

2025 ACORN 2 SUPPLEMENTAL RULES

Year 2026

Thousand Oaks Little League Acorn 2 Division

Key Contacts for Acorn 2 in 2026

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NOTE: These rules are subject to revision at any time by the Thousand Oaks Little League Board of Directors. Any changes during the season will be appropriately communicated to all Acorn 2 Managers.

ACORN 2 RULES SYNOPSIS

- 1. Do not question umpires on judgment calls. Do not attempt to show umpires cell phone video. Live with the (potentially) bad call; win despite it.**
- 2. Games are 6 innings long, but no new inning will begin after 1:45 of game time (weekdays); 1:45 drop-dead timing on Saturdays.** It is the umpire's responsibility to determine when the time limit is reached, NOT the coaches - coaches confirm time check with umpires between innings. Once the time limit is reached, the umpire will call the last batter and that batter will complete their at-bat. Coaches can check time with umpires between innings.

The horn from the Snack Shack indicates drop dead due to darkness. In the event of a drop-dead ending, the score reverts to the last complete inning.

- 3. In the first 3 innings teams may score a maximum of 5 runs per inning (including homeruns; if 4 runs have been scored in the inning, a 3-run homerun will count as 1 additional run in the scorebook, but the players may round the bases and celebrate). Scoring in the 4th, 5th and 6th innings is unlimited.**
- 4. The Little League 10-run mercy rule (ahead by 10+ after 4 innings) applies.**
- 5. Strict “days of rest” requirements (listed below) must be adhered to for all pitchers.**

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ACORN 2 PITCHING GUIDELINES (7- AND 8-YEAR-OLDS*):

- a. No pitcher may pitch more than 50 pitches per game.**
- b. No pitcher may pitch more than 30 pitches in a single inning.**
- *Note that these are not hard count numbers; the pitcher may finish the batter.**
(If the pitcher starts a batter having thrown 47 pitches, then throws 5 pitches to the batter, his pitch count will be recorded as 50 and he must rest for two days.)
- c. Regardless of pitch count, pitchers may pitch a maximum of 3 innings or 9 outs.** (The 9 outs may be part of up to 4 innings (e.g., 1 out in 1st inning, 3 outs in innings 2 and 3, and 2 outs in inning 4) provided the pitcher is under the allowed pitch count requirements.)
- d. A pitcher is allowed a maximum of 75 pitches in each calendar week: Sunday–Saturday. The standard days of rest still apply to all pitch counts.**

*See the Little League rulebook for pitch count guidance for other ages.

Print out this chart and keep it with your equipment

Pitches	Days of Rest*
1–20	0
21–35	1
36–50	2
51–65	3
66+	4

***Days of rest are days with no pitches thrown.** If a player throws 45 pitches on Tuesday, he is required to have 2 days of rest (no pitching on Wednesday or Thursday). He would be eligible to pitch again on Friday (not to exceed 75 pitches in the calendar week).

6. Anyone who has played catcher in any part (1 pitch or more) of 4 innings is not eligible to pitch in the same game. If a player catches less than 4 innings, he maintains his full pitch count availability. But if he then throws 21+ pitches, he may not return to catcher.

7. A pitcher who has thrown 41+ pitches may not play catcher in the same game.

TOLL has a no tolerance policy in regards to the pitching rules. While scorekeepers will assist with verifying pitch counts, managers are ultimately responsible for knowing the pitch count of each pitcher. Any violation, even if by 1 pitch, will lead to a 1 game suspension

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for the team manager. Additional violations will lead to additional disciplinary action including possible removal of the manager from the team.

8. ACORN 2 OVERTHROW RULES:

Runners may advance one (1) base on an overthrow PER BATTER - example: if there is an overthrow at 1B, the base runner can advance to 2B AT THEIR OWN RISK - it is not automatic and the runner can be thrown out going to 2B. If the fielder then overthrows 2B, the runner CANNOT go to 3B and MUST stay at 2B.

