

VIRGINIA DISTRICT 7

LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL

Hampton • Newport News • Poquoson • York County
DEER PARK, HAMPTON-WYTHE, NORTHAMPTON, PHOEBUS, POQUOSON, WARWICK, YORK,
CHALLENGER

D7 INTERLEAGUE GROUND RULES – Fall 2021

Note: These rules are in affect for all interleague play. Exception: If a league is playing interleague games SOLELY between themselves (i.e. YCLL Am/Nat), they are not bound by these interleague ground rules. However, the local rules used must meet minimum Little League Regulation rules and be approved by the District prior to the season.

GENERAL RULES & REGULATIONS

1. All games must be played in accordance with the 2021 Official Little League Rulebook, D7 Interleague Rules and regulations with exceptions as listed in this document.
2. All Volunteers (Managers, Coaches, Team Moms, Umpires, and Volunteers) must submit and complete a background check before any volunteer can be allowed to participate in a practice, game or team event.
3. An adult, who is an approved volunteer, **MUST** be present in the dugout at **ALL TIMES**.
4. Local ground rules apply to interleague ONLY where they pertain to the field themselves or the locality and will impact the game (i.e. overhead wires, trees, city/county ordinance etc.) and agreed to at start of game between umpire and both teams. Local ground rules where they apply to the field themselves will be posted on the D7 website under the Field Location links.
5. All protests will come through the league president to D7 within 24 hours (email) and the home league will provide umpire's letter within 24 hours to D7 (email). The Protest Committee will consist of both league presidents involved in game, two D7 staff and the District Administrator (DA). All forfeits will be decided by the D7 DA, and not by the team Managers/Coaches, League Administrators or Umpires.
6. If COVID-19 restrictions are in place, teams will follow all guidelines that are in place by their respective state and local government and health officials. Teams should be encouraged not to congregate and to enforce social distancing measures. Socially distant high fives are strongly encouraged. All post-game handshake lines will not be permitted.
7. In the event of a positive case or potential exposure, all leagues are responsible for following their coordinated safety plan.
8. Fall Ball is an instructional league. Managers and coaches should work together with opponents to facilitate a safe, fun, and learning environment. Understand that there is a different caliber of players in Fall Ball with the 2022 Little League Age Chart being used, there is a lot of opportunity for development and instruction with the players.

SCHEDULING INFORMATION

1. Leagues will provide/share D7 with Manager/Coach/Scheduler/Coordinator contact information, as appropriate, prior to the season start to help facilitate communication between leagues. D7 will distribute this information to the leagues.
2. Teams must arrive at games at least 30 minutes prior to start of games.
3. All games shall start on time if no games being played before; or games start no later than 30 minutes after previous game is over (start and stop time must be annotated on Home team scorebook).



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- Games canceled due to weather or field being unavailable will be played on the next available open date scheduled between the two league Presidents (or appointed official).

LEAGUE REQUIREMENTS

- The **HOME TEAM** will provide and ensure the following:
 - Umpires (Games WILL NOT be played without at least a plate umpire). If no are umpires present; the managers will arrange for an umpire as per rule book, or the game will not be played. The umpire can either umpire behind the catcher or the pitcher's mound.
 - Game approved balls (visiting teams will have additional game approved balls available).
 - Official Scorekeeper with the official scorebook and pitch count record. NOTE: Even if there is a central/master scorekeeper, the HOME TEAM's score book must annotate the official game information.
 - Playable field conditions with the correct distances for base paths and pitching locations. The field should be lined with chalk/spray paint with a minimum of the first base/third base foul lines and batter boxes.
 - In the event that a mound is not available, artificial mounds are authorized at all divisions as necessary. Pitchers will wear "non-metal" cleats while pitching.

SPORTSMANSHIP & DECISION MAKING

- ALWAYS think about the best interests of the children/player when out on the field and make decisions accordingly. Please use common sense. Always consider safety, building self-confidence, fairness, leading by example and most of all, FUN!
- In the spirit of sportsmanship and to provide a wide range of experience, player should be rotated as many positions as possible during a game. Be fair and allow each player to experience in position but keep in mind that some players may not be capable of playing some of the more difficult positions for safety reasons.

