

Capitol Hill Little League



AAA Softball Rules

Sportsmanship Rules

All players, coaches, and parents will learn and follow principles of good sportsmanship, which include respecting umpires, teammates, coaches, the fields, and especially players and coaches on the opposing team.

1. All players and coaches from opposing teams will shake hands after each game. They also will thank and/or shake hands with the umpire(s).
2. Each team is responsible for cleaning up their bench areas after the game. The home team is responsible for field preparation prior to games and providing game balls for the game. The home team is also responsible for field clean up, including raking the field and returning equipment to the shed and locking up.
3. Players and coaches will encourage teammates.
4. Players, coaches, and parents will recognize good play by the opposing team and, in all instances, refrain from shouting at, taunting, attempting to distract (e.g., the catcher may not speak to an opposing batter), or making disparaging comments (such as “no batter”) directed at players on the opposing team.
5. Players, coaches, and parents are not to sit behind the backstop because doing so distracts the players, especially the pitcher.
6. When a batter is hit by a pitch, the batter and pitcher will shake hands.
7. At no time will any player, coach, or parent curse or use abusive language.
8. Penalties are enforced solely by the umpires.
9. Players, coaches, and parents are not to question the umpire’s call of balls and strikes, fair and foul, or safe and out. Coaches may ask umpires before the start of a game to describe the strike zone that will be used during the game and communicate that information to the players.
10. Players will not argue with an umpire. A coach who has a question about an umpire’s call may ask for time and in a calm and respectful tone ask the umpire to explain the call. At no time is a coach to raise his or her voice and argue. If a coach believes that an umpire has improperly interpreted the rules, the coach has the right to continue to play a game under protest and/or report the matter to the Division Commissioner.
11. The display or consumption of tobacco or alcoholic beverages in any form is strictly prohibited on the playing field, benches, dugouts, or bleachers.
12. Per Little League regulations, the actions of players, managers, coaches, umpires, and league officials must be above reproach. Any player, manager, coach, umpire, or league representative who is involved in a verbal or physical altercation, or an incident of unsportsmanlike conduct, at the game site or any other Little League activity, is subject to disciplinary action by the local league board of directors. When a manager, coach, or player is ejected from a game, they shall take no further part in that game. A manager or coach ejected from a game must leave the field

immediately and may not sit in the stands. A player ejected from a game may not be recalled, may not take any further part in the game (e.g., warming up the catcher, serving as a base coach), and must remain supervised until released to his/her parent or guardian (or other responsible adult). Any manager, coach, or player ejected from a game is suspended for his/her team's next physically played game and may not be in attendance at the game. Please see the CHLL Code of Conduct for additional information.

Sportsmanship Rules Note: In Little League programs, if the player will not cause a disturbance for the remainder of the game, it is acceptable, and advisable, to leave him/her in the dugout for the remainder of the game.

Safety Rules

1. All players shall sit on their team's bench or in the dugout unless participating in the game or preparing to enter the game.
2. There is no on-deck batter. Only at-bat batters may have a bat in their hands.
3. All players must wear helmets with face masks when batting, running the bases, or coaching from either the first or third base coach's box. Pitchers are required to wear face guards. It is also recommended that players playing third base wear face guards.
4. Managers and coaches (adults) are prohibited from warming up a pitcher either on or off the field. A registered Capitol Hill Little League player must warm up the pitcher.
5. Catchers and defensive players will not block a base, home plate, or the base line without possession of the ball. This is considered an obstruction. The obstructed runner is safe and a dead ball is called.
6. Players must not wear jewelry such as, but not limited to, rings, watches, earrings, bracelets, necklaces, nor any hard cosmetic/decorative items. EXCEPTION: Jewelry that alerts medical personnel to a specific condition may be worn.
7. Players and umpires may not wear casts during the game. Persons wearing casts, including managers and coaches, must remain in the dugout during the game.
8. Shoes with metal spikes or cleats are not permitted. Shoes with molded cleats are permitted.
9. Penalties are enforced solely by the umpires. (Any reference to "umpire" included in this document refers to the individual(s) responsible for enforcing penalties at a given division level.)
10. The home team is responsible for having the first aid kit in a dugout during the game.
11. Throwing the bat is an automatic out. It is at the umpire's discretion on whether a bat has been thrown. Warnings should be given to players who show this tendency, but if the umpire determines that the player has thrown the bat, the player should be called out without a warning.
12. A base runner must never purposefully remove his/her helmet while on the field without first calling a timeout. The penalty is that the player is out.
13. All injuries where a player is unable to return to a game or practice or must seek outside medical assistance must be reported by the team manager/coach to the Safety Officer and the CHLL President within 48 hours of the incident. An incident form must also be completed and submitted to the Safety Officer.

