

UMPIRE AND MAIN RULES SUMMARY

- **Continuous Batting Order** A continuous batting order policy will be followed that will include all players on the team roster present for the game. Players arriving after a game begins (ie, the home plate umpire puts the first pitch in play) may be added to the bottom of the batting order lineup if the manager so chooses. Otherwise, that player will be considered absent from that game.
- **Courtesy Runner for Catcher** If there are two outs and a catcher who will catch at the beginning of the next inning has reached base safely, a courtesy runner may be used for that catcher in order for the catcher to dress and be ready to warm up the pitcher immediately following the team's at bat. The courtesy runner will be the player who made the last out for the team at bat.
- **Courtesy Runner for Injured Player** If an offensive player is injured while at bat or running bases, a courtesy runner may be used to replace the injured runner. The courtesy runner will be the player who made the last out for the team at bat, whether in the current inning or in the previous inning. The injured player may re-enter the game once provided the player's manager and the umpire-in-chief deem that player recovered and able to play. However, if that player becomes injured again during that game, that injured player will be removed from the line-up and will be considered permanently out of the game. The re-entry rule is to accommodate a player who, for example, may only have the wind knocked out of him but is physically able to re-enter the game in the following inning when he has recovered his breath.
- **Late Arrivals of Players** If a player arrives late to a game and the manager chooses to allow that player to enter the game, he would be added to the end of the current lineup.
- **Extension of Game Time** No new inning on a Saturday will start after the game is 2 hours for Major League games and 2 hours 15 minutes old for 50/70 or JR/SR League games except for games with no game scheduled to follow the immediate game as long as agreed to by both managers and umpire-in-chief. No new inning on a weeknight will begin after 8:30 PM for Major League games and 9:00 PM for 50/70 or JR/SR League games. The only exception is if both managers agree to the extension of game time as well as the umpire-in-chief.

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GAME RULES:

- **Major League ONLY Composite Bats:** Composite bats are prohibited unless an approval has been granted by Little League International (see www.LittleLeague.org for approval list). **Bats for major league:** cannot be more than 33 inches in length nor more than 2 ¼ inches in diameter **and non-wood bats shall be printed with a BPF (bat performance factor) of 1.15 or less (Rule 1.10, page 53, 2015 Rule Book).**
- **Bats for 50/70 and JR Leagues:** cannot be more than 34 inches in length nor more than 2 5/8 inches in diameter (cannot use a 2 ¾ inch diameter bat). **JR League Composite Bats:** Composite bats are prohibited unless it meets the Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution (BBCOR) performance standard and the bat is labeled with that permanent certification mark. **Aluminum/alloy and composite bats shall be marked as to their material makeup being aluminum/alloy or composite.** (Rule 1.10, page 54, 2015 Rule Book).
- **Bats for SR League:** cannot be more than 36 inches in length nor more than 2 5/8 inches in diameter (cannot use a 2 ¾ inch diameter bat) **and** must not have less than a “-3” rating, ie, “a drop 3” (weight of bat cannot be less than 3 ounces of the length of the bat) **SR League Bats:** **all bats not made of a single piece of wood shall meet the Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution (BBCOR) performance standard, which will include having a silkscreen or other permanent certification mark on the bat. Aluminum/alloy and composite bats shall be marked as to their material makeup being aluminum/alloy or composite.** (Rule 1.10, page 54, 2015 Rule Book).
- **Penalties for use of illegal bats:** an illegal bat must be removed from the game. Additionally, if the batter enters the batter’s box with one or both feet **entirely** on the ground with an illegal bat or is discovered having used an illegal bat during his turn at bat and prior to the next player entering the batter’s box **and** the infraction is discovered before the next player enters the batter’s box: (Rule 1.10, NOTE 5, page 54, and Rule 6.06(d), page 83, 2015 Rule Book).
 - a) the manager of the defense may advise the plate umpire of a decision to decline the penalty and accept the play (as long as this election is made at the end of the play),
 - b) for the **first violation**, the offensive team will **lose** one eligible adult base coach for the duration of the game,
 - c) for the **second violation**, the **manager** of the team will be **ejected** from the game, and
 - d) any **subsequent violations** will result in the **newly designated manager** being **ejected**.An illegal bat **must** be removed from the game once discovered (NOTE 5, page 54, and Rule 6.06(d), page 84, 2015 Rule Book).

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- **Dropped Third Strike (Major, 50/70, JR, and SR League Divisions):** the batter becomes a runner when the third strike called by the umpire is not caught, providing (1) first base is unoccupied or (2) first base is occupied with two outs. A batter forfeits his opportunity to advance to first base when he enters the dugout or any other dead ball area (Rule 6.05(b), page 81, and Rule 6.09(b), page 86, 2015 Rule Book). **NOTE:** To put the batter out, the defense must tag the batter or first base before the batter touches first base (Rule 6.05(b), Approved Ruling, page 82, 2015 Rule Book)
- **Casts** may not be worn during the game, including umpires. **NOTE:** Persons wearing casts, including managers and coaches, must remain in the dugout during the game (Rule 1.11(k), page 55, 2015 Rule Book).
- **Electronic Equipment in Dugouts:** the use of electronic devices in the dugout is allowed for players, coaches, or managers **as long as** the devices are **not used for communication**; the penalty for violation of this rule is **ejection from the game** (Rule 3.17, page 69, 2015 Rule Book).
- **For minor league:** if the Board of Directors approve and elect this option, the five-run rule may be suspended **in the last half inning for either team** (Rule 5.07, page 78, 2015 Rule Book).
- **NOTE: PENALTIES FOR EJECTIONS** – a manager, coach, or player ejected from a game must leave the game site **and** are not allowed to participate or be present at the team’s next physically played game (Rule 4.07, page 71, 2015 Rule Book).

