



Major League Rules

(5th & 6th grade)

The official Little League baseball playing rules will be the main source or guide to govern play. The following guidelines have been adopted by the LZBSA Board of Directors to incorporate and enhance the Little League rules.

Program Goals:

At the 5th & 6th grade (11 & 12-year-old) level, player/participant goals should be relatively simple:

- A. Develop: *Teach the game; A player's skills should improve from the beginning to the end of the season*
- B. Respect: *Be respectful of team mates, opponents & the umpires*
- C. Compete: *Do your best/ Play hard; Managers should begin to teach winning and losing with grace*
- D. Have Fun: *One great measure of success – do the players return the next year?*

1.0 Manager, Coach & Team Responsibilities:

- A. All managers and on field coaches (including in dugout scorekeepers) will be required to complete a Manager/Coach/ Field Assist Form and pass a background screening prior to the start of the season. (Forms & background screen info can be found on the LZBSA website).
 - i. The agreement stipulates guidelines that include, but are not limited, to manager/coach responsibility and the conduct of players, rule violations, disciplinary action, equipment, knowledge of playing rules, LZBSA responsibilities, etc.
 - ii. During the season, all Managers and/or head coaches are responsible for their team. A team includes coaches, players and parents, as outlined in the agreement.
 - iii. The position of manager is a privilege retained for one baseball season. At the completion of the season, each manager's performance will be reviewed by the league president. Recommendations for future manager assignments are made by the league president and approved by the LZBSA Board.
- B. Managers have responsibility for their players while on the field. During the season (including any preseason team training), starting with practices, Managers must make sure that there is no fighting, bullying, swearing, arguing with umpires or opponents, throwing of equipment, or engaging of any unsportsmanlike conduct.
- C. **Field Care Responsibilities:** Every Manager, and his team, are responsible for field care and maintenance and ensuring our LZ baseball facilities, including dugouts, are well maintained.
 - i. After each practice & game managers, coaches, players and parents should complete some light maintenance to ensure the field is playable for the next team(s). This includes:
 - a. Light raking around pitcher's mound and batter's box – fill in holes; add water & tamp down when/where possible.
 - b. Use field drag on the baselines and in the base paths – smooth out for groundballs & base runners.
 - c. Between games only – freshen up baselines and batter's box when chalk is available.
 - ii. After practice & games, dugouts should be cleaned of trash and debris before you leave the field. Please make sure the players help with this.
 - iii. If you are the last team on the field for the day, once the field maintenance is complete, please return field tools to the equipment boxes and lock it for the night.



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1.1 Good Sportsmanship Responsibilities (Managers/Coaches/ Parents & Players):

- A. Managers, coaches, players and parents shall exhibit good sportsmanship at all times. Any action to taunt, intimidate or degrade opposing managers, coaches, players, parents or umpires will not be tolerated.
- B. Swearing by managers, coaches, players or parents, on and off the field, during games or practices, will be strictly prohibited. Violations during a game will result in immediate ejection.
- C. **Arguing with umpires will not be tolerated.** If violated, managers, coaches, players or parents may be ejected and subject to disciplinary action. The Minor League is an instructional league. Please be patient with everyone involved.
- D. **Remember, many times the umpires are kids, too.** They are learning and will make mistakes!
 - i. Influencing the umpires (for example, yelling "safe" or "out" before the umpire makes a call, or yelling "good pitch" before the umpire makes a call) or openly questioning or complaining any umpire's call will not be tolerated.
 - ii. Judgment calls by the umpire cannot be argued. All umpire decisions are final.
 - iii. Rule interpretation questions can be discussed between innings, with both Managers present. These can be teaching moments for young umpires.

1.2 Major League Structure:

- A. The number of teams will be determined by the number of registered players. LZBSA creates teams that are a combination of 5th and 6th grade children (typically 11 and 12 years old).
- B. The schedule and number of games to be played each year will be determined by the league president.
- C. All players are asked to participate in a evaluation prior to team selections (usually in January or February). These evaluations will assist the Managers in trying to create competitive balance within the league.
- D. Team selections are completed through a basic draft process. Process of draft determined by the league president.

1.3 Complete, Called or Suspended Games:

- A. All Major league games are planned for 6 innings. If the score is tied, extra innings can be played as long as time limits are not exceeded.
- B. The time limit for each game is 140 minutes. No new inning will start after the 140 minute mark has been hit
 - i. The umpire is the official time keeper will note the game start time at first pitch
 - ii. A new inning is considered to start as soon as the last out (of the previous inning) has been made.
 - iii. For safety, all games must end at dusk (or dark) on fields without lights.
 - iv. No time limit will be used for playoff and All-star games.
- C. A game is considered a regulation game if one of the following has occurred:
 - i. 4 innings have been completed;
 - ii. If the home team has scored more runs in three or three and a fraction half innings than the visiting team has scored in 4 completed half innings;



