

KETTLE MORAINÉ YOUTH BASEBALL

JUNIOR LITTLE LEAGUE RULES 2021

Junior 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 11 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 can be brought up from the Pee-Wee division or see exception below

Exception:

Eight (8) year olds may participate on more than one Junior Little League division team in their community but only if needed.

- Both coaches must discuss and agree on this exception at the pregame conference.

B. Player Equipment

1. Protective cups are recommended for all male players.

2. Steel spikes are **not** allowed.

- Round, plastic cleats are permissible
- **Round, steel tipped plastic cleats are NOT ALLOWED!**

3. Catchers must wear protective cups (males), 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

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**

D. Baseballs

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

E. All diamonds to have 60 foot bases and 46 foot pitching rubber

1. Double first bases are not required and are not recommended.
2. If no batter's box is marked, the batter cannot stand more than one bat length behind the mid-point of home plate.
 - -One warning shall be given per player.

F. Free Substitution.

- Players may enter, exit, and re-enter, as much as the coach would like.
- Players can be pulled and re-added as the coach chooses.
- The goal is to play all participants as much as possible with equal playing time.
- Pitchers are subject to a special re-entry rule. See I.1 below

G. Continuous Batting Order.

- **All players bat regardless if they play defense or not.**
- Once a player has batted in one position in the lineup, he must **always** bat in that spot, regardless of where he plays on defense.
- -If the number of eligible players drops to 8, the game will continue but an out will be issued the **first 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.
- If youth is injured can skip the spot without charging an out.

H. There may be no more than 10 players in the field on defense.

- The use of 4 outfielders is encouraged.
- 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.

I. 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
 - Pitcher can be removed prior to the 3 innings and brought back in later.
3. Balks will **NOT** be called.

I.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 I 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

J. Sliding Rules

1. When there is a potential play at a base, the runner **must** make a legal slide(according to book rule) 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 defensive player 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 defensive player is not attempting to receive a thrown ball and is in the base path, he has committed obstruction and the runner is awarded the base.
- 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 defensive player is on the bag with the ball and the runner makes a legal slide and there is contact, interference shall not be called.
- **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.
- This is an umpire judgment call
- **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

K. Base Running

1. Base runners **must** stay on their base until the pitch crosses home plate or the foul line

- If the runner leaves the base before the ball crosses home plate or the foul line the runner is out (umpire's judgment –1 warning given per team)
 - **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 the base occupied at the time of the pitch
2. No base stealing is allowed.

2. Base Stealing:

- A max of 3 advances can be completed in 1 inning.
- Runner may not advance until the ball crosses home plate.
- Stealing will consist of running stations. Runner can only advance one base per attempt.
- If an over throw occurs, runner may not advance.
- No stealing of home plate. Once runner reaches 3rd base, must remain there until a hit or forced advancement.
- Due to stealing being in play coaches may no longer retrieve past balls for the catchers.

L. Dropped Third Strikes

- Batter is automatically out on dropped third strike.

M. Infield Fly Rule.

- The infield fly rule does not apply to this league.

N. 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**
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O. Game Length

1. Each game shall be 6 innings in duration with a 1 hour and 45 minute time limit per item 3 below.
2. There is an eight (8) run rule per inning except for the final inning.
 - In the final inning, the 8 run rule takes effect if and when the losing team ties the score. **Example:** Team Away is losing in the top of the sixth inning, 8 to 12. Then the score after one out becomes tied, 12 to 12. Team Away can now score up to 8 more runs, making the maximum score 20 to 12. At that point or after 3 outs, team Home comes to bat and play continues until 3 outs have been made or until they win, whichever happens first.
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.

3. Time Limit

There is a 1 hour and 45 minute time limit from the time of the first pitch.

- A new inning may not start after the time limit has elapsed.
- Any inning started prior to the time limit expiring must be completed.
- An umpire shall be the official time keeper and announce the start time at the first pitch - Time taken due to injuries, weather delays, etc. shall not count towards the 1 hour and 45 minute time limit total

4. Tie Breaker Rule.

- In the event of a tie after six innings or expiration of time, the tie will be broken by use of the "California Tie Breaker Rule".
- The visiting team bats first. The visiting team player that made the last out from the previous inning is placed on second base with one out. The next player in the line up bats.
- Play continues until 3 outs are recorded.
- The home team then repeats the process.
- Game continues until the tie is broken.
- The (8) run rule per inning does not apply during tie-breaker play.
- The home team always has the final at bat and the game is over the moment the home team takes the lead.

P. 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

Q.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

Q.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.

R. 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 only 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

S. 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
1. A. 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 KMYBL 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.
3. 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

T. Scoring and reporting

1. The home team will be the official scorekeeper for league games and **must** provide an official scorekeeper.
2. 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 league scorekeeper.

U. Miscellaneous

1. Approved game balls:
 - Rawlings-RLLB/R100HS/RPLB/RS-T
 - Wilson-A1010HS1/A1010B
 - Diamond-DOLA/DSLL/DINFHS/DPL
 - Baseball Express – BB XHS
2. Rosters must be sent to league officials prior to June 1 of the season.
 - No additions to the team roster will be allowed after that time without written approval of the league officials

Special Note: To all communities, coaches, and umpires in KMYBL,

It has been brought to my attention that some communities are telling their coaches to instruct their players to throw a live ball to the infielders and the receiving infielder should call time, thereby stopping all play, making the ball immediately dead. Then the runners would need to stop and return to the last base touched when the ball became. Basically no advances.

This is an old wives tale and is not correct.

This may apply in Pee-Wee rules (if both coaches agree) or very young softball but not in Junior Little League, Little League or Pony League.

Nowhere in our rules or the WIAA rules does it state that a player may call time while in possession of the ball in the infield, thereby immediately stopping play.

The only time play stops is when an umpire stops play, either by the ball becoming dead or the umpire granting time out. **Just because a player asks for time does not mean time is given.** Time out needs to be granted by the umpire and umpires should not grant time unless all play has stopped or an injured player may suffer more injuries by letting play continue. (very rare).

To all umpires:

You are not to grant "time out" while the play is live, even if an infielder, with the ball, asks for time out during playing action. All playing action must be over before granting time out.

We are supposed to be getting these kids ready for high school baseball and show them the correct way to play. The rules were written for this very reason and need to be followed. Communities cannot change the rules or interpret them differently without the league's approval. No exceptions.

If both coaches agree to play the game where a player can stop play by calling time while in the infield with the ball and no runners may advance, so be it; **but no protests will be allowed** once the game has started. I do not agree with this practice but if the head coaches mutually agree prior to game start, that is the way it will be played.