OTHER RULE BOOK SUMMARIES

1. A “new inning” is defined as one that **starts the moment that the third out is made**, completing the preceding inning (Regulation X – NIGHT GAMES (a), page 42, 2015 Rule Book).
2. **Continuous Batting Order:** A continuous batting order policy may be followed that will include all players on the team roster present for the game. Players arriving after a game begins (ie, the home plate umpire puts the first pitch in play) may be added to the bottom of the batting order lineup if the manager so chooses. Otherwise, that player will be considered absent from that game. Pinch runner rule does not apply if leagues use a continuous batting order (Rule 4.04, page 70, 2015 Rule Book).

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3. **The following pre-game schedule should be adhered to by both teams:**

<u>Weekdays</u>	<u>Saturdays</u>	
:05	:35 or :05	Visitor's infield warm-up
:15	:45 or :15	Home infield warm-up
:25	:55 or :25	Meeting at home plate with umpires
:30	:00 or :30	Game begins

If the visiting team has not taken their infield warm-up within their designated time allotment, the home field may take their infield warm-up instead and the **visiting team will then forfeit infield warm-up** in order that the game starts on time.

4. **If a game cannot be played due to one or both teams failing to have nine players** to begin the game, the game will be referred to the League Vice-President for a decision on forfeiture. A game may not be started with less than nine (9) players on each team. Additionally, if an injury or ejection occurs during a game, the game may not continue without nine (9) players on the field. If a decision of forfeiture is decided, the score will be recorded as 6 – 0 (major league) or 7 – 0 (JR/SR league) with the losing team being the one that failed to field nine (9) players. If both teams fail to have sufficient players, both teams will forfeit with the score being recorded in the official team scorebooks as 0 – 6 or 0 – 7, depending upon major league or JR/SR league play (Sections 4.16 and 4.17, page 76, 2015 Rule Book and Section 2.00 – DEFINITIONS, Forfeited Game, page 60, 2015 Rule Book).
5. Any player who has played the position of catcher in four (4) or more innings in a game is ineligible to pitch on that calendar day (Regulation IV – PITCHERS, section (a), page 37, 2015 Rule Book). For example, if a player has caught for 3 full innings and catches **one live pitch** in the fourth inning, that player may **not** pitch that day.
6. **During games**, there shall be only one (1) manager and two (2) coaches allowed in the dugout with team players provided they have passed their background checks **and are approved by the Board of Directors**. If any manager, coach, or assistant coach is **has not** had a background check performed, that individual is **not allowed to be on the field at any time**. **The offensive team** shall station two base coaches on the field during its time at bat. These base coaches should not leave their respective dugouts until the pitcher has completed his/her preparatory pitches to the catcher. The base coaches are required to remain within the coaches boxes during their offensive time at bat. The base coaches may be both manager and coach (provided an adult coach is in the dugout with the players), manager/coach and player, or both players. Once the game has started, **all coaches must remain in the dugout as well as players** except for bathroom breaks or other “emergencies” (NOTE: going to the concession stand for snacks is

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- not an “emergency”). An adult manager/coach **must be** in the dugout with the players at all times during the game (Rule 4.05, page 71, 2015 Rule Book **and** Rule 3.09, page 68, 2015 Rule Book).
7. **Ten-Run Rule:** There will be a 10-run rule in force for all games pursuant to Rule 4.10(e), page 73 of the 2015 Rule Book. Games will be called according to this rule and **the team books will be closed** but play may be continued if time permits and both managers as well as the umpire-in-chief agree to continue play.
 8. A pitcher shall be permitted to pitch no more than eight (8) preparatory pitches to the catcher **but no more** than one minute of preparatory pitches between half-innings (Rule 8.03, page 100, 2015 Rule Book).
 9. **Pitching Rules:** Pitching rules are as follows pursuant to Regulation VI – Pitchers, sections (b), (c) and (d), pages 37 and 38 in the 2015 Rule Book.

Pitchers must be removed, based on the pitcher’s age, from that position (but may remain in the game at another position) once the pitcher has reached a certain number of pitches for any particular game as follows:

Age 13 to 16 :	95 pitches allowed per day
Age 11 to 12 :	85 pitches allowed per day
Age 9 to 10 :	75 pitches allowed per day
Age 7 to 8 :	50 pitches allowed per day

DAYS OF REST FOR PLAYERS AGE 14 AND UNDER:

That pitcher may pitch again as follows:

<u>Number of pitches</u>	<u>Number of Days</u>
66 or more	after 4 calendar days of rest
51 to 65	after 3 calendar days of rest
36 to 50	after 2 calendar days of rest
21 to 35	after 1 calendar day of rest
1 to 20	0 calendar days of rest

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DAYS OF REST FOR PLAYERS AGE 15 TO 18:

That pitcher may pitch again as follows:

<u>Number of pitches</u>	<u>Number of Days</u>
76 or more	after 4 calendar days of rest
61 to 75	after 3 calendar days of rest
46 to 60	after 2 calendar days of rest
31 to 45	after 1 calendar day of rest
1 to 30	0 calendar days of rest

If the pitcher reaches the limit imposed above on his/her last pitch to a particular batter, the pitcher **must be removed** prior to delivering a pitch to the next batter.

Exception: If a pitcher reaches the limit imposed above while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until that batter reaches base, is put out, or the third out for the inning is made on another player.

