



ROUTE 65 12U LITTLE LEAGUE RULES

Last Updated: April 7, 2022

SECTION A: Game Preliminaries

- 1) The home team manager has the responsibility of assessing field conditions, and if appropriate, calling the game prior to the first pitch. Every effort must be made to alert umpires and the away team's manager of a cancellation at least 1 hour prior to the scheduled start time.
- 2) If a team knows 24 hours or more in advance that it cannot field at least six (6) of their original team players, the game will be postponed.
- 3) A full game will be six (6) innings in length.
- 4) The home team shall record the time of the first pitch, as no new innings can be started after **2 hours** from the first pitch (regardless of whether there is a game scheduled afterwards or not). Each manager must keep his team playing at a steady pace with no interruptions. No stalling or extended conferences. NOTE: There is no time limit for League Playoff elimination games.
- 5) Once a game begins, the umpire has the responsibility to call or suspend a game due to darkness or inclement weather. Lightning and/or the approach of a dangerous storm will immediately suspend play; and each instance of lightning will require a 15 minute wait period before play can resume.
- 6) A game that becomes suspended will be considered a "regulation game" if:
 - a) Four (4) innings have been completed.
 - b) The home team is winning after 3 ½ innings.
 - c) The home team takes the lead in the bottom of the fourth inning, but that inning is not completed.
- 7) If a regulation game is suspended prior to the completion of a full inning (in the 5th inning or later), then the score shall revert to the last completed inning – even if the result is a tie.
- 8) Games that remain tied at the end of 6 innings will end in a tie. No extra innings will be played. NOTE: League play-off eliminations games cannot end in a tie and extra innings will be played until a winner is determined.
- 9) If a game becomes suspended prior to qualifying as a regulation game, the game will be replayed at a later date from the point where the game became suspended.
 - a) The home team is responsible for recording the inning, score, outs, batter count, and any runners on base when the game became suspended.
 - b) If players that were NOT playing during the original game are now available to play on a later date, those players can enter the game and must be added to the end of the line-up (ie. As the 10th batter if there were 9 players batting in the original game.
 - c) Suspended or postponed games will be rescheduled by the league scheduler or commissioners at the next available open date.
- 10) If there is no other game being played on the same field directly beforehand, the away team will have use of the field 15 minutes prior to the start of the game for warm-ups. Prior to that, the home team will have the field.
- 11) Teams will exchange lineups prior to the start of the game.
- 12) Managers and/or Coaches must coach the bases from the first and third base coaching boxes.



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- 13) Mercy Rule: If a team is winning by fifteen (15) or more runs after four (4) innings, or by ten (10) or more runs after five (5) innings, then the game will end early. If the home team is leading in either situation, then they will not bat in the home half of that inning.

SECTION B: Player Eligibility

- 1) A maximum of **nine (9) defensive players are allowed in the field.**
- 2) A team must have at least eight (8) players to begin a game.
 - a) There will be a 15-minute grace period to allow 8 players to show up for the game.
 - b) If a team has less than eight (8) players and the 15-minute grace period has expired, the game will be a forfeit. If this occurs, coaches should make every effort to play a practice game.
 - c) If a game is played with eight (8) players, the ninth spot in the batting order will NOT be an out.
- 3) If a team is reduced to eight (8) players or less during a game for any reason, play will continue to completion. Outs will not be assessed for missed at-bats due to a player injury, but if a player voluntarily leaves the game or is ejected from the game for unsportsmanlike conduct, an out will be recorded each time their spot in the order comes up.
- 4) A player that shows up late (after a game has already started) can only enter the game and play if his team has NOT yet batted through the lineup (ie, if the lead-off batter has not been up to bat twice already). The late player must be added as the last batter in the lineup.
- 5) If a team knows it will start or finish a game with **eight (8) players or less**, one or more **10U Minor League players** may be used to bring the team up to full strength.
 - a) No **12U call-overs** from other **Little League** teams can be used in the Spring – but they can be used in the Fall.
 - b) **Minor League 10U** players must bat at the bottom of the batting order, and may play any position other than pitcher.
 - c) **Minor League 10U** players must wear a different uniform when playing up for a **Little League** team, to be easily identifiable as a call-up player.
 - d) If a **Little League 12U** player arrives late (or wasn't expected to be there at all) and the game starts with one or more **Minor League** players, it is at the coach's discretion on whether to let the **Little Leaguer** play or not. NOTE: If the coach allows both the **Little League** player AND the **Minor League** Player to play – bringing the total number of players to **10** at any point in the game - no **Little League** player on the team can sit for more innings than the **Minor League** Player does.
- 6) There is free substitution on defense, except for the pitcher.
- 7) Courtesy base runners
 - a) A courtesy base runner is permitted to replace an injured base runner. The courtesy runner must be the player who made the last out. This can only be used one time for a player. If that same player cannot run again in the same game, then they must be removed from the game.
 - b) A courtesy runner may also be used for the catcher with two outs to speed-up the game. Again, the runner must be the player who made the last out, and the player who was subbed for must enter the game as the catcher in the next half inning.
- 8) No batting out of order will be charged due to an injury. An injured player can return to his original position in the batting order once during a game
- 9) A non-injured player cannot sit on the bench for more than two (2) defensive innings of a six (6) inning game. Coaches may waiver from this rule if necessary due to player attendance or for disciplinary reasons.



