

KETTLE MORAINÉ YOUTH BASEBALL

LITTLE LEAGUE RULES

2021

Revision 1.92

02/09/2021

Little League Rules

2021

National Federation of State High School (NFHS) and WIAA rules will apply, with the following clarifications and exceptions:

A. Age Restrictions

1. Age cut-off date: May 1st.
 - No player may be 13 years of age prior to May 1st of the seasonal year

A.1 Player Restrictions

1. Each player participant may only be listed on one roster and play for only one team per division in the league.
 - If extra players are needed, they must be brought up from the Junior Little League division.
 - Both coaches should discuss this at the pregame conference.

B. Player Equipment

1. Protective cups are recommended for all players.
2. Steel spikes are **not** allowed.
 - Round, steel tipped plastic cleats are permissible
3. Catchers **must** wear protective cups, helmet, face mask (or combination) **and** dangling throat protector.
4. Face shields are allowed but must be clear.
5. Helmets must be worn by all offensive players at all times while on the playing field. Helmets may not be removed for any reason, without permission of the umpire, while the ball is live and while the player is in live ball territory.
 - Bat boys and base coaches under 18 **must** also wear helmets at all times while on the field
6. Players from each team shall be in proper baseball uniform, preferably with a minimum of matching hat and jersey.

C. Bats

1. Wood bats are allowed.
 - 2-3/4" maximum diameter
2. Aluminum or Composite bat size:
 - 2-5/8" **maximum** diameter
 - **No weight drop restrictions**
 - **Must be a USSSA or USA certified bat**

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D. Baseballs

- 2 new and 1 like new league approved baseballs to be provided by the home team
- new/like new baseball to be provided by the visiting team

E. All diamonds to have 65 foot bases and 50 foot pitching rubber

1. Double first bases are not required and not recommended.

2. If no batter's box is marked, the batter cannot stand more than one bat length behind the mid-point of homeplate.
 - One warning shall be given

F. The A.H. (additional hitter) is encouraged but not mandatory

- A team may insert an additional hitter into its lineup. However, **the batting order must remain constant** throughout the game. Any nine of the ten players listed in the line-up may take any defensive position during the course of the game
- Failure to declare such a hitter prior to the game precludes the use of an A.H. during that game
- The D.H. (designated hitter) rule does not apply to this league

F.1 Rule clarification:

- Once a player, either a starter or a substitute, has batted in one position in the lineup, he must **always** bat in that spot, regardless of where he plays on defense
- If using the A.H during the game, batting 10 or more and playing 9, (which is recommended when there are 10 or more players), and one of the players is injured or has to leave the game, with no eligible substitutes left, the batting order will drop to 9 players (skip the missing batter) with no out assessed
- If the number of eligible players drops to 8, the game will continue but an out will be issued every time the missing batter's spot comes up in the lineup
- If the number of players drops below 8, the game will be forfeited by the offending team

F.2 Continuous Batting Order

- A continuous batting order may be used by either one or both teams and must be declared prior to the start of the game
- If a player leaves the game there is an automatic out **the next time** his spot comes up in the batting order.
 - once the out is taken, the player **may not** return to the game

G. There may be no more than 9 players in the field on defense.

- The game may start with 8 players but the 9th position will be an automatic out each time through the line-up until a player fills that position.

H. Courtesy runner may be used at any time for the pitcher or catcher of record.

- The same player may **not** be used for both in the same inning, must **not** be in the game and may **not** be used as a substitute for any other player in the same ½ inning.
- If no eligible player is available, the player who made the last out may run for the catcher or pitcher
- A courtesy runner for the catcher after 2 outs is **suggested** but not mandatory
- Pitcher/catcher of record means the player in those positions the previous defensive inning.
- In the case of the visiting team, in the 1st inning, it is the player who will pitch or catch in the bottom of the inning.

I. Modified re-entry rule applies.

- Any of the players (starters or substitutes), may be withdrawn and re-entered once, including the A.H. **The batter must occupy the same batting position whenever he is in the line-up.** In the event of an injury with no officially available players to replace the injured player, re-entry of any player will be allowed.

J. Pitching Rules

1. Pitchers can pitch **no more** than 3 innings in any one game.

2. Pitchers can pitch 6 innings every 3 days.

- one pitch constitutes an inning
 - enforcement of pitching restraints is the coach's responsibility, **not** the umpires
3. Balks will **NOT** be called.

J.1 Pitcher re-entry rule.