NOTE FOR DAY(S) OF REST EXCEPTION: If a pitcher reaches a day(s) of rest threshold 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 retired,
3. the third out is made to complete the half-inning

The pitcher will only be required to observe the calendar day(s) of rest for the threshold he reached during that at-bat, provided that pitcher is removed before delivering a pitch to another batter (Regulation VI(d) – PITCHERS, page 38, 2015 Rule Book).

Managers are responsible for the removal of pitchers once the pitcher has reached his/her maximum pitch count for the day. The manager should establish an official pitch count recorder for the team who may or may not also be the official scorekeeper. The failure of the pitch-count recorder or the umpire-in-chief to notify the manager of a pitcher reaching the pitching maximum for the day does not relieve the manager of his responsibility to remove that ineligible pitcher. **FOR 50/70 and JR/SR LEAGUE ONLY:** If the pitcher is removed prior to reaching his/her maximum pitch counts for a game, that pitcher may return to the mound if he/she remains in the game in another field position, but only once per game (Regulation VI – PITCHERS, sections (b) and (g), pages 37 and 38, 2015 Rule Book).

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I would suggest that all home-plate umpires check with the official pitch-count recorders and/or the official scorekeepers for both teams as each half inning ends to establish an ongoing pitch count. By checking with both teams, the home-plate umpire also establishes an agreed upon pitch count so there can be no controversy or protest of game.

NOTE: A pitcher who delivers forty-one or more pitches in a game **cannot** play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day. However, a player who begins a game in the position of catcher may pitch provided he meets all other pitch count and days of rest requirements and has not played the position of catcher for four (4) or more innings (Regulation VI – PITCHERS, section (c), page 37, 2015 Rule Book).

Intentional Walk: If a pitcher wishes to intentionally walk a batter, he must do so by pitching four pitches intentionally outside the strike zone that are not struck at by the batter, and are called “balls” by the umpire. All such pitches will count in determining that pitcher’s pitch count (Memo from Little League Headquarters, October 3, 2007).

An illegal pitch (or balk in 50/70, JR, and SR Leagues), whether or not a pitch is actually delivered to a batter, will count as a pitch in determining the pitch count for that pitcher **only for Major League or Minor League divisions**. The pitch count **may** increase for 50/70, JR, or SR League divisions, depending upon whether a pitch was actually delivered (Rule 8.05, PENALTY FOR AN ILLEGAL PITCH/BALK, pages 101 and 102 and Rule 2.00 – DEFINITIONS, Pitch, page 64, 2015 Rule Book).

10. A player who is 12 years old **cannot** pitch in the Minor League (Regulation VI – PITCHERS, section (j), pages 38 and 39, 2015 Rule Book).
11. The pitcher shall **not** apply a foreign substance **of any kind** to the ball (this includes **dirt or clay**) or deface the ball in any manner. A pitcher may use a rosin bag for **hands only**. When a pitcher violates this rule, an umpire shall call the pitch a ball and warn the pitcher. (Rule 8.02 (a)(2) through (6), page 99, 2015 Rule Book). If the violation is repeated during the game, the umpire shall remove the pitcher from the game. No **player** shall intentionally discolor or damage the ball by rubbing it with soil, rosin, etc. or any other foreign substance. The umpire shall demand the ball and remove the offender/player from the game. If the umpire cannot locate the offender/player and the pitcher delivers such discolored or damaged ball to the batter, the pitcher shall be removed from the game at once (Rule 3.02, page 66, 2015 Rule Book).

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12. Pitchers can pitch from the windup position or the stretch position but, for 50/70, JR, and SR Leagues, the pitcher must come to a set and pause position prior to delivering the pitch to the batter. Major League and Minor League pitchers do not have to come to a complete stop. The pitcher, before making any motion naturally associated with a pitch to a batter, can **step and throw** to any base occupied by a runner, or to a base where a play can be made (such as an attempted stolen base in 50/70/JR/SR League). A snap throw followed by the step toward the base is an illegal pitch (a balk in 50/70/JR/SR League). The pitcher **may not** go into a set or stretch position from the windup position without properly disengaging the pivot foot from the pitcher's plate (Rule 8.01(b) **NOTE** and Rule 8.01(a)(3), page 98, 2015 Rule Book; also, see Rule 8.01 in its entirety, pages 98 and 99, 2015 Rule Book).
13. A manager or coach may come out twice **in one inning** to visit a pitcher (the third time in one inning and the pitcher must be removed) and may visit a pitcher three times **per game** (the fourth visit within a game, the pitcher must be removed). A manager or coach is prohibited from making a third visit to the pitcher while the same batter is at bat. Injury time-outs **are not** considered visits to pitchers. (Section 8.06, page 102, 2015 Rule Book) **FOR 50/70/JR/SR LEAGUE ONLY: If the pitcher is removed prior to reaching his/her maximum pitch counts for a game, that pitcher may return to the mound if he/she remains in the game in another field position, but only once per game (VI – PITCHERS, section (b), page 37, 2015 Rule Book).**
14. **AN ILLEGAL PITCH** requires the umpire (plate or field) to either call "ball" or "balk". A "balk" is called only in 50/70/JR/SR League; major league and below, the call will be "ball". A "ball" will be called to benefit the batter (**in 50/70/JR/SR League only if there are no base runners**). A "balk" will be called **when there are base runners** in 50/70/JR/SR League only. When a "balk" is called, the ball is dead and **each** runner shall advance one base, including home. With a "balk" call, the batter's count will remain the same as it was prior to the call by the umpire **unless** an actual pitch was made to the batter which resulted in "ball 4" thereby awarding the batter first base. If a play is made on an illegal pitch (such as a hit, a fielding error, a base on balls, or a hit batter) **and** all base runners advance at least one base, then the play would stand and there would be no reference to a "balk" (Rule 8.05, pages 100, 101, and 102, 2015 Rule Book). An illegal pitch (or balk in 50/70, JR, and SR Leagues), whether or not a pitch is actually delivered to a batter, will count as a pitch in determining the pitch count for that pitcher **only for Major League or Minor League divisions**. The pitch count **may** increase for 50/70, JR, or SR League divisions, depending upon whether a pitch was actually delivered (Rule 8.05, PENALTY FOR AN ILLEGAL PITCH/BALK, pages 101 and 102 and Rule 2.00 – DEFINITIONS, Pitch, page 64, 2015 Rule Book).

