



## **ROOKIE DIVISION RULES 2026**

In this and all divisions instruction should be the primary focus.

This is an instructional league and coaches should ensure all players get equal playing time during each game and at multiple positions. Games are 6 innings or 2 hours (whichever is shorter). Innings consist of three outs or one time through the lineup if three outs are not recorded. Batting order is followed with all players in line up whether or not in the field (Roster Batting). Free substitutions on defense.

1. Seven or eight defensive players are used. Infield has a maximum of 5 players: 1B, 2B, SS, 3B and one player acting as pitcher. All other players play OF. Catchers are optional. One player should play the defensive position of the pitcher. Player should position themselves with 1 foot within a 10 feet radius around the pitcher's rubber.
2. Walks are not allowed.
3. Strike outs count. A strike may be a swinging strike or a called strike by the ball feeder. A batter may only strike out by swinging at the ball on the third strike and missing the pitch.
4. Stealing and bunting are not allowed.
5. A defensive coach is permitted in the field to assist positioning and instruct. He or she may not interrupt a play or call time out. Positioning shall be in accordance with traditional baseball positions. Do not overload IF with players - just 1B, 2B, SS, 3B, P.
6. Batted balls hitting the ball bucket – the batter is awarded a single. Thrown balls hitting bucket are dead balls and all base runners are awarded one base beyond the base they occupied or would have occupied if the ball had not hit the bucket.
7. Do not keep score. Scores are not recorded and no league standing shall be kept. Emphasis shall be on basic instruction and not on winning.
8. Coach will pitch
9. Pitched balls that are not hit should be caught by a screen. If desired, a coach can perform catching duties with a glove AND a facemask. Also, players can be catcher. Catchers gear at the field.
10. Coaches must make immediate correction if a player inadvertently throws his or her bat after swinging. This is common but very dangerous.

11. Any player coaching 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base must wear a batting helmet.
12. Baserunners do not advance on overthrows of 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base.
13. As per Little League Rules, **the swinging of bats in on deck area is prohibited in all divisions.** Bats should be kept out of the hands of all players except for the **hitter.** Exception may be made during practice or instruction if there is direct supervision of each hitter such as in drills involving soft toss or a batting tee. All hitting drills **must include the hitter and hitting partner wearing a helmet.**
14. BPR recommends coaches follow this Little League program to ensure the most important baseballs lessons are taught at this age level  
<https://www.littleleague.org/university/articles/the-little-league-coach-pitch-program/>
15. Lock combinations for equipment boxes will be verbally given
16. All balls and equipment must be returned to boxes

### **BPRBA ADDITIONAL RULES, SAFETY**

- Any Player/Manager/Coach/Parent who, in the opinion of the Board of Directors, flagrantly violates the above rules (especially 4:06 and 4:08) will be reviewed by a committee appointed by the Board of Directors and issued a Warning. If the same person commits violations subsequent to the Warning, that individual, upon a decision by the Board of Directors, will be banned from participating in all Little League activities.
- Clean dugouts after each game..
- Players and coaches are the only people allowed in the dugout. No siblings, parents or friends allowed.
- Each team should have a team meeting with the parents before the 1st game to discuss discipline and conduct, including spectators.
- No smoking allowed in dugout/field areas.

### **Safety**

**USA stamped bats are only bats allowed for practices and games.**

Link: <https://www.usabaseball.com/bats/>

Be prepared for any emergency in advance of all games and practices. Emergency medical services are available in the Village of Bedford and the Town of Pound Ridge.

Safety is a matter of ongoing concern for all Little League Volunteers. This requires vigilance and firm discipline applied through positive reinforcement.

At the team level it starts with the manager and includes the coaches and parents.

It may require a meeting with parents if there is a discipline problem. Certainly, the manager should stress with the players and parents what he expects when it comes to safety. This should include ongoing meetings and discussions with the team..

All accidents should be reported to the division director and the family should be supplied with a medical claim form. All league members are covered by medical insurance which is excess to the families personal policy.

The rules of Safety which follow are for the benefit of the entire league. They should be enforced as they are in place for the protection of everyone. By following them, the managers' job becomes easier and players will develop good habits.