MANAGERS & COACHES

- All Volunteers (Managers, Coaches, Team Moms, Umpires, and Volunteers) must submit and complete a background check before any volunteer can be allowed to participate in a practice, game or team event.
- An adult, who is an approved volunteer, MUST be present in the dugout at ALL TIMES. The adult in the dugout should maintain order and discipline in the dugout and may not leave the dugout during the game and cannot be involved with play on the field during the game.
- Maximum number of coaches allowed on the field or in the dugout is contingent on the division:
 - 1 Manager & 3 Coaches (T-Ball, Coach Pitch, Minor Leagues – Baseball & Softball)
 - 1 Manager & 2 Coaches (Major, Intermediate, Junior & Senior Leagues – Baseball & Softball)
- T-BALL, COACH PITCH/MACHINE PITCH BASEBALL/SOFTBALL: While the team is on defense, two coaches can be allowed on the field to assist and provide instruction but must be positioned behind the base paths and cannot interfere with any play. Defensive coaches should verbally direct but not physically touch the players to assist in making plays.

GAME PRELIMINARIES



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1. **TIME:** All games will last 6 innings (7 innings for Intermediate, Junior, Senior Leagues) or until the time limit expires. If the time limit expires in the middle of the inning, the current inning **MUST** be completed. A new inning begins immediately at the conclusion of the third out of the previous inning. No new inning will begin once the time limit has expired. The official start time of the game will start at the completion of the home plate meeting between the coaches and umpires. It is the umpire's "judgement" in establishing the start and end time of the game.
 - a. **T-BALL:** 1hr time limit.
 - b. **COACH PITCH:** 1hr 30minute time limit.
 - c. **MINORS & ABOVE (Baseball & Softball):** 1h 45minute time limit.
2. **BATTING ORDER:**
 - a. A continuous batting order is mandatory (Rule 4.04) for ALL leagues. All team members who are present at the beginning of the game will be put in the batting lineup and must be followed in that order until the game is over.
3. A minimum of eight (8) players is needed to play a regulation game. Teams with only 8 players present will use a batting order consisting of 8 players and **WILL NOT** be charged an out in the final spot of the batting order. If a player arrives after the game begins, that player will be inserted into the lineup in the final spot. If an opposing team has additional players, the team can lend players to allow for more opportunities for players to play.
 - a. **T-BALL & COACH PITCH:** If a team does not have the minimum number of players required, the game may still be played and the coaches will work together to ensure maximum participation and learning is achieved with those players that are present. There will be no forfeits.
4. All games regardless of division will have a five (5) run limit per inning unless three (3) outs are recorded by the defensive team. The five (5) run rule is suspended for the final inning (6th for Minor & Major, 7th for Intermediate, Junior & Senior Leagues)
5. The 10 run and 15 run rules apply to all games per Rule 4.10(e).
6. **ALL DIVISIONS:** Players must play in the field on defense at least every other inning. No player shall sit two consecutive innings.
7. **PITCHING RULES (Minors & Above – Both Baseball & Softball):** All standard pitching rules apply with one additional restriction. No pitcher may pitch more than **THREE** innings in one game. A single pitch delivered in an inning will count as one inning.
8. **SPECIFIC COACH/MACHINE PITCH RULES:**
 - a. **EQUIPMENT**
 - i. Either a Machine or a Coach may be used and may be different between the teams. However, teams may not use a combination and must use the same method throughout the game unless an equipment malfunction persists. The speed of a machine, if used, is determined at the beginning of the game and will not be adjusted during the game.
 - ii. **COACH PITCH SOFTBALL:** Only an 11-inch Reduced Injury Factor softball ball are authorized for play.