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Since there are no balks in Major League or Minor League divisions, an illegal pitch is called a ball. However, if a play follows the illegal pitch, the manager of the offense may advise the plate umpire of a decision to decline the illegal pitch penalty and accept the play, provided such election is made immediately at the end of the play (Rule 8.05, **PENALTY FOR AN ILLEGAL PITCH**, page 101, 2015 Rule Book).

Illegal pitches are when:

- the pitcher, while touching the plate, makes any motion naturally associated with the pitch and fails to make the delivery,
- the pitcher, while touching the plate, feints a throw to first base and fails to complete the throw,
- the pitcher, while touching the plate, fails to step directly toward a base before throwing to that base (a snap throw),
- the pitcher, while touching the plate, throws or feints a throw to an unoccupied base, except for the purpose of making a play,
- the pitcher makes a “quick pitch” (a pitch delivered before the batter is reasonably set in the batter’s box),
- the pitcher makes any motion naturally associated with the pitch while **not** touching the plate,
- the pitcher, without having the ball, stands on or astride the pitcher’s plate,
- the pitcher, while touching the plate, accidentally or intentionally drops the ball,
- the ball slips out of the pitchers hand and crosses the foul line (if the slipped ball remains in fair territory, the call will be “no pitch”)

For **50/70/JR/SR League**, umpires should bear in mind that the purpose of the balk rule is to prevent the pitcher from deliberately deceiving a base runner and that the “intent of the pitcher should govern” these calls. With a runner on first base attempting to steal second, the pitcher may make a complete turn without hesitating toward first and throw to second (Rule 8.05, **PENALTY FOR A BALK**, pages 101 and 102, 2015 Rule Book).

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15. Other than the normal plays getting a BATTER out, a batter is also out when:
- bunting foul on a third strike,
 - the batter attempts to hit a third strike and is touched by the ball,
 - the batter hits the ball with **one or both feet** on the ground **entirely** outside the batter's box
 - a third strike is not caught by the catcher with less than two outs and first base is occupied
 - the batter enters the batter's box with an illegal bat (as defined in Rule 1.10, pages 53 and 54, 2015 Rule Book) or is discovered having used an illegal bat prior to the next batter entering the batter's box
- (Rules 6.05 and 6.06, pages 81, 82, and 83, 2015 Rule Book)
16. A batter may attempt to run to first base when a third strike pitch is not caught by the catcher **and** either first base is unoccupied **or** first base is occupied but with two outs. A batter will forfeit the opportunity to advance to first base when he/she enters the dugout. Until the batter enters the dugout or other dead ball area, he/she may attempt to advance to first base under this rule (Rule 6.09(b), page 86, 2015 Rule Book). This rule does not apply to the Minor League Division or below.
17. If the ball is in the strike zone when it touches the batter (including hands on the bat when swinging at, or attempting to bunt, a strike), it shall be called a strike, whether or not the batter tries to avoid the ball. If the ball is outside the strike zone when it touches the batter, it shall be called a ball **if that batter makes no attempt to avoid** being touched (Rule 6.08(b), **NOTE**, page 86, 2015 Rule Book).
18. A batter becomes a runner at first base without liability to be put out when there is catcher's interference (when a batter's bat hits the catcher's glove when the batter is swinging at a pitch is the most common example of catcher's interference). If a play follows the catcher interference, the manager of the offense may advise the plate umpire of a decision to decline the interference penalty and accept the play provided the election is made immediately at the end of the play. If the batter reaches first base on a hit, error, base on balls, etc. and all other runners advance at least one base, the play proceeds without reference to the interference (Rule 6.08(c), page 86, 2015 Rule Book).
19. A batter becomes a runner at first base without liability to be put out when a fair ball touches an umpire or a runner in fair territory **before** touching a fielder (the runner would be called out). If a fair ball touches an umpire **after** having passed a fielder (other than the pitcher) or having touched a fielder (including the pitcher), the ball is live and in play (Rule 6.08(d), page 86, 2015 Rule Book).

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20. **BATTING OUT OF TURN:** A batter (proper batter) shall be called out, on appeal by the defensive team's manager, when failing to bat in his/her proper turn and another batter (improper batter) **completes** a time at bat in place of the proper batter. The proper batter may take a position in the batter's box any time before the improper batter becomes a runner or is put out, and the improper batter's strike and ball count becomes the proper batter's count (Rule 6.07(a), page 84, 2015 Rule Book).

When an improper batter becomes a runner or is put out and the defensive team appeals to the umpire **before the first pitch to the next batter**, or before any play or attempted play, the umpire shall (1) declare the proper batter out and (2) nullify any advance or score made because of a ball batted by the improper batter or because of the improper batter's advance to first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter or otherwise. When an improper batter becomes a runner or is put out and a pitch is made to the next batter before an appeal is made, the improper batter becomes the proper batter and the results of such time at bat becomes legal (Rules 6.07(b) and (c), page 84, 2015 Rule Book).