FIRST HALF OF THE SEASON (Feb 21-Mar 27): Third base is frozen, meaning the runner must be batted in. Coaches should encourage catchers to try to throw runners out at third as there is no risk.

SECOND HALF OF THE SEASON (Mar 28-May 16): Third base is not frozen, and runners may score on an overthrow, passed ball, etc.

9. ACORN 2 WALK RULES:

FIRST HALF OF THE SEASON (Feb 21-Mar 27): There are no walks. When a batter receives a fourth ball, a registered coach from the hitter's team will take the mound to pitch **a maximum of 4 pitches**. The following rules apply:

- A. The strike count carries over.** There are no called strikes from the coach, only swinging strikes. Foul balls are not third strikes.
- B. After the coach delivers 4 pitches, the player is out unless the ball is hit and put in play.** The only exception to this rule is on foul balls.
- C. Runners may not advance unless the ball is hit. (No stealing when the coach is pitching.)**
- D. Coaches may not field the ball and must give the pitcher the right of way to the ball. If, while pitching, a coach is hit by a batted ball or interferes with the play (intentional or not), the batter is out and runners must return to their original bases.**
- E. The coach must throw overhand and keep one foot on the rubber.** Note that kneeling is allowed, as long as one foot is on the rubber.
- F. If the coach hits the batter, the batter does not take first base and the pitch counts.**

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SECOND HALF OF THE SEASON (Mar 28-May 16): Walks count; on ball 4, the batter takes first base and forces runners ahead a base as applicable, with the exception of the bases loaded. **On ball 4 with the bases loaded, a registered coach shall come on to pitch with the same rules as for walks in the first half of the season.**

10. ACORN 2 HIT-BY-PITCH RULES:

FIRST HALF OF THE SEASON (Feb 21-Mar 27): When hit by a player pitch, **at the player's discretion (not the coach's)**, they may stay in the box and have the registered coach come in to pitch with the same rules as for walks, **with the exception that the ball/strike count goes back to zero**. If the player chooses to take first base, they will be awarded first base from the umpire. This is done to help the players get back in the box again ASAP, hopefully helping them not to be afraid in their next at bat of a pitched ball. **These rules apply with the bases loaded.**

SECOND HALF OF THE SEASON (Mar 28-May 16): Hit by pitch results in the batter proceeding to first base under all circumstances (including bases loaded).

11. ACORN 2 STRIKE ZONE:

The Strike zone is always the umpires call, however umpires are instructed to use the following guidelines:

FIRST HALF OF THE SEASON (Feb 21-Mar 27): The strike zone is from the shoulders to the knees and **the lines of the batter's box (this means white to white)**.

SECOND HALF OF THE SEASON (Mar 28-May 16): The strike zone is from the chest to the knees and **inside edges of the batter's box**.

NOTE THAT TAKE SIGNS ARE NOT ALLOWED IN ACORN 2; HAVE YOUR BATTERS SWING

12. No delayed stealing from any base.

13. Bunts are allowed (but not if the coach is pitching).

14. No swinging of bats inside or outside the dugout, including in the batting cage.

15. Final regular season standings determine playoff seeding. Throughout the playoffs the home team will be determined based on regular season standings, regardless of winners'/losers' bracket status. The team that finished higher in the regular season standings

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will be the home team in the playoffs. Tiebreakers: (a) head-to-head record; (b) runs allowed; (c) runs scored; (d) coin flip.

17. No balks will be called – this is a learning environment. Pitcher's foot must be on the rubber prior to his/her forward motion.

18. When the coach is pitching, the pitcher (player) must keep one foot on the mound (dirt) during each pitch.

19. All players are REQUIRED to play at least one inning (3 consecutive outs) in the infield during every game, unless doing so would be a safety hazard (e.g., they can't protect themselves). Safety hazards must be approved by the Division Director and VP–Baseball. Catcher is considered an infield position.