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- iii. If the home team scores one or more runs in its half of the fourth inning to tie or win the game. If the home team is ahead after 3 ½ innings (the visitor has batted 4 times) the game is official and subject to time and weather.
 - iv. If a game is called after the start of the 5th inning, any partially completed inning will not count, unless the Home team scores one or more runs in its half of the inning to tie or win the game.
 - v. If time limit is reached and the home team is ahead, due to pitch counts, the home team does not have to bat to complete the game.
- D. If a game is called and it is not a regulation game (i.e., one of the requirements in part C above is not met), the game will be rescheduled and start over from the beginning.
- E. **Lightening:** Most LZBSA Fields have lightening detection systems. If the warning siren goes off (or lightening is spotted in the distance), the game will be immediately stopped. Players and coaches will immediately retreat to safety (e.g., car/building). The lightning detection system will also provide an all clear alert (3 shorts blasts from the siren). Once heard the game can resume.
- i. On fields without lightening detection, if lightening is spotted play must be stopped immediately and players must leave the field to seek shelter. For each future lightning strike, the clock restarts. After 30 minutes with no lightening spotted, play can resume. If lightning is sighted again (after the 30 minute period), the game shall be called. See Little League Book for more detail.

Game Play

2.0 Field Size:

- A. The distance between bases shall be 70 feet
- B. The distance between the mound and home plate shall be 50 feet.
- C. The distance between home and second base shall be 99 feet

2.1 Game Balls & Official Scorekeeper:

- A. Each Manager will supply a new little league approved baseball for each game. These are provided to each team by the league at the start of the season.
- B. Managers **should not** give out game balls to players as MVP awards after each game. Please keep these for practice balls and return at the end of the season.
- C. The Home team is the official scorekeeper for each game.
- D. Lineups should be exchanged prior to first pitch.
- E. Final score and pitch counts are to be reported to the league at the conclusion of each game. **2.1**

2.2 All Play Rule – Continuous Batting Order- Field Participation

- A. A team must field at least 8 players to start a game. If team is unable to field 8 players to start a game in a reasonable amount of time, the game is forfeit.
- B. If a team fields 8 players, the 9th spot in the order **does not constitute** an automatic out
- C. All players present for the game shall be listed in a continuous batting order. The batting order is in effect for the entire game. All players must bat in their position in the order, whether or not they play in the field.
- D. Each manager will submit a listed batting order, including player name and number, to the opposing team manager prior to the game.



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- a. Players arriving late to the game must be placed at the end of the batting order and play a proportionate amount of innings.
- E. If a player leaves before the end of a game, that player's position in the batting order will be eliminated and such elimination will not constitute an out.
 - a. **Exception:** if a player is ejected for any reason, subsequent at bats for that player are outs.
- F. No player shall sit on the bench (sit out) 2 full innings (unless due to injury or illness) during any game before every other player on the team has sat at least one full inning. In other words, no player shall sit their second inning until every player has sat their first inning.
- G. **Courtesy Runners** are allowed for catchers (only for the player who will be putting on the equipment during the next defensive inning) once there are two outs. The Courtesy Runner will be either the last batted out or, if in the first inning, the last player in the lineup.

2.3 On Field Defense – Infield Participation

- A. Each player must play at least one (2) inning at an infield position **AND** (1) inning at an outfield position during each game.
 - i. **Exception:** If a Manager feels a player is at risk or there is safety issue with playing an infield position (1st, 2nd, 3rd, SS, C, P), the Manager must discuss this with the child's parent in advance and provide the reasoning.

2.4 Four (4) Run Rule:

- A. Except for the 6th inning or any extra innings of a game, only four (4) runs may be scored by each team in each inning. Upon scoring the fourth run, the umpire will declare the play dead and the defensive team will leave the field.
- B. During the 6th inning of a game and in extra innings, the four (4) run limited will be lifted. However, no batter can come to bat more than one (1) time in an inning. (*Exceptions to this rule: see below Bi & Bii*)
 - i. **Regular Season:** If teams of unequal roster size are playing, then both teams will be allowed to bat an equal number of batters in the sixth and all extra innings. The number of allowed batters will be equal to the **larger** roster.
- C. If the game is shortened to less than 6 innings due to time limit, or for any other reason, the four run limit will remain in place during the last inning played.

2.5 Dead Ball / Dead Play Rule:

- A. Ball is a "live" ball with the exception of a time out.
- B. The dropped 3rd striker rule is in effect according to Little League and IHSA rules

2.6 Tagging Up to Advance & Stealing (General Base Running):

- A. Players can tag up on a fly ball and advance to the next base.
 - i. A player advancing incorrectly may be put out by a defensive play
- B. Stealing bases is allowed.
 - i. Leading off a base is allowed
 - ii. Delayed stealing (stealing when the catcher throws the ball to the pitcher) is allowable.



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2.7 Sliding on a Close Play – No Contact Rule:

- A. All players must avoid contact when running the bases, except when sliding.
- B. A base runner not complying with this rule will receive one warning and an automatic out (at the umpire's discretion, an ejection can occur on the first offense, should the umpire deem it appropriate).
 - i. A 2nd offense by any player on the same team, during the same game, will result in an out and an automatic ejection of that player.
- C. Head First Slides are only permitted when returning to a base, after having previously reached that base safely. Any player that violates this rule will be called out.