While the improper batter is at bat and a runner advances on a stolen base, illegal pitch (balk), wild pitch, or passed ball by the catcher, such advance is legal.

If a proper appeal is made by the defensive team after the improper batter becomes a runner or is put out, when the proper batter is called out by the umpire, the next batter in order **immediately after** the original proper batter who was just called out now becomes the proper batter, even if that batter was the improper batter. For example, assume Adam was supposed to bat and Bryce came out to bat instead. Bryce hit the ball between third and short-stop and was awarded first base on a hit. The defensive team appealed the batting order before the next pitch to Charley. Adam is now called out and Bryce, because he is the batter immediately following Adam, is now at bat again, but this time as the proper batter, not the improper batter (See Approved Rulings listed under Rule 6.07, pages 84 and 85, 2015 Rule Book).

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21. **INFIELD FLY RULE:** a batter will be called out and runners, if any, may advance at their own risk if an infield fly ball is hit (**not bunted**) by the batter. An infield fly is a fair fly ball that can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort but only when first and second, or first, second, and third bases are occupied **and** there are less than two outs. The fly ball does not necessarily have to be judged by the umpire to be falling within the infield. If, in the umpire's judgment, the fly ball is high enough and gives the infielder enough time to go to the short outfield area and catch the ball with ordinary effort, this shall be deemed an infield fly. The umpire shall **immediately** declare "Infield Fly-Batter's Out" for the benefit of the runners. If the ball is near either foul line, the umpire shall declare "Infield Fly If Fair". The ball is alive on an infield fly and runners may retouch their respective bases after the ball is touched by a defensive player in order for the runner to advance at the runner's own risk, the same as any fly ball. If the hit becomes a foul ball, it is treated as any foul ball. If an Infield Fly falls untouched to the ground and bounces foul before passing first or third base, it is a foul ball. If an Infield Fly falls untouched to the ground in foul territory and bounces into fair territory before passing first or third base, it is an Infield Fly (Rule 2.00 – Definitions – INFIELD FLY, pages 61 and 62, 2015 Rule Book).

A batter is out when an infielder **intentionally** drops a fair fly ball **or line drive** with first, first and second, first and third, or first, second, and third bases occupied with less than two outs. The ball is dead and any runner shall return to their original base or bases (**Rule 6.05(k), page 82, 2015 Rule Book**).

22. If a batter hits a fair ball close to the baseline and the umpire judges the hit to be fair, **the umpire should remain silent** and point to fair territory indicating the hit is a fair ball. If a batter hits a foul ball, the umpire should hold up both hands and declare "Foul Ball". A foul ball is a dead ball, runners do not advance, and the game does not continue until the plate umpire puts the game back into play by pointing to the pitcher. A game should not be put back into play until the pitcher has the ball in his/her possession and is on the pitcher's plate and the batter is in the batter's box.

A fielder who is in fair territory but reaches out into foul territory and touches the ball requires the umpire to declare "Foul Ball". An example is when a third baseman has his feet in fair territory but reaches into foul territory to attempt to catch a ball hit on the outside of third base; the ball is foul and play is dead until the umpire puts the game back into play. Any overthrown balls after a foul ball hit (dead ball) with runners on base **does not** allow those runners to advance. If the runners do advance in error, those runners must return to the bases they originally occupied at the time of the foul ball hit prior to the plate umpire putting the game back into play.

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A foul tip **is not** a foul ball. For one thing, a foul tip is a **live ball** instead of a dead ball like a foul ball. A foul tip is defined as “a batted ball that goes sharp and direct from the bat to the catcher’s hands and is legally caught. It is not a foul tip unless caught and any foul tip that is caught is a strike”. An umpire should never declare “Fair Ball” **or** “Foul Tip” as this could cause confusion to any base runner who chose to run on the foul tip ball. If the runner successfully advanced to the next base, that stolen base stands and the runner is not to be returned to the prior base. The umpire should make a “brushing” sign with his hands raised to indicate a foul tip (Rule 2.00 – DEFINITIONS, pages 60 and 61, 2015 Rule Book).

23. Any **fair ball** after touching the ground passes through, over, or under a fence or through or under a scoreboard or passes through or under a fence or scoreboard without necessarily touching the ground, or is deflected by a fielder over or under a fence or into foul territory entitles the batter and any runner to **advance two bases** (Rule 6.09(e), (f), and (g), page 87, 2015 Rule Book).
24. If a thrown ball **accidentally** touches a base coach, or a pitched or thrown ball touches an umpire, the ball is alive and in play. **However**, if the base coach interferes with a thrown ball, the runner is out and the play remains live (Rule 5.08, page 78, 2015 Rule Book).
25. The ball becomes dead when the plate umpire interferes with the catcher’s act of throwing in an attempt to retire a runner. The runner(s) return to their original bases. **However**, if the catcher’s throw gets the runner out, the out stands and there is no umpire interference (Rule 5.09(b), page 78, 2015 Rule Book).
26. The ball becomes dead when a pitched ball lodges in the catcher’s or umpire’s mask or paraphernalia. Runner(s) advance one base (Rule 5.09(g), page 79, 2015 Rule Book).
27. **Major and Minor Leagues Only:** There is **no On-deck Circle** for warm-up swings by batters (Rule 1.08, **NOTE 1**, page 53, 2015 Rule Book).

50/70/JR/SR League Only: There **is an On-deck Circle** for warm-up swing by batters.

Batters and player/base coaches **must always** have a batting helmet on when outside the dugout and in a position of either the base coach’s box or, in the case of JR/SR League, the on-deck circle. Batters are **never permitted** to swing bats in the fenced-in areas of the dugouts. Both of these rules are related to safety issues and must be adhered to.