20. Acorn 2 teams may play with a minimum of 8 players. Any team with fewer than 8 will forfeit to the opposing team. Teams will have a 15-minute grace period to field 8 players before the game is called a forfeit by the umpire. To obtain a pool player, contact Steve Colgate Registrar and Player Agent, via text message (916-532-9559) with as much warning as possible (at least 2 days before the game). Pool Players are not allowed to be used in the playoffs.

21. USA bats required. No T-ball bats allowed (they will get destroyed). 26-inch USA bats (non-T-ball) are allowed.

22. A manager or coach may come out once in one inning to visit with the pitcher, but the second time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher. A visit to the pitcher's mound to attend to an injured player does not count as a mound visit.

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The Acorn Division is an instructional and developmental division of Thousand Oaks Little League. While the players are introduced to competition at this level, the main focus of this division is to prepare the players for the jump to the minor/major divisions. We are here to teach. The managers and coaches of the Acorn 2 Division are not in competition with each other. While baseball is a game with an objective of winning, let the players provide their own pressure to win. At this level, we are to stress the learning of baseball skills to be used as part of a team to obtain the goal of winning a game.

Medical releases (signed in blue ink) MUST be in possession of the manager or designated coach in the manager's absence for all games, practices and whenever the manager/coach is supervising the players. Make color copies for your coaches.

Practice

1. There are no more than three team assemblies per week. This means that you may have three practices per week before games are played. After Opening Day, you can only get together with the team a total of three times. If you have two games a week, you may only practice once. If you have one game, then you may practice twice. There shall be no use of Colina fields for practice on Sundays or days not scheduled by the division VP. Violators will lose all use of Colina fields for practice.
2. There may be conflicts regarding the right to practice fields. The manager holding the permit from the granting agency has rights to the field during the specified time periods. Yield to the permit holder. If there has been a conflict of permits lines, call the VP of the league or a TOLL Board Member ASAP. To prevent a problem, yield the field until the conflict can be resolved. Do not call the agency owning the field (CRPD or CVUSD). The TOLL Board will resolve the issue as fast as possible. Managers switching practice fields must also provide the permit or a copy if used short term.
3. You (Manager and or designated coach) are responsible for the actions of your team (including players, coaches, family members, associates of the player) at the practice fields.
4. Medical releases will be in possession of the manager or designated coach in the manager's absence for all games, practices and whenever the manager is supervising the players. Make copies for your coaches.

Conduct

1. Managers are responsible for their conduct and the conduct of their coaches, players, family members and associated fans. Misconduct (including foul or inappropriate language) will not be tolerated.
2. ***Managers and coaches of opposing teams will never debate umpire decisions.***

WARNING: This is your only warning regarding conduct with umpires:

- A. Only the team manager has the right to consult with the umpire. All coaches must go through their team manager.

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B. To approach an umpire from the dugout or a coaching position, time out must be called after the play is over. In addition, the opposing manager or designated coach shall be called in to discuss the play in question.

C. Judgment calls by the umpire cannot be disputed. Misinterpretations of the rules may be questioned in a non-argumentative manner. If you do not agree with the umpire regarding a non-judgment call, you can file a protest immediately prior to play resuming. Make sure the scorekeeper documents the protest. Call the Acorn 2 Division Director immediately after the game.

D. Abusive conduct toward an umpire is cause for immediate ejection from the game, and potential suspension from future games

E. Physical contact with the umpire is assault and cause for arrest.

F. All misconduct by managers and coaches will be brought before the board and have a long-lasting effect on future coaching positions.

3. If a manager, coach, or player is ejected from a game by an umpire or removed by a TOLL board member, that person must leave the Colina playfield immediately and have no further involvement with the game. Failure to do so will result in revocation of all playing or coaching privileges.

4. If a manager, coach, or player is ejected from the game, he or she is suspended for the rest of that game and the next regularly scheduled game. At the discretion of the BOD, Longer suspension and/or disqualification for the entire season and future coaching may be issued pending the severity of the offense. The ejected manager, coach, or player must meet with the disciplinary committee before they may return to the field.

