in chief may overrule an umpire’s decision.

Weather and Cancellations:

- NWLL President or his /her designees are the only person(s) who can cancel or call games in the event of inclement weather. Determination will be made 1 hour prior to game times.
- In the event of a Tornado Watch or Warning that is in effect at game time those games will be canceled.
- Games will be called one hour before game time based on the warning status at that time.
 - Example: If there is a weekday game scheduled for 6:30 PM and there is a tornado watch in effect at 5:15 PM until 7:00 PM, the game is canceled. If at 5:15 PM they change the expiration time to 6:00 PM the game is on.
 - The same rule applies to Thunderstorm Warnings (not watches).
- In the event of lightning strikes, ALL players must be removed from the playing field. Play must not be resumed until 30 minutes have passed from the last strike or clasp of thunder.
- A coach's failure to follow this rule will be subject to disciplinary action, which may result in suspension of one game.
- If Comstock Park High School goes on a lock down or a soft lock down, games will be canceled or moved locations.