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28. **The traditional batting donut is not permissible** (Rule 1.10, **NOTE 2**, page 54, 2015 Rule Book).
29. **Major League Only:** When a runner is advancing or stealing a base, there is no head-first sliding. If a runner does slide head-first while advancing, that runner shall be called “Out” (Rule 7.08(a)(4), pages 90, 2015 Rule Book). **50/70/JR/SR League:** A runner may slide head-first on an advance to any base. Head-first sliding **is always allowed** for all runners in any league if they are **attempting to return to a base** they occupied.
30. **OBSTRUCTION:** is the act of a fielder (defensive team) who, while not in the possession of the ball, impedes the progress of any runner (this includes “fake tags” and blocking of bases or home plate while not in possession of the ball). As with most calls, this is one of judgment by either the plate umpire or the field umpire(s). The ball is either called “Dead ball-Obstruction” **or** play is allowed to continue at which time the umpire will call “Time” and impose any obstruction penalties (Rules 2.00, DEFINITIONS, page 63, 2015 Rule Book and Rule 7.06, page 90, 2015 Rule Book).

The dead-ball call is when **a play is being made on the obstructed runner**. The ball is dead and all play ceases. The obstructed runner is then awarded to advance to the base which, in the umpire’s judgment, that runner would have advanced had no obstruction occurred. The runner shall be awarded **at least one base** and any preceding runners **forced** to advance because of the obstruction call shall advance without liability to be put out. If Runner 1 is on 2nd Base and advances to 3rd Base when Runner 2 hits the ball and Runner 2 is obstructed with by a play to 1st Base, the ball would be called dead for obstruction and Runner 2 is awarded 2nd Base with Runner 1 remaining on 3rd Base because there was no force of advance. If Runner 1 was on 1st Base when the ball was hit and safely advanced to 2nd Base, Runner 2 would be awarded 2nd Base because of the obstruction and Runner 1 would be awarded 3rd Base because there was a forced advance when the obstruction call was made.

If **no play is being made on the obstructed runner**, the play shall proceed until no further action is possible. The umpire will then call “Time” and determine what bases, if any, should be awarded to runners due to the obstruction. Assume Jake hits the ball to the outfield, tags 1st Base safely then immediately proceeds to go to 2nd Base. When rounding first, Jake collides with the 1st Baseman because the 1st Baseman was standing within Jake’s established basepath to 2nd Base. Jake continues on to 2nd Base where the outfielder throws the ball. If Jake is safe at 2nd Base, the umpire should **not call obstruction** because Jake is where he would be had no obstruction occurred. If Jake is thrown out at 2nd Base, the umpire **should call “Time” and obstruction** and award Jake 2nd Base, if in the umpire’s judgment, Jake would have been safe at 2nd Base had the obstruction not occurred.

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Please note that **actual contact with a runner does not have to occur** in order to have obstruction. In the example above with Jake hitting the ball and colliding with the 1st Baseman before going to 2nd Base, if Jake had not collided but was instead forced to run around the 1st Baseman thereby running outside of his otherwise normal basepath toward 2nd Base, there is still obstruction.

Also, please note that **if a defensive player blocks** the base, **home plate**, or baseline **clearly without possession of the ball**, “dead ball” obstruction shall be called and the runner is safe (Rule 7.06(b), page 90, 2015 Rule Book).

31. **INTERFERENCE:** There are three main types of interference, all of which are dead ball offenses and strictly judgment calls by either the plate umpire or the field umpire(s):

- offensive interference which is an act by a member of the team at bat that interferes with, obstructs, impedes, hinders, or confuses any fielder attempting to make a play,
- catcher’s interference which is an act by the catcher that hinders or prevents a batter from hitting a pitch (most common occurrence is when a batter swings at a pitch and in the process hits the catcher’s glove first), and
- umpire interference that occurs when an umpire hinders, impedes, or prevents a catcher’s throw attempting to prevent a stolen base or when a fair ball touches an umpire in fair territory prior to passing a fielder.

(Rule 2.00-DEFINITIONS, pages 62 and 63, 2015 Rule Book)

It is interference by a batter or runner when, with less than two outs and a runner is on 3rd Base, the batter hinders a fielder in making a play at home base. The runner will be called out. If there are two outs in this circumstance, the batter will be called out for the third out and no run scores (Rule 7.08(g), page 91 and Rule 7.09(c), page 92, 2015 Rule Book).

It is interference by a batter and/or runner when, in the judgment of the umpire, **a base runner** willfully and deliberately interferes with a batted ball or a fielder in the act of fielding the batted ball with the obvious intent of breaking up a double play. The ball is dead and the base runner is out for interference as well as the batter-runner because of the action of the runner and **no bases may be run and no runs scored** because of the interference (Rule 7.09(f), page 92, 2015 Rule Book). If there is no double play, only the runner who made contact with a fair ball in fair territory before the ball was touched or passed by an infielder shall be called out (Rule 7.08(f), page 91, 2015 Rule Book).

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It is interference by a batter and/or runner when, in the judgment of the umpire, **a batter-runner** willfully and deliberately interferes with a batted ball or a fielder in the act of fielding the batted ball with the obvious intent of breaking up a double play. The ball is dead and the batter-runner is out for interference as well as the runner who advanced closest to home plate regardless of where the double play might have been possible; **no bases may be run and no runs scored** because of the interference (Rule 7.09(g), page 92, 2015 Rule Book).

It is interference by a runner when the runner fails to avoid a fielder who is attempting to field a batted ball or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball (Rule 7.09(j), page 93, 2015 Rule Book). This includes a runner who does not vacate his base when the fielder must pass over that base to field a **fair batted ball**.