2.8 Bunting: Bunting is allowed.

- A. For safety, **Fake Bunts are not allowed**. A fake bunt is when the batter squares off to bunt, but pulls back and swings at the pitched ball. Any batter who attempts a fake bunt, whether they make contact or not, will be immediately called out. This is a Dead Ball Play. If runners attempted to advance they must return to their previous base

2.9 Infield Fly Rule:

- A. The Infield Fly Rule will be in effect during all Major League games.

2.10 Pitching Rules:

- A. A pitching week runs from Monday – Sunday.
 - i. One day's rest is considered 24 hours of elapsed time (cannot pitch the next day unless player pitches under 25 pitches prior day)
- B. Any player on a team's roster can pitch. Borrowed players are not allowed to pitch.
- C. LZBSA follows the following strict pitch count guidelines. Managers are expected to adhere to these guidelines for each game. Pitch counts for each player are to be reported to the league (along with game scores) at the end of each game.

LZBSA Pitching Guidelines

Player/League Level	Per Game MAX	Weekly MAX Pitches	Days of Rest		
			1 day	2 days	3 days
9U - 10U (3 rd & 4 th grade)	50	75	Up to 33 pitches	34-50	n/a
11U - 12U (5 th -6 th grade)	60	100	25-35 pitches	36-50	51-60
13U -14U (7 th & 8 th Grade)	70	125	31-42 pitches	43-54	55-70

- D. A pitcher may only exceed his daily/weekly pitch count limit to complete a batter he is facing. Managers should use their best judgement if their pitcher is at his pitch count limit as to whether they should be replaced or complete the batter his is facing.
- E. Once a pitcher leaves the game he cannot return as a pitcher.
- F. For rained out and make up games, pitching eligibility remains as highlighted in the LZBSA Pitching Guideline table. No exceptions should be made.



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- G. While LZBSA does not typically suspend games, should there be a suspension, a pitcher who has already recorded pitches in the contest will not be allowed to pitch again in that game unless 1) they are the pitcher of record at the time of suspension and 2) they have not exceeded the current week's pitching guidelines.

2.11 Balks:

- A. Balks will be called at the Major league level.
- B. Warning can be agreed upon by the umpires and the managers (max 2 per pitcher)

2.12 Batters Hit by Pitcher:

- A. If a pitcher hits two (2) batters in one (1) inning, that pitcher must be removed from the mound.
- B. If a pitcher hits three (3) batters in a game, that pitcher must be removed from the mound.

2.13 Visits to the Mound:

- A. A pitcher is allowed no more than 2 visits to the mound (by any combinations of managers, coaches, parents, etc.) during any one inning. On the 3rd visit he must be removed, as a pitcher, from the game.
 - i. A visit constitutes any of the above mentioned persons from the defensive team stepping across the foul lines onto the playing field during the defensive teams half inning. **Note:** For the purposes of a coaches visit, the defensive team's half inning starts after warm-ups are completed and the first pitch has been thrown.
 - ii. A pitcher throwing multiple innings is not allowed more than 3 visits to the mound during a game. On the 4th visit he must be removed.
- B. If an injury occurs, a mound visit will not be charged. Any questions are resolved at the umpire's discretion.

General Safety Guidelines

Managers and Coaches have a critical responsibility for the safety of their team's players and the families that attend LZBSA baseball games.

3.0 Bat Requirements:

- A. All Bats must comply with the following guidelines to be used in games or practices:
 - i. All non-wood bats must be stamped/printed with a BPI (Bat Performance Indicator) of 1.15 or less (see image on last page of Major League Rules if you have questions).
 - ii. Its barrel must not exceed two and one-quarter (2 5/8) inches in diameter
- B. Managers have responsibility for reviewing its team's bats to ensure league guidelines are being adhered to.
- C. Wood Bats are allowed. If taped, the tape length cannot exceed sixteen inches (16") up from the handle (starting at the small end – the handle -- of the bat).

3.1 Major League (5th & 6th grade) Common Sense Guidelines:

- A. To ensure player and fan safety, players are not to swing their bats outside the field (within the fences only). The coaching staff is expected to monitor this.
- B. Any player warming up a pitcher (on the field or in the "bullpen") must be in full catcher's equipment.
- C. Any offensive player, on the field, must have a helmet on at all times, starting when they leave the dugout (on deck, at bat, or on base).



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- D. All players, should be wearing a protective cup while on the field. Catchers are required to wear a protective cup.
- E. Players must wear proper shoes (tennis/gym shoes or plastic/rubber baseball cleats) to participate in games and practices. Metal cleats are not allowed.
- F. All players must remain on the bench if they are not playing in the field or taking their turn at bat. They should be paying attention to the game and not running around.
 - i. Coaches must keep their players out of the dugout doorway and off the field (when not hitting or playing defense) to prevent players from being hit by foul balls or errant throws.
- G. Only the players and coaching staff (inclusive of scorekeeper) are allowed on the bench.

* **Bat Performance Factor Stamps** (must be printed on all non-wood bat to be used during games & practices)

