

Longwood Babe Ruth League – Rookies

Revised: 2/6/2026

1. Home & Visiting Team Responsibilities

- The **home team**, per the official league schedule, must provide:
 - Two (2) new baseballs to the Head Umpire
 - An official scorekeeper
 - The home team manager/coach is responsible for:
 - Setting up and testing the pitching machine prior to game start
 - Returning the pitching machine to the shed after the game
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2. Time Limits

- No new inning may begin after **1 hour and 30 minutes** from the official start time.
- **Weeknight games** have a 2-hour time limit.
- The 2-hour rule does **not** apply to weekend games.

Official start time is declared by the umpire when:

- The defensive team is on the field, and
- The first batter steps into the batter's box.

If a game ends due to the 2-hour limit, the score reverts to the **last completed inning**, provided the game is official (see Rule 5).

3. Tie Games

- Games may end in a tie.
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4. Run Rule (Mercy Rule)

A game shall be declared complete when:

- A team leads by **15 runs after 3 innings**, or
 - A team leads by **10 runs after 4 innings**
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5. Official Games

A game is considered official when one of the following occurs:

1. Completion of **4 innings** if the visiting team is winning
2. Completion of **3½ innings** if the home team is winning
3. The time limit has been reached

If a game is stopped before becoming official (rain, weather, etc.), it is considered a **suspended game** and must be resumed at a later date.

- Time limits carry over to resumed suspended games.
 - If both teams are tied at the end of an official game, the game is recorded as a tie.
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6. Batting Rules

- All players bat in the lineup.
- A team's at-bat ends when:
 - Five (5) runs are scored in an inning, or

- Three (3) outs are recorded

In the **6th inning**, play continues until three outs are recorded or the game ends.

- Bunting is not allowed in coach pitch.
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7. Coach Pitch Rules

- Pitching distance: **35 feet**
- The pitching coach must:
 - Keep one foot on or straddle the pitching line
 - Deliver overhand pitches only (no lobs or underhand pitches)
 - Avoid verbal or physical coaching while in contact with the pitching line or after the ball is in play
 - Avoid obstructing defensive players after the ball is hit

Violations:

- First offense: Warning
- Second offense: Removal of the coach as pitcher for the remainder of the game

Contact With Coach-Pitcher

- If a fair ball hits the pitching coach before touching a defensive player, the ball is dead. The batter is awarded first base and runners advance one base.
- If the ball first touches a defensive player and then hits the coach, it is a live ball.
- If a thrown ball hits the pitching coach, it is a live ball.
- Each batter receives a maximum of **four (4) pitches or three strikes**.
- The pitching coach may not coach base runners. Violation results in immediate removal as pitching coach.

Courtesy Runner (Catcher Speed-Up Rule)

- The player who made the last out (or a player not currently in the game) may serve as courtesy runner for the catcher at any time.
- The catcher remains in the game.
- If the last-out player is unavailable, the courtesy runner will be determined by moving backward through the batting order or selecting a player not currently in the game.
- In the first inning, if no outs have been recorded, the courtesy runner will be the player furthest removed in the lineup or a player not currently in the game.

8. Player Requirements to Start a Game

- Each team must have a minimum of **eight (8) players** at official start time.
- If a team cannot meet the minimum requirement, the game is a forfeit and the win is awarded to the opposing team.
- If both teams cannot field eight players, the game is a double forfeit.
- Once a game begins, if a team falls below eight players, that team forfeits.
- Managers may petition the League President, Division Rep, and Player Agent to reverse a forfeit and reschedule.
 - Unanimous consent of all five parties (League President, Division Rep, Player Agent, and both managers) is required.

Player Leaving Game

- If a player leaves due to injury or illness, they are skipped in the batting order and are not recorded as an out.
- If a player leaves for any other reason, they remain in the batting order and are recorded as an out when their turn occurs.
- Religious or school function conflicts may allow rescheduling with at least **48 hours notice**.

- Borrowed players may only be used to reach the minimum number and:
 - Must play outfield only
 - Must bat last
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9. Players Arriving Late

- Late arrivals are added to the bottom of the batting order.
 - Defensively, a late player is credited with playing any missed defensive innings.
 - Managers must ensure the player meets minimum play requirements.
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10. Fielding & Coach Placement

Defensive

- Two defensive coaches are allowed on the field.
- Defensive coaches must remain in foul territory beyond first and third base.

Offensive

- One coach at first base and one at third base.
 - An additional coach may stand behind the batter's warm-up circle.
 - No coach may stand at or near home plate during live at-bats.
 - Maximum offensive coaches on field: three (3).
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11. Minimum Playing Time

- Each player must:

- Play at least three (3) defensive innings
 - Have at least one at-bat
 - Each player must play **at least two innings in the infield** per game.
 - Infield positions: pitcher (defensive player), catcher, first base, second base, shortstop, third base.
 - No player may start as a substitute in two consecutive games or innings.
 - Four (4) players must be placed in the outfield.
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12. Infield & Outfield Play Rules

- Infielders must begin each play on the clay area.
 - Only infielders may tag runners or touch bases for outs.
 - Outfielders must begin each pitch in the outfield grass.
 - Outfielders may not record an out except on a fly ball (Fall season only).
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13. Overthrow Rules (Fall Only)

- An overthrow is a throw by an infielder (including pitcher/catcher) that passes the intended receiver.
 - Throws from the outfield to the infield do not count as overthrows.
 - Runners may advance **one base only** on an overthrow.
 - Only one overthrow per play.
 - If a runner advances beyond the allowed base, time is called and the runner is returned.
 - If the ball is thrown over the fence, all runners advance one base.
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14. Dead Ball Rule

- Play stops when runners have been stopped from advancing.
 - The umpire determines when the ball is dead and signals by raising both arms.
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15. Bunting Rules

- Bunting is not permitted in coach pitch.
 - Showing bunt and then swinging is not allowed.
 - Penalty for fake bunting:
 1. Batter is called out.
 2. Ball is dead; runners return to bases.
 3. Second occurrence: Manager reported to Rookie Division Rep for possible Board action.
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16. Scorebook

- Any manager or coach ejected must be recorded in the official scorebook.
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17. Dress Code

- Players must wear full matching league uniforms (hat, shirt, belt/socks, pants).
 - No exposed jewelry (watches, bracelets, large/loop earrings, necklaces).
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18. Team Direction & Strategy

- Authority rests with the manager and coaches present on the field.
- Parents may not coach from the stands (no signals or calling plays).