1. Once a pitcher is removed as a pitcher, he may only return to the pitching position one more time.

- The 3 inning maximum pitch rule above still applies

2. The pitching rules under section J above apply to the league sponsored tournaments only.

- individual community tournaments may set their own pitching restrictions with good sportsmanship and player's welfare in mind

K. Sliding Rules

There is a modified mandatory slide rule. (Ref. NFHS rule 8-4-2).

TWO MAIN POINTS OF THE RULE:

1. The force play slide rule (same as the NFHS rule):

NFHS Summary:

Any runner who is in a force play **must** either slide directly into the base **or** run himself out of the play, avoiding contact with the fielder. If this is not done, this is considered interference, the runner is out, the batter/runner is out for a double play, and all other runners return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch. **The runner may not "take out the fielder" to break up a double play.**

- If the runner slides it **must** be a legal slide according to the book rule
- If the second baseman is on the bag, the runner makes a legal slide and there is contact, interference shall not be called

2. Plays at the plate – NFHS summary-**MODIFIED**:

When there is a potential play at the plate, the runner **must** make a legal slide and attempt to avoid contact, **unless the act of sliding is potentially more dangerous than the act of not sliding.**

-This is an umpire judgment call.

The catcher has the right to be in the base path to field the thrown ball but may not deny **some** access to the plate. The runner is responsible for avoiding contact.

- If the catcher is not attempting to receive a thrown ball and is in the base path, he has committed obstruction and the runner is awarded home
- The runner has the right to re-establish his base path by running no more than 3 feet to either side of the base path to avoid contact
- If the runner does not attempt to avoid contact and there is incidental contact, then this will be a judgment call by the umpire
- If the runner commits malicious contact, the runner is out and ejected
 - intentional charging with dropped shoulder, elbows/forearms flying are some examples of malicious contact

-Malicious contact supersedes obstruction

3. NO head first slides.

- Runner is out if he/she slides head first while **advancing** a base

- **Retreating** to a base head first is allowed

L. Game Length

1. Each game shall be 6 innings in duration.
2. WIAA ten run rule **will** apply.
 - If a team is behind by 10 or more runs after 5 innings of play (4-1/2 innings if the home team is ahead by 10 runs – does **not** have to be equal at bats) it shall be considered a complete game
 - Coaches can agree to continue playing **without** keeping score (the official game is over), to benefit and help the players learn, as long as it is done in a “**sportsmanlike**” fashion
3. Games shortened due to weather are official after 4 innings (3-1/2 innings if the home team is leading)
4. If a game is called due to lack of daylight, it is considered a suspended game and should be finished from the exact point where it was when called (inning, line-up, score, etc.).
 - If agreed upon by both coaches, the game may be considered complete at this time.

M. Rainouts/Cancellations

1. Every effort must be made to play every league game.
2. In the event of a rainout, the home team must notify the visiting team 1 hour prior to game time.

+++++This means talking to the coach, not simply leaving a message+++++

3. Re-scheduling postponed games shall be the responsibility of the home team.
 - Both teams must mutually agree to the time and place of rescheduled games
 - All rescheduled games should be completed 5 days prior to playoff/championship games if possible
 - If an agreement is not reached, the league officers **must** be notified immediately
 - League officials will reschedule as needed

M.1 Reschedule guidelines

- Most school functions are known far enough in advance that in the event of a necessary reschedule, the teams should be able to notify each other **at least a week ahead of scheduled game time**.
- We all know emergencies and rainouts happen and there is nothing that can be done about that; However, in all other cases, **every effort should be made to contact the opposing team at least 7 days ahead of time to reschedule games**
- Be courteous and “gentlemanly” about the whole reschedule deal

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M.2 Forty eight hour cancellation rule –Effective 5/1/2011

1. Barring any emergencies (death of a player or coach), inclement weather, or acts of God, government, or war, any game canceled less than 48 hours prior to the scheduled game time will be declared a forfeit with a loss being awarded to the canceling team and a win awarded to the other team.
 - The score will be recorded as 7-0 for league standings purposes.

N. Scoring and reporting

1. The home team will be the official scorekeeper for league games and **must** provide an official scorekeeper.
 - The winning team is **required** to e-mail (this is the **preferred method** of correspondence) the results, including winner, loser and score within 24 hours to: The League Director or Scorekeeper of the League.