5. Teams (Players, Managers, Coaches, Family Members, and associated fans) will only cheer in support of their team and should not engage in any taunting or conduct directed to distract the other team or demean an opponent (e.g., make other pitcher nervous or make a batter nervous). In the event any such conduct occurs, please notify umpire of what has occurred and contact a TOLL board member.

Game Times

1. The game clock starts at the scheduled game time. NO EXCEPTIONS. Subsequent games will start at the scheduled time. If unforeseen league operational circumstances cause a delay, a delayed start must be approved by the Division Direction or VP of Baseball.
2. Games are scheduled for six innings with no minimum innings requirements. Games tied after six innings may continue within time parameters. No subsequent games will be delayed – NO EXCEPTIONS.

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3. If a game is called for time, darkness, or weather, the official score will be the score at the end of the last full inning.
4. Ties count as $\frac{1}{2}$ win $\frac{1}{2}$ loss for team standings.
5. **For all games, no new inning starts after 1:45 (weekdays); 1:45 drop-dead timing applies on Saturdays.** An airhorn from the Snack Shack will blow to indicate the immediate stopping of all games (e.g., due to darkness or inclement weather).
6. New pitcher warm-ups are 10 pitches, otherwise 6 pitches. Managers and umpires will expedite warm-ups and reduce time between innings whenever possible. Regardless of the time left in the game, new pitchers are allowed to warm up properly to help avoid injury. Under Little League rules, managers and coaches may warm up pitchers on the field or in the bullpen.
7. Intentional time delays (e.g., switching pitchers for no reason other than to delay the game) to win a game due to time limits will result in sanctions, and possible loss of that game no matter the score.

Game Day

1. The visiting team is responsible for the following field prep:
 - A. Provide one trash can for each side of the field.

- B. See TOLL Field Prep document for field duties.

EXPECTATION: For the first game of the day, the field should be ready for warm-ups and play a minimum of 30 minutes prior to the scheduled game time.

2. During field prep, all unusual circumstances or safety issues found will be communicated to the other manager and the umpires prior to the start of the game. If the issue involves the safety of the players and cannot be resolved, contact a board member for assistance.

- 3. The home team is responsible for the following after the game:

- A. Remove all trash from both sides of the field, dugout and stands, deposit in dumpster and store the can.

- B. See TOLL Field Prep document for field care duties.

- C. Return bases and maintenance equipment to the shed and lock it if last game of day.

D. Last games of the day: The home team manager or coach must stay with the snack shack crew until they leave. Please advise them, who you are, the Acorn 2 team you are from and that you will be staying. If a board member is present, they may relieve you of your responsibility. **Violations of this rule will result in sanctions of the manager.**

4. Both teams are responsible for the cleanliness of the maintenance sheds. Hoses must be coiled and hung. Tools must be neatly arranged. Clean up all chalk.

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5. Both teams must provide a scorekeeper for each game. The home team is responsible for the official league scorebook.

6. Both teams are responsible for:

A. Rating the umpire(s) via the Umpire Evaluation Form

B. Filing any protests.

C. Notifying Acorn 2 Division Director of any problem.

7. Smoking, the use of tobacco products, and the consumption of alcohol are not permitted at any time. Please advise your players' parents.

8. Players must stay in the dugout when not in play. Exceptions are restroom trips only. Parents are not permitted in the dugouts (team parent is OK if a coach is not available).

9. Medical releases must be present at each practice and game. Acorn VP and safety officer must be contacted ASAP for all injuries that cause the player to seek medical attention.

10. Discipline problems and conflicts with parents and or associated family members are always a possibility. Please contact Acorn 2 VP or TOLL Board member for assistance. Address potential problems early before they get bigger.

11. No More than 3 coaches in the dugout at any time.

An adult needs to remain in the dugout at all times throughout the game.