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- 10) While a healthy rotation of players is desired to promote development, there are no stipulations for how many innings a player must play in the infield or outfield at the 12U level.

SECTION C: Pitching Eligibility

- 1) A pitcher cannot pitch more than three (3) innings in a single game – including scenarios where a suspended game is resumed at a later date.
- 2) If a team plays two or more games in one day, the combined innings of one pitcher cannot exceed four (4) innings for the day.
- 3) One pitch thrown in an inning constitutes an inning pitched.
- 4) Once a pitcher is replaced by another pitcher, they cannot pitch again in that game.
- 5) The following pitch count restrictions must be adhered to, including the maximum 85 pitches per day limit, and required rest period as defined below:
 - a) If a player pitches 61 or more pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest must be observed
 - b) If a player pitches 41 - 60 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest must be observed
 - c) If a player pitches 21 - 40 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar days of rest must be observed
 - d) If a player pitches 1-20 pitches in a day, no (0) calendar day of rest is required
- 6) If a pitcher reaches a pitch count threshold while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any one of the following conditions occurs:
 - a) That batter reaches base;
 - b) That batter is put out;
 - c) The third out is made to complete the half-inning.

As long as a pitcher does not face another batter *after* reaching a pitch count threshold, their official pitch count shall be reported as the threshold reached, i.e. 20, 40, 60, or 85.

- 7) Managers should consult between innings to confirm that pitch counts are the same.
- 8) Managers must notify all other coaches (via text group or email) if any pitcher throws more than 40 pitches in a game.
- 9) A pitcher is allowed a maximum of six (6) warm up pitches between innings.
- 10) If a pitcher hits two (2) batters in an inning or three (3) batters in a game, they must be removed from pitching immediately.
- 11) There are no minimum requirements for how many innings must be pitched by an 11 or 12 year old pitcher at the 12U level.



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SECTION D: General Playing Rules

- 1) There will be a continuous batting order.
- 2) There is a six (6) run limit per inning for innings one (1) through five (5). NO continuation will be in effect except in the event of an over the fence home run. There is no run limit the last inning (inning 6) or in extra innings.
- 3) Leading from and stealing of bases is permitted while the ball is live.
- 4) Dropped 3rd strike IS in effect. Namely - if there are two outs, a batter may attempt to advance to first base after a dropped third strike. If there are less than 2 outs, the batter may attempt to advance to first base after a dropped third strike *only* if first base is not occupied.
- 5) The infield fly rule IS in effect when a fair fly ball (not including a line drive or a bunt) can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort, when first and second, or first, second, and third bases are occupied before two are out. The ball is live and runners may advance at the risk of being caught or retouch and advance *after* the ball is touched, the same as on any fly ball. If the hit becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul ball.
- 6) BALKS: Umpires and/or coaches will explain the reason for a balk to pitcher upon each occurrence. One warning to be given to each pitcher per inning. (Coaches are to discuss the need for more warnings in each game.)
- 7) No "Slug Bunts" are allowed. Any fake bunting and then swinging will result in a dead ball out for the batter with no advancement by any base runners.
- 8) No intentional walks are allowed.
- 9) Coaches may have one (1) free conference visit per inning without changing the pitcher. On the second and all subsequent mound visits in an inning, the pitcher must be replaced.
- 10) Coaches may have one (1) conference with the infielders per game (which also counts as a trip to the mound for that inning).
- 11) Accidental throwing of the bat the first time will result in a team warning. Any additional offenses will result in a dead-ball foul on a batted ball with no runners advancing and the batter being called out.
- 12) Intentional throwing of a bat or helmet (which will be a judgment call by the umpire and not subject to protest) will result in both
 - a) the player being ejected from the game; AND
 - b) a dead ball foul on a batted ball with no runners advancing and the batter being called out
- 13) Adults may coach first and third bases and warm-up pitchers.
- 14) Any player coaching the bases must wear a helmet. Any player warming-up a pitcher must wear a catcher's mask.
- 15) Base running:
 - a) A runner must avoid contact with the fielder on a play at any base or the runner will be called out. Any attempt to jump over a fielder in a position to receive a thrown ball at a base is not considered avoiding contact and the runner will be called out.
 - b) A runner may not slide head first, except when returning to a base that had already been achieved.
 - c) Runners can steal any base on a live ball.
 - d) The ball is considered dead when the pitcher is in possession of the ball on the mound.