1. All equipment must be off the field while a team is at bat. Any area within the fence line is considered the field of play whether fair or foul. (Rule 3.14)
2. The on deck batter is not permitted. (Rule 1.08)
3. All players, coaches and spectators should be alert for batted and thrown balls and be faced towards the area of play.
4. As per Little League Rules, **the swinging of bats in on deck area (or any area around the dugout) is prohibited in all divisions. Bats should be kept out of the hands of all players except for the hitter.** Exception may be made during practice or instruction if there is direct supervision of each hitter such as in drills involving soft toss or a batting tee. All hitting drills must include the hitter and hitter partner wearing a helmet.
5. Helmets with face masks are recommended by all leagues at practice and games.
6. Periodical inspection should be made of the medical supplies located in the storage boxes at end of field. A medical kit and ice packs should be available there.
7. Each field will have rakes available to smooth surfaces and fill holes during the season. Regular inspection and repairs should be given by managers and coaches.
8. Injuries during games and practices from thrown and batted balls will be minimized if each player learns that there is "always something to do" during games and practices. Coaches should be sure the rule is followed.
9. Equipment inspection is essential. Broken equipment may be replaced by contacting the league. Metal cleats are not permitted.
10. Players in the field should be taught to avoid collision by calling for the ball and learning which position has priority where more than one fielder is calling for the fly ball. Example; shortstop catches pop ups behind third, first base man catches

pop ups in front of home plate on first base side; an outfielder has priority over infielder.

11. Misjudging fly balls can be a cause of injury. It can be corrected with practice and drills such as pointing to the ball with the throwing hand when it is in the air and catching the ball with two hands when possible.
12. Ball handling skills should be taught with drills to minimize injuries. Ground ball skills should be taught to all players utilizing proper technique to minimize injuries.
13. Coaches will call games due to inclement weather. Certainly, at the first sign of lightning the field should be cleared and appropriate decisions made.
14. Players should be taught the importance of warm up before practice and games. Drills and warm up routines are available and should be utilized to prevent injuries and to develop good habits in a player.
15. Sliding should be practiced and taught using half speed drills, grassy areas and non-fixed bases. Head first slides are not permitted, except returning to a base.
16. Injuries can be avoided to the batter by proper technique. Batters should be taught to stay in the batter's box and not lean into the strike zone. Proper grip when bunting and staying in the batter's box will reduce finger injuries. When the batter becomes a base runner he should be taught to run in foul territory to reduce the chance of being hit by a thrown or batted ball.
17. The catcher has the most accidents and time should be spent separately with the catchers to teach safe technique. The throwing hand should be protected by keeping fingers closed and keeping the glove between the ball and hand. Some little league catchers prefer using one hand and keeping the throwing hand behind the back. He should be taught how to judge the proper distance behind the batter by positioning himself after the batter takes his stance and not reaching into the swing area. Catchers must wear helmets, face mask and throat guard during warm-ups. Catchers must wear protective cups.
18. All runners should have an unobstructed path to a base (including home plate). Defensive players are not allowed to block a base. However, an umpire can determine that a defensive player could not have fielded the ball without blocking the pathway of the runner and that contact was unavoidable.

## EQUIPMENT BOXES

Each field has an equipment box which contains baseball, batting tees, bases, first aid kits, ice packs, some batting helmets, and umpire equipment. The home team manager is responsible for making sure that the field equipment is put away and the equipment box is locked at the end of the game. Each team has the

responsibility to get the teams batting helmets from the equipment box and return them to the box after the game. Please make sure that the equipment boxes/storage closets are locked before leaving the field.

#### SPECTATORS

Spectators at Minor, Major & Senior League games will not be allowed to view the game from any location between the dugouts or behind the backstop. Appropriate viewing locations would be in the stands provided or behind Fences that run from the dugouts down the right or left field foul line.

### **GENERAL RULES OF DISCIPLINE AND CONDUCT**

The following General rules are excerpts from the Little League Rule Book Rule Number

3:14 No equipment shall be left on the field either in fair or foul territory.

4:05 The offensive team shall station two coaches on the field during its time at bat, one near first base and one near third base. Coaches' shall-

- (1) be eligible players in the uniform of their team; or adult manager or coach;
- (2) remain within the coaches' boxes at all times;
- (3) talk to members of their own team only.

4:06 No manager, coach or player, shall at any time, whether from the bench or the playing field or elsewhere –

- (2) use language which will in any manner refer to or reflect upon opposing players, manager, coach, an umpire or spectators. The offender shall be removed from the game.