Umpires/Sportsmanship

1. Home team to provide **2 qualified umpires**.
 - Minimum age – 16 years old
 - Every effort should be made to have at least one **(1) WIAA certified umpire for each game**
 2. Umpires must conduct a pre-game conference approximately 5 minutes prior to game time. - Ground rules shall **not** supersede a rules book rule
 3. Arguing umpire judgment calls is prohibited.
 - Strikes/balls and fair/foul balls are some examples of judgment calls
 4. The umpires will have the right and the responsibility to end a game due to unsafe playing conditions.
 - If a game is ended prior to six innings, then five complete innings will constitute an official game
 - 4 and ½ innings if the home team is ahead at the time the game is ended
 - The players' safety should be everybody's main concern
 5. Unsportsmanlike conduct/taunting by coaches, players, and fans will not be tolerated.
 - - Coaches will be held responsible for the actions of their players and fans
 6. Electronic recording devices may be used for coaching purposes during the course of the game.
 - - Cell phone use, texting, etc. is prohibited in the dugouts except **for emergencies**
- 6.1 Electronic devices are **not allowed** in the coaches boxes.
- Exception: cell phones may be in the base coaches' possession but not held in their hands or in use while on the field of play except in the case of an emergency.
 - The NFHS instituted this rule due to safety concerns.
 - Failure to comply will result in an automatic ejection and possible forfeiture

P. Ejections

1. Any coach or player ejected from a game will automatically be suspended for the next game.
 - This is the **minimum** punishment and league officials may impose additional penalties if warranted
- 1A. For the second ejection in a season, the individual will automatically be suspended for the next 2 games.
 - This is also the **minimum** punishment and league officials may impose additional penalties if warranted
1. B. For the third ejection in a season, the individual will be removed from the permanently.

-This means forever-

2. Coach Ejection: If a coach is ejected from a game, the coach **must** leave the park/stand area.
 - There shall be **no** electronic communication from ejected coach/coaches to any person or player associated with or involved with said game
 - The Umpire should issue a warning prior to ejecting a coach, for minor infractions only.
 - Major infractions require no warning to be given
 - League officials may impose additional penalties against the ejected coach/coaches if warranted
 - If an assistant coach is not present to continue the game, the game will end in a forfeit
3. Fan Ejection: Coaches are reminded to tell their umpires that they have the authority to eject a disruptive

fan.

- Coaches are responsible for their fans
 - Game will be put on hold until disruptive fan/fans are removed from the park/stand area - If the situation cannot be resolved, the game may result in a forfeiture by the disruptive team - Sufficient verbal warning should be given before the ejection takes place
 - No umpire or coach should have physical contact with a disruptive fan
 - If necessary, police should be called
4. All coach and player ejections must be reported to league officials by the home team when reporting the game score.
- League officials are required to verify ejections with both teams and notify the next opposing team of the upcoming suspension

Q. Base Running

1. Base runners **must** stay on their base until after the pitch leaves the pitcher's hand. Thereafter, the runner may lead off and steal any base **except home**. If the runner leaves the base before the ball leaves the pitcher's hand, the runner is out (umpire's judgment - no warning given).

-This will be an immediate dead ball and the pitch will not be allowed-

- Any action that results from the delivery of the pitch will be null and void. Batters and runners (except those called out for leaving early) return to base occupied at the time of the pitch
2. Base runner may attempt to steal home **only** if the defense **intentionally** (per umpire's judgment) attempts to make a play on him or any other base runner. Base runner **may not** attempt to steal home on a wild pitch, passed ball, or on a routinely thrown ball (from the catcher or another position player) that gets away from the pitcher. The purpose of this rule is to reduce the number of collisions at the plate.

R. Dropped Third Strikes

1. Batter is automatically out on dropped third strike with bases loaded and two outs. The purpose of this rule is to avoid collisions at home plate. **This differs from WIAA and Pony League rules.**
2. Batter may attempt to reach base on a dropped third strike if there are **less** than two outs and first base is unoccupied, **or**, if there are two outs and the bases are not loaded. However, in accordance with Rule Q2, **a base runner may not attempt to advance to home unless the defense intentionally makes a play on him, the batter or another base runner.**

S. Bunt Rule.

- Bunting is allowed
- **Slash bunting is not allowed.**
A slash bunt is an attempt made by the batter to draw the infield in by "showing" bunt and then swinging away.
- Because this is a safety issue, **there are no exceptions.**

-This is an umpire judgment call

T. Miscellaneous

1. Approved game balls:

- Rawlings-RLLB/R100HS/RPLB/RS-T
- Wilson-A1010HS1/A1010B
- Diamond-DOLA/DSSL/DINFHS/DPL
- Baseball Express – BB XHS