General Game Rules & Format

- The Playing Rules are governed by the most recent Little League Baseball Rulebook, including updates, as modified and interpreted by the CHLL House Rules below.
- All calls, including balls and strikes, fair and foul, safe and out and any other decision based on rules, made by the umpire(s) are considered final.
- Each team must have at least 8 players and 1 coach to play. A team has a 15 minute grace period from the scheduled start time of the game to meet this requirement. If a team has less than 8 players, a scrimmage may be played if both teams agree to do so.
- If a manager knows in advance that s/he will not have 8 players for an entire game, the manager should refer to the CHLL player call-up policy to request one or more players.
- An offensive half inning will end when three outs are made or when five runs have scored. A team can score more than five runs only if they are the result of a home run hit over the fence. The CHLL Softball Commissioner may reduce the run limits for the innings pitched by players, if deemed necessary to improve the quality of play.
- Games are 6 innings long with a time limit of 1 hour 45 minutes. An inning in progress at the 1 hour 45 minute mark may be completed. No new full inning can begin after reaching the 1 hour 30 minute mark. However, if there is no “next game” on the field, the game limit can extend to 2 hours 15 minutes when both teams agree to do so, with no new full inning beginning after the 2 hour mark.
- Due to weather or time limits, a game is declared official if the home team is ahead after 3 1/2 innings or the visiting team is ahead after 4 innings.
- The 10-run rule as documented in the National Little League Rule Book will not be implemented, except that if, at the 2 hour mark (or 2 hour 30 minute mark), a team is winning by 10 or more runs and was also leading by 10 or more runs at the time that the innings needed to complete a regulation game had been completed; or (ii) the innings needed for a regulation game to be completed have been played and, if applicable, a maximum run limit would prevent the team that is behind from tying or winning the game, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede victory to the opponent.
- Teams must confer at the end of each inning to agree on the score. If there is a dispute, it is resolved by the umpire.
- A player may not sit out from the field for more than one inning in a row. If a player arrives after the start of the game, the player must be inserted into the defensive lineup by the next full inning following his/her arrival and completion of warm ups.

Batting

- Teams will use a continuous batting order that contains the entire roster of players.
- The dropped third strike rule is not in effect, meaning the batter is not able to try to advance to first base if the catcher drops the third strike. A batter is called out on the third strike regardless of whether the catcher catches the ball. Note that if a batter foul tips a 3rd strike and the catcher drops it, that pitch is considered a foul ball. However, if a catcher holds onto a foul tip 3rd strike, the batter is out.

Pitching

- When using the pitching machine, the pitch should come to the batter at a rate of speed such that the pitch is “flat”. The pitch should not “loop” in to the batter with an arc.

- A player may pitch in a maximum of 12 innings in a day. If a player pitches in 7 or more innings in a day, one calendar day of rest is mandatory. A single pitch thrown constitutes an inning pitched.
- A pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position, can return as a pitcher anytime in the remainder of the game but only once in the same inning as she was removed.
- All players should have an opportunity to pitch.
- Not more than 5 pitchers per team shall be used in one game, except in case of illness or injury to the fifth pitcher.
- For games early in the season, if the pitching machine is used, rules for minors related to the coach operating the machine and the pitcher apply.

Defense

- The defensive team fields 10 players with the 10th player positioned in the outfield. All outfielders must be positioned in the outfield grass.
- A defensive player without the ball may not fake a tag, shout out or otherwise try to trick a base runner to induce an unnecessarily slide or cause them to return to the previous base. This is considered obstruction and, if a play is being made on the obstructed runner, the runner shall be awarded one base beyond the base last legally touched by such runner, before the obstruction.
- Catchers and defensive players will not block a base, home plate, or the base line without possession of the ball. This is considered obstruction and the runner will be called safe at that base and a dead ball is called.
- The position of the fielder's body or feet, have absolutely nothing to do with judging whether a ball is fair or foul. The judgment is based solely upon the relationship between the BALL and the LINE at the moment the fielder touches the ball, or at the moment the ball comes to a stop, or on outfield fly balls; the moment it touches the fielder or the ground.
- Defensive players on the field may not switch positions (e.g., center fielder and shortstop switch positions) in response to a particular batter. Defensive players may shift (e.g., players move to their left or right) at any time.
- The infield fly rule is not in effect.