It is interference by a batter or runner when a fair ball touches the batter or runner in fair territory **before** touching a fielder or passing by an infielder. The umpire will declare “interference on the batter or runner” and the batter or runner is out. Additionally, if in the judgment of the umpire, the batter or runner deliberately and intentionally kicks such a batted ball on which the infielder had missed a play, then the batter or runner shall be called out for interference (Rule 7.09(k), page 93, 2015 Rule Book).

32. Any runner shall be called out on appeal if the runner fails to touch home plate and makes no attempt to return to that base and home base is tagged. The appeal **must** occur prior to the next pitch, any play, or attempted play. **NOTE:** A runner forfeits his/her opportunity to return to home plate when he/she enters the dugout **No appeal can be made if the ball is dead** (Rule 7.10(d), page 94, 2015 Rule Book). **NOTE:** To put the batter out, the defense must tag the batter or first base before the batter touches first base (Rule 6.05(b), Approved Ruling, page 82, 2015 Rule Book). This rule make no mention of any newly created base path by the batter running from his position in the field to first base.
33. **NO SLIDE TO AVOID RULE:** Any runner is out when the runner does not slide or attempt to avoid contact with a fielder who has the ball and is waiting to make the tag (in other words, the runner “trucks” the fielder as in football or rugby) (Rule 7.08(a)(3), page 90, 2015 Rule Book). There is no “must slide rule”, only the “no slide to avoid contact” rule (Rule 7.08(a)(3), Approved Ruling, page 90, 2015 Rule Book).
34. Any runner is out when that runner passes a preceding runner before that preceding runner is put out (Rule 7.08(h), page 91, 2015 Rule Book).

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35. **RUNNING THROUGH FIRST BASE RULE:** Any runner is out when failing to return **at once** to first base and overrunning or oversliding that base. If attempting to run to second base, the runner is out when tagged (Rule 7.08(j), page 92, 2015 Rule Book). Please note that **there is no requirement for the runner to “turn out” into foul territory** in order to be declared safe without liability to be put out. The runner simply must immediately return to first base without making any move to run toward second base, regardless of whether that runner turns out into foul territory or turns into fair territory prior to immediately returning to first base.
36. Each batter-runner and/or runner may advance without being put out and **the ball remains in play** (ie, live ball) (Rule 7.05(b), (c), (d), (e), page 89, 2015 Rule Book):
- **three bases** if a **fielder touches a fair ball** with a cap, mask, or other part of the uniform detached from its proper place on the fielder, other than a glove remaining on the fielder’s hand, and the batter, after being awarded 3rd Base, may advance to home plate at his own peril,
 - **three bases** if a **fielder deliberately throws a glove and touches a fair ball**, and the batter, after being awarded 3rd Base, may advance to home plate at his own peril,
 - **two bases** if a **fielder deliberately touches a thrown ball** with a cap, mask, or other part of the uniform detached from its proper place on the fielder, other than a glove remaining on the fielder’s hand,
 - **two bases** if a **fielder deliberately throws a glove at and touches a thrown ball**.
37. Each batter-runner and/or runner may advance without being put out and **the ball becomes a dead ball** (ie, live ball) (Rule 7.05(g) and (h), page 89, 2015 Rule Book):
- **two bases** when a **thrown ball** goes into a dugout (even if the ball bounces back out into fair territory), over or under a fence, or becomes stuck in the fence. When such a wild throw is the **first play by an infielder**, the umpire, in awarding such bases, shall be governed by the position of the runners **at the time the ball was pitched**. In **all other cases**, the umpire shall be governed by the position of the runners **at the time the wild throw was made**. If all runners, including the batter-runner, have advanced at least one base when an infielder makes a wild throw on the first play after the pitch, the award shall be governed by the position of the runners when the wild throw was made.

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Example: Adam is on second when Chris hits the ball to short-stop who overthrows first and the ball goes into the dugout; Chris is awarded 2nd Base and Adam is awarded home and the ball is dead.

Adam is on first when Chris hits the ball to right field. Adam runs to second and Chris runs through first but the right fielder, after Chris has run through first, attempts a throw to first but the ball goes into the dugout. Since Chris had established occupancy of first base safely and Adam had established occupancy of second base safely, the two-base award begins at the position of the runners when the throw was made. Therefore, Adam will be awarded home and Chris will be awarded third base.

- **one base** if a **ball is pitched** or **thrown by the pitcher to a base** in an attempt to catch a runner and that **ball goes into the dugout or over or through a fence**. If the pitch or throw remains within the field, the ball is live and runners advance at their own peril.

38. **Minor and Major League Only – Runners Leaving Bases Early:** Base runners shall not leave their bases until the ball has been delivered and has reached the batter. If **any** base runner leaves early, the field umpire should let play continue and at the end of the play, throw a red flag or his hat to indicate the runner left early. If the play results in that runner being tagged or put out, the runner is out. However, if safe, that runner as well as other runners **may be** required to return to open bases. If the ball is hit within the infield and a runner leaves early, no run shall be allowed to score. If bases were loaded and the batter reaches first safely with on other runner being put out on the play, each runner shall advance to the base beyond the one they occupied at the start of the play (**one-base advance**) except the runner who occupied third base shall be removed from the base without a run being scored (Rule 7.13 and EXAMPLES, pages 94, 95 and 96, 2015 Rule Book):

