

WPLL Minors 9U Baseball
2024 Rules & Guidelines

Unless otherwise noted we will follow the rules in the Little League Rulebook app – you can download for free.

Playoff Rules will be similar to Little League 10U Division Tournament rules.

This level introduces players to “real” baseball. Focus on developing all players, having fun, and teaching respect for the game and all participants.

1. All players are in the batting order. Any player arriving late is added to the end of the original order; any players leaving early are simply skipped – no automatic outs.
2. Pitching rules: ALL MANAGERS ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO DEVELOP AS MANY PITCHERS AS POSSIBLE. IF IT COMES TO THE ATTENTION OF THE BOARD THAT PITCHERS ARE BEING OVERUSED, MANAGERS ARE SUBJECT TO SUSPENSION.
3. Players are limited to **50** pitches per day. If a pitcher reaches the limit while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until the batter reaches base or is put out. Also note rest periods:
 - a. If a player delivers 36 - 50 pitches in a day, two full days of rest must be observed (Monday = Thursday)
 - b. If a player delivers 21 – 35 pitches in a day, one full day of rest must be observed (Monday = Wednesday)
 - c. If a player delivers 1-20 pitches in a day, no (0) calendar day of rest is required (Monday = Tuesday)
 - d. A player who delivers 41 or more pitches cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day.
 - e. Anyone playing the position of catcher in four (4) or more innings in a game (total), is not eligible to pitch on that calendar day.
 - f. 8U pitchers may pitch from the closer block (40’ or 43’ depending on the field and what’s there).
 - g. 9U pitchers may pitch from the closer block until 5/13/24 – after this date, all 9U pitchers should pitch from the regulation 46’ block.
4. A team must start and maintain at least 9 players throughout the game. If you don’t, the game is stopped and viewed as a forfeit. You may then continue the game as a scrimmage by taking players from opposing team to achieve 9 players. If both teams have 10 players, teams may play with 4 outfielders. All outfielders must play on the grass – any outfielders positioned on the infield dirt must be moved – umpires will enforce this.
5. You may have 2 adult base coaches, provided they are board-approved (Background and Abuse certified). One adult must be in the dugout at all times. There can only be a max of 3 coaches per team in any game, If there are only two adults at the game (manager or coaches) you cannot have two adults as base coaches (you may use players with helmets).
6. Every player on the team must play a minimum of 6 outs in the field – rotate players defensively, and the batting order is not affected. There is a 5-run per half inning limit in effect for the regular season.
7. A manager or coach may warm up a pitcher before an inning. If the catcher is not ready, a substitute player may warm up the pitcher, but any such player must wear a face mask. The 2 out “speed up” rule will be in effect for the catcher – take your catcher off base with 2 out and get them dressed. Failure to have the catcher ready when your defense takes the field will reduce the number of warmup pitches for that inning.
8. Stealing should be taught and encouraged from Game 1, both offensively and defensively. Runners may not leave the base before the ball crosses the plate, otherwise they may be sent back, called out (if put out by the defense), or limited to one base on a safe hit. Managers should use best judgement to limit steals, only when scores begin to get out of hand. Until 5/13/24, if both managers agree at the pre-game conference, stealing may be limited to 2 per inning. No runners may advance after a successful stolen base, to encourage catchers to make the throw. No stealing home.

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9. The ball is always live in this division unless an umpire grants time out – throwing the ball back to the pitcher does not stop a play or freeze runners. As the ball is always live, a base on balls is a live situation. Therefore, if first and second base are open, the batter turned runner can round first and go on to second. However, once he stops after rounding first he must return to first unless a play is being made on him. Note that the defensive team cannot stop the runner by calling time, since you cannot stop a runner that is already advancing. No infield fly or dropped strike 3 rules at this level.
10. No automatic walks are permitted - YOU MUST DELIVER 4 PITCHES TO THE BATTER TO ISSUE A WALK.
11. Game Time Limits: Darkness will be the time limit for night games at fields without lights. Always err on the side of safety in calling a game on account of darkness. If darkness is not a factor in a game, no new inning may start after 1 hour and 45 minutes from the game start. The umpire has final say as to when a game ends.
12. There is no "must slide" rule for runners approaching a base. The runner must avoid contact with the fielder. There are 3 ways a runner avoids contact: slide, retreat to the prior base, or give themselves up. Incidental contact between a sliding runner the fielder may happen, and is not necessarily interference/obstruction, however if the umpire judges contact from either runner or defender to be careless/intentional, the umpire may penalize either accordingly. A fielder may not block a base without possessing the ball or be in the baseline unless actively fielding a ball, and fake tags are not allowed – these are defensive obstruction and will be called by the umpire.
13. Head-first sliding is prohibited unless the runner is returning to a base.
14. Equipment:
 - a. All non-wood bats must have the "USA Baseball" logo visible on the neck of the bat.
 - b. Wood bats are permitted and do not require certification.
 - c. Catchers must wear protective cups, shin guards, and chest protectors. Catcher may use a fielder's glove. Catcher's masks must have dangling throat guards.
 - d. Pitchers are highly encouraged to wear "heart-guard" shirts under their jersey. Pitchers may not use a white or other light/distracting color glove, wristband, or sleeve, and must be removed at the discretion of the umpire.
 - e. Only non-metal cleats may be used.
 - f. Any equipment showing signs of damage must be removed from the game.
 - g. Consult your Division VP if you have any issues with equipment.
15. Umpires – Youth umpires, trained by WPLL, may be used in games at this level. All umpires, youth or adult, must be treated with respect by all managers, coaches, players, parents/families, and spectators. Failure to act accordingly may result in ejections, removal from the park, and suspensions.
16. There is no on-deck batter. Only the current batter may hold a bat – umpires will strictly enforce this rule.