- b. **OFFENSE**



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- i. The team on OFFENSE will supply a coach to pitch to their own team's batters. The Coach-Pitcher is encouraged to pitch from the regulation pitching rubber but may move closer to the batter as necessary to promote pitching accuracy but will remain within five feet of the pitcher's mound.
 - ii. For the first half of the season, a Tee may be used after the 5th hittable pitch. Starting October 16, 2021, the Tee will no longer be used and each batter will get a maximum of six (6) hittable pitches from the Coach per batter. If the batter has not hit the ball fair or strikes out in six pitches, providing the batter did not foul off the 6th pitch, an out will be declared. If a batter swings and misses at any pitch, regardless of location, it is a strike and does count as one of the six hittable pitches. If a batted ball is hit and coach pitcher, the ball shall remain live and is played just as if it hit the pitching rubber. (NOTE: When the Tee is used, the ball must be hit at least 12 feet from the back corner of home plate).
 - iii. When the coach begins his or her pitching motion to the plate, the DEFENSE must have a player playing the pitcher position within 10 feet of the pitching rubber. This player should be positioned to the right or left of the adult pitching coach. It is encouraged to have a drawn 8-foot circle around the pitching rubber but it is not mandatory.
 - iv. Leading off bases, stealing, and bunting is prohibited.
 - v. Since no balls/strikes are called, there will not be walks or hit by pitches at this level.
 - vi. On balls hit into the outfield, the batter and other base runners may advance at risk until the ball is returned to the infield dirt. Coaches must stop base runners once the ball is returned to the infield. The ball does not have to be in possession of an infield player for this rule to apply. The object is to reward a good hit while at the same time refraining from exploiting the development of defensive skills.
 - vii. A batter/runner may only advance one base on a batted ball to the infield that DOES NOT reach the outfield grass. The batter/runner MAY NOT advance on overthrows.
 - viii. Runners running outside the base lines to avoid a tag will be called out.
 - ix. There is no on-deck warm up area. No players can swing a bat prior to approaching the plate.
- c. DEFENSE
- i. A maximum of ten (10) players will be assigned to fielding positions. Any players present in addition to the ten (10) assigned in the field will remain on the bench during the defensive portion of the inning. The only players allowed on the infield dirt are those players assigned to an infield position including pitcher and catcher. The remaining players will be assigned to outfield positions and placed in the outfield grass. A team mom, coach, or manager must remain in the dugout with the players at all times. Players will NOT be left alone in the dugout.
 - ii. As required by Little League rules, all players MUST play a minimum of two complete innings assigned to a defensive position.
 - iii. When the coach begins his or her pitching motion to the plate, the DEFENSE must have a player playing the pitcher position within 10 feet of the pitching rubber. This player should be positioned to the right or left of the adult pitching coach. It is encouraged to have a drawn 8-foot circle around the pitching rubber but it is not mandatory.



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9. MAJOR BASEBALL – Rules 6.05(b) and 6.09(b) in relation with the dropped third strike will apply for Interleague Play.
10. MINOR SOFTBALL DIVISION ONLY:
- a. A modified coach pitch scenario will be used. The pitcher will pitch to each batter until that batter is retired or reaches base safely or achieves a count of three balls. When the count reaches three balls, an adult member of the OFFENSE coaching staff will pitch to the batter until the batter is either retired or reaches base safely. When the adult coach pitches, only strikes will count. The batter will either be retired on strikes, hits the ball and is retired, or reach base safely by hitting the ball (the batter is not permitted to walk). An adult **OFFENSE** coach will take a position behind the pitcher so as to be available when needed and is permitted to coach the players on the field but not interfere with the play of the game.
 - b. When the adult coach is pitching:
 - i. The player playing the position of pitcher will take a position either to the right or left of the adult coach (but no closer to the plate than the pitching rubber) in order to field her position.
 - ii. No base runner can advance stealing or because of a wild pitch/passed ball when the adult coach is pitching.
 - iii. Bunting is allowed at all times even when the adult is pitching.
 - c. A base runner may attempt to advance to second or third as the result of a passed ball or wild pitch delivered by the pitch but may not attempt to score on a passed ball or wild pitch delivered by the pitcher OR adult pitcher. A base runner that advances as the result of a passed ball, wild pitch, stolen base or over throw may advance one base only per batter. A base runner may not attempt to score on an overthrow from the throwback to the pitcher from the catcher.



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