

Determining and Scoring Errors in Little League Baseball and Softball

In Little League, scorers should favor the batter if a decision of judgment is on the border line of hit versus error. However, this is not to say that obvious errors should be glossed over.

- Generally, when a defensive player, through ordinary effort, muffs a batted or thrown ball, throws the ball widely, or drops the ball, the error must be charged. The key is to determine the value of ordinary effort by a fielder. If the fielder should have made the play, with ordinary effort, and failed to, an error may be charged.
- However, in the case of a fielder, who has to extend far from his usual position to make a play, and fails to make the play (even if he touches the batted ball), no error should be charged. The benefit of the doubt should always go to the batter. If a fielder's play on a batted ball is affected by some outside force, such as bright sunlight, a collision with a fence or fielder, or a "bad hop," it should be scored a hit if the fielder fails to make the play.
- Errors of omission, such as indecision to throw the ball, etc., cannot be charged as an error. But in the case of a baseman, for example, who neglects to have his/her foot on the base when he/she receives a throw, they've committed a chargeable error.
- For throwing errors where additional bases are taken by a runner because of the throw, the scorekeeper must charge an error to someone. For fielding errors after a throw, when additional bases are taken by the runner (like when a first baseman drops the ball on a good throw to first) the scorekeeper must charge an error to someone.
- The scorekeeper should not be awarding a double, triple or a home run when the batter only earned a single, and then a fielding or throwing error allowed him/her to advance. This should be scored as a hit plus an error.
- For no throw or no play made by the fielder -- even if a play should have been made -- it should be scored as a hit.