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- e) If the catcher makes a play to third base (or any other base) or throws the ball errantly back to the pitcher, the play is considered “live”
 - f) Third base runner “jockeying” is not allowed. (aka - Runners on third base aren’t permitted to steal home by timing the throw back from the catcher, or if they have “given themselves up” and retreated back towards third base during a play while the catcher possesses the ball or is in the third to home base path.)
 - g) For safety reasons, straight steals of home are not allowed unless there is a passed ball. (aka – baserunners cannot enter the home plate area during the delivery of a pitch); on the Avonworth Little League field, any passed balls that go behind the wall behind home plate and cannot be retrieved by the catcher will be considered a dead ball and runners will not be able to advance from third to home; runners will be permitted to advance from first to second and second to third.
- 16) A base runner is out if a base coach touches the runner with the intent to assist or restrain the runner while the ball is in play. This is a judgement call by the umpire and cannot be protested.

SECTION E: Equipment

- 1) All rostered players should be in full uniform. Hats are mandatory for all defensive players, and protective helmets must be worn by offensive players in the field of play.
- 2) Metal spikes are prohibited.
- 3) Catchers must wear appropriate protective gear [cup, chest protector, helmet, mask, shin guards, catcher’s mitt].
- 4) Little League USA and many other leagues have adopted the USA Baseball recommendation requiring new bats be utilized beginning with the 2018 season. The Board of Directors at both Avonworth and Quaker Valley have determined only USA Baseball approved bats (including those that are 2-5/8” diameter) will be allowed beginning in 2019 for Route 65 League play. Bats manufactured prior to 2018 that were previously approved for Little League play are no longer allowed.



SECTION F: Protests

- 1) No protest can be made on an umpire’s judgment call.
- 2) No manager can overrule an umpire’s judgement call.
- 3) Any protest due to misinterpretation of a rule must be submitted to neutral Commissioners within forty-eight (48) hours.
- 4) Managers may dispute a rule interpretation, provided that the dispute is presented in a calm, gentlemanly manner. No Assistant Coach, Parent, Player or other actor is permitted to engage in a protest with an umpire, especially in matters that involve judgment calls on close plays.
- 5) The protesting manager must inform the opposing manager and the umpire that he is protesting the game at the point of disagreement. At that time and prior to the next pitch, the protesting manager must have the umpire sign their name in the score



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book and outline a description of the disagreement. If intentions to protest the game have not been recorded before the game continues on, the protest is invalid.

- 6) A protested game must be played to completion.
- 7) If the protesting team wins, the protest is dropped.
- 8) Before ruling on a protest, the Commissioner (or Commissioners in the case of an Avonworth vs. Quaker Valley game) must contact the umpire and both managers to understand the situation.
- 9) If the protest is upheld, the game will be resumed from the point of protest.
- 10) All protests will be decided by independent Commissioners not involved in the game. If a Commissioner is a coach on a team involved with the protest, that League's VP On Field will handle the protest. (If both the Commissioner and VP On Field are involved, then the League President will handle the protest)
- 11) All Commissioner rulings are final.
- 12) For anything not explicitly covered by these local rules, please refer to the most recent edition Little League Rule Book.