- All runners on base will be allowed to score when the batter hits a **clean** triple (ie, not a triple on errors) or home run, regardless of whether any runner left too soon,
- Runners on first and second, **either** leaves too soon, batter hits a **clean** double, runner on first goes to third, runner on second scores,
- Runners on first and third, **either** leaves too soon, batter hits a **clean** double, runner on first goes to third, runner on third scores,
- Runners on second and third, **either** leaves too soon, batter hits a **clean** double, runner on second goes to third, runner on third scores,
- Runners on first, second, and third, **any** runner leaves too soon, batter hits a **clean** double, runner on first goes to third, runners on second and third score,

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- Bases full, **any** runner leaves too soon, batter receives a base on balls or is hit by a pitch, each runner will advance one base and a run will score,
 - Bases full, **any** runner leaves too soon, batter reaches first safely on any ball bunted or hit within the infield, all runners advance one base except runner advancing from third. That runner advancing from third is removed, no run is scored, and no out is charged. However, if on the play, **any** runner is put out at any base which results in an open base, the runner who occupied third base **returns to third base**.
39. All ejections of managers, coaches, players, or parents **must be** reported within 24 hours to the League Vice-president by the home plate umpire (Rule 9.05(a), page 105, 2015 Rule Book).
40. If a player, manager, or coach is ejected from a game by an umpire, that player, manager, or coach must immediately vacate the Little League premises and must not arrive for the next game (must not be in attendance) and could face more severe penalties as issued by the Discipline Committee. For the purpose of this rule, the game is in the hands of the umpires 10 minutes prior to the first pitch and continues until 10 minutes after the final out of the game. If that player, manager, or coach is ejected again during the season, the second ejection will automatically disqualify such player, manager, or coach for the rest of the season unless waived specifically by the Board of Directors with the League Vice-president's recommendation. Ejections will not be treated lightly by St. Augustine Little League, Inc. (see Rules 9.01, 9.02, and 9.05, pages 103, 104, and 105, 2015 Rule Book).
41. Judgment calls by umpires can **never** be questioned. These include fair/foul balls, strikes/balls, and safe/out calls. This rule applies to all managers, coaches, players, and spectators. Violators should be reported to the Junior/Senior League Vice-president or members of the Board of Directors. Violations of this rule will be treated strictly by St. Augustine Little League, Inc. (Rules 9.01, 9.02, and 9.05, pages 103, 104, and 105, 2015 Rule Book).
42. Managers and coaches must not warm up a pitcher at home plate or in the bull pen or elsewhere at any time (this includes before or during the game) (Rule 3.09, page 68, 2015 Rule Book).
43. The catcher must wear a catcher's mitt and wear a long or short model chest protector (Rules 1.12 and 1.17, pages 55 and 56, 2015 Rule Book)
44. Only one offensive time-out is permitted **each** inning (Rule 5.10(d), page 79 and Rule 7, Visits (**NOTE**), page 123, 2015 Rule Book)

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45. **Mandatory Play:** Every player on a team roster is required to play at least six (6) **consecutive** defensive outs and one time at bat per game. If this mandatory play is not met in a certain game, that player **must** start in the next game to make up his/her deficiency **plus** remain in that game until his/her mandatory play time for that game is met. Additional penalties: (a) first offense, the manager shall receive a written warning, (b) second offense, the manager shall receive a suspension for the next scheduled game, and (c) third offense, the manager shall receive a suspension for the remainder of the season (Regulation IV – THE PLAYERS, section (i), pages 34 and 35, 2015 Rule Book).
46. **DOUBLEHEADERS:** A team may play one (1) doubleheader in a calendar week for Major League Division and more than one doubleheader may be played in a calendar week for 50/70 and JR/SR Divisions (Rule 3.11, page 68, 2015 Rule Book).

PRELIMINARY PRE-GAME DUTIES:

- Inspect field for playing conditions, including filling of any holes in outfield
- Check team equipment (**NO ILLEGAL COMPOSITE BATS**, bat sizes, bat dents or cracks, **dangling throat guards on catcher’s masks**, etc.)
- Discuss signs to be used during game with partner (lost count, infield fly, etc.), who will call fair/foul balls, etc.

OTHER UMPIRE RULES

- At plate meeting, always ask managers “are all your players properly equipped to play per Little League Rules?”
- Umpire from behind the plate, **not** behind the pitcher’s mound
- Umpires must remain on **both feet**; umpires should not kneel on one knee or two knees behind the plate or in the field
- Maintain a consistent strike zone throughout the game
- Do not “rush the call”; if needed, take a second or two in order to make sure of the call and that the fielder did not drop a throw or the runner touched the plate or base prior to the throw arriving
- Field umpires, maintain your “A”, “B”, and “C” positions
- **Never** vocalize “fair balls” or “foul tips” (these are live balls and vocalization of these balls would only serve to confuse the players); only foul balls should be vocalized because this kills any play and becomes a dead ball
- Plate umpires, try to remember to always “put the game back into play” after a dead ball incident by pointing to the pitcher and vocalize “PLAY”

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- Umpires are in charge of the field 10 minutes before and 10 minutes after a game; this includes the dugouts
- Try to make sure no batters are swinging bats in dugouts
- Try to ascertain that an adult coach remains in the dugout at all times throughout the game
- No manager or coach is allowed on the field during play without receiving time-out from the umpire; violators should be warned and, if the manager or coach continues to disregard the umpire's warning, that violator should be removed from the game
- Harassment of umpires should **never** be tolerated and if it becomes a detriment to your decision-making on calls, any violator (manager, coach, player, parent, or fan) should be removed

Thank you all for volunteering as managers, coaches, and umpires in our league. Without you, there would be no league and our children could not benefit from the opportunities our league provides. Good luck to everyone and I, as well as the entire Board of Directors, hope everyone has a successful season.

Any comments, concerns, suggestions, or questions should be directed to:

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