Base Running

- When a fielder has the ball and is waiting to make the tag, the runner has three options:
 1. Slide feet first, OR
 2. Attempt to get around the fielder; OR
 3. Retreat to the previous base.
 - There is no “must-slide” rule. Sliding is only one of the three options for the runner that comes into play when the fielder has the ball and is waiting to make the tag. If the fielder (any fielder, not just the catcher) does not have the ball, and there is a collision, the runner cannot be called out because of the collision; only if the umpire determines that the runner deliberately or maliciously attempted to contact the fielder, the umpire could eject the runner for unsportsmanlike conduct.

- Teams may use a courtesy runner for their catcher. If the next inning's catcher is on base with 2 outs, the player who was last out should be used as substitute runner. This allows the catcher to return to the dugout and put on the catcher's gear on before the end of the inning.
- If any base runner deliberately or maliciously attempts to contact a fielder, the umpire could eject the runner for unsportsmanlike conduct. The ball is dead and any other base runners may not advance to the next base.
- There is no headfirst sliding unless a player is returning to a base. The penalty for inappropriately sliding headfirst is the runner being called out.
- There is no rule against sliding into first base, except that the slide cannot be headfirst unless the player is returning to the base.
- The play is live until the pitcher is on the mound in possession of the ball. The intent of this rule does not mean the defense simply has to return the ball to the pitcher to have the ump call the play dead. If a base runner is in motion when the ball gets back to the pitcher, they can continue. If the pitcher attempts to make a throw to a base, the play continues. Once all runners stop advancing, the pitcher has the ball on the mound and has turned to face the next batter, the previous play is considered over and all runners must hold at their current base.
- There is no leading off the base. Runners may only come off their base after the pitched ball crosses home plate.
- A runner at first base may not steal second base and also may not advance if a throw from the catcher attempting to pick off a runner at first base results in an error. The stealing of third base and home plate is permitted. Runners at second and third base may advance on a throw down from the catcher attempting to pick off a runner at any base. When stealing all runners may only advance one base per attempted steal. Delayed stealing is not permitted. Once the catcher has released the ball back to the pitcher, a runner may not attempt to steal. If the runner is already in the process of stealing the base when the throw is made back to the pitcher, the runner may continue to advance to the next base. Should a player attempt a delayed steal, she will return to her original base without penalty. There is no "halfway" rule with respect to base running (at this or upper levels). In addition, there is no limit to the number of bases a runner may advance on an overthrow with the exception of the stealing rules above.
- Any base runner touched by a live batted ball has committed interference and is out. The ball is dead. The batter is awarded first base and other runners advance only if forced. However, the runner is not out if s/he is touched by a batted ball after it passes through or by an infielder, except the pitcher. (For example, if a base runner is passing behind an infielder while the fielder is making a play on the ball, but the infielder then misplay the ball and the misplayed ball passes through the infielder's legs or by him/her on either side, or then touches the runner, the runner is not out. This is not interference. The ball is live.)
- Any base runner hit by a thrown ball is not interference (live ball) unless the runner intentionally attempts to make contact with the thrown ball or otherwise hinders or impedes a fielder's opportunity to field or throw the ball.

Miscellaneous Rules

- Only a properly-equipped player may receive warm-up throws from a pitcher during a game. No manager, coach, or any other adult volunteer, is permitted to be on the field or in the bullpen for the purpose of warming up a pitcher. They may, however, stand by to observe a pitcher during warm-up in the bullpen.

- A batted ball that hits home plate is not a foul ball. For the purposes of a fair/foul determination, home plate is no different from the ground. All of home plate is in fair territory, so if a batted ball touches it, it has merely struck part of fair territory.
- No base coach can physically assist a runner in any way while the ball is alive. Pushing a runner off a base or pulling them back to a base, or helping a runner up off the ground would be considered coaches' interference and result in the base runner being called out.
- Any coach failing to get out of the way of a fielder who is making a play on a batted ball, regardless of where the fielder is at the time is considered coaches' interference and results in the batter being called out.
- A pitch that bounces in front of the plate can be hit. If a pitch bounces, the only thing that changes is that it can no longer become a called strike. With this single exception, the pitch is alive and in play. If the batter swings at the pitch and misses, it is a strike. If the batter hits the ball in fair territory, the batted ball is alive and in play. If the batter hits the ball foul, it is simply a foul. If the bounced pitch hits the batter, all the standard hit-by-pitch rules apply.