SECTION G: Discipline

- 1) Umpires have the right to eject anyone, including parents and spectators, from the field of play for unbecoming conduct. This is a Little League rule, not a local rule.
- 2) Any player found to be using illegal equipment will be ejected from the game, unless the opposing manager is willing to issue a one-time warning instead (with an automatic ejection for 2nd offense).
- 3) Use of an illegal pitcher (one who pitches more than three (3) innings in a game or violates the pitch count rule) will result in a 1-0 forfeiture of the game. However, in the spirit of sportsmanship, both teams should make their best effort to notify the other team before such a violation occurs.
- 4) Unsportsmanlike conduct, including vulgarity or violence directed at another person by a player, manager, or coach is a serious problem and warrants ejection from the game by the umpire without warning. Each case will also be reviewed by both Boards of Directors, and punishments could range from a warning may be given in the event of a less serious occurrence...to a lifetime ban for extreme violations.
- 5) An ejected person must leave the ball park. Any adult that has been ejected from a game by an umpire must immediately leave the field and must remain at least 100 yards away from the nearest part of the field through the completion of the game.
- 6) The use of tobacco or alcohol is not permitted in the ballpark by any coach, player, scorekeeper or umpire.
- 7) A manager has the right to suspend a player. The suspension and length of suspension by the manager must be investigated by his league commissioner.



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8) The league also has a right to suspend a player for repetitive occurrences of unsportsmanlike conduct. This suspension requires unanimous approval of the league commissioners.

- ◆ **KNOW YOUR RULES AND KEEP IN MIND THAT THE PURPOSE OF OUR BASEBALL LEAGUE IS TO TEACH KIDS TO PLAY AND LOVE THE GAME OF BASEBALL!**

PLAYOFF RULES

All rules will be the same as regular season rules except for the following:

1. Any pitcher who pitches more than 40 pitches in a playoff game will not be eligible to pitch in the team's next playoff game, regardless of the number of days of rest between games. If a pitcher reaches 40 pitches while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any one of the following conditions occurs: 1) That batter reaches base; 2) That batter is put out; 3) The third out is made to complete the half-inning. The official pitch count for the pitcher will be 40 for the game, as long as they do not face another new batter after the 40 pitch threshold has been surpassed.
2. Higher seeded teams will be the home team, regardless of field location. All playoff rounds will be single elimination including the championship.

SECTION H: Playoff Rules

- 1) All teams make the playoffs.
- 2) All playoff rounds will be single elimination including the championship.
- 3) Teams will be seeded based upon winning percentage for a minimum of **12** games (unless ALL teams have completed all 13 or 14 regulation games within 3 days of the regular season finale, in which case **13 or 14** games will be used as the winning percentage minimum for playoff seeding)
 - a) Teams that play less than **12** total games played will add losses to their record until the number of games equals 13
 - b) Teams with more than the minimum of **12 (or 13)** total games played will use their **13 (or 14)** best games (i.e. they are able to drop losses to get back to the minimum number of games). This is to encourage teams to reschedule all rainouts.
 - c) Seeding of tie-breakers is as follows:
 1. Head-to-Head
 2. Winning percentage for all games actually played (so as to place a 15-0 team ahead of a 14-1 team)
 3. Run Differential for the season
 4. Coin Flip
- 4) Up to the four highest seeds will get first round byes (unless the total number of teams from Avonworth and QV combined is exactly 8 or 16).



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- 5) Higher seeded teams will be the home team, regardless of field location.
- 6) The highest seeded team in each playoff match will select the field location and time, except for championship games if league decides to host a doubleheader at a single location. If their “home” field is not available, an alternate field must be used so game is played on/by scheduled date.
- 7) First round play-off matches can be scheduled for as early as the Saturday after the last scheduled day of the season (usually a Thursday in early June), or as late as that Monday following the last scheduled day of the season.
- 8) Second round play-off matches can be scheduled for as early as the Sunday after the last scheduled day of the season (usually a Thursday in early June), or as late as that Wednesday following the last scheduled day of the season.
- 9) Third round play-off matches should be scheduled for a time that both coaches agree upon. If a date cannot be agreed upon for a third round match to be scheduled within 9 days since the last day of the regular season, then the league scheduler or Commissioners will schedule that (and any subsequent round match) for a date that equals 2 weeks from the last regular season game (and then every 2 days after that until the Championship game has been played).
- 10) The highest seeded team is responsible for negotiating the date and time, and also scheduling umpires for the game. NOTE: If a team chooses to host a game at an away (or neutral) venue, they must also pay for and coordinate the umpires for that location.
- 11) Play-off Pitch counts:
 - a) All players’ pitch counts are reset for the 1st game of the playoffs
 - b) A pitcher can throw up to 40 pitches, plus finish the batter faced when 40 pitches are reached, in a playoff game and be eligible for the next game, regardless of when that game occurs - next day or longer
 - c) A pitcher that exceeds 40 pitches, and faces a new batter after reaching 40, cannot pitch in the next game, regardless of when that game is played (no eligibility gained due to rainouts or other delays).
 - d) Losing team will report score and any pitcher that are not available (over 40 pitches) for the team advancing.