

2026 BASEBALL RULE BOOK SUMMARY

IMPORTANT RULE CHANGES FOR 2026

- **Pine Tar Allowed On Bats:** The use of pine tar or any other similar adhesive substance may be applied to the handle or grip of the bat at all levels of play but shall **not** be added to the surface of the barrel or taper of the bat and **shall not** cover the BPF specifications mark or other key identifying information or logos on the bat which, in this case, would render the bat improper and (1) the bat must be removed from the game, (2) the player is warned, and (3) if the infraction is repeated, both the offending player and the manager shall be ejected from the game (Rule 1.10, NOTE 2, pages 95 and 96, 2026 Rule Book).
- **BAT MODIFICATIONS:** Pursuant to Rule 1.10, APPROVED RULING 2, no bat, in any level of Little League Baseball or Softball play, is permitted to be altered. Products such as, but not limited to, choke-knobs and choke-up assists ~~or thumb protectors~~ are considered alterations or modifications to the bat and are not permitted. **Thumb protectors are now allowed.**
- **RETURNING PITCHERS (50/70, JR, and SR ONLY):** A pitcher once removed as pitcher may return to the position of pitcher even if they have no visits remaining. In such cases, a manager or coach may only come out to remove the player as pitcher and **is prohibited from conferring with any defensive player** (Rule 8.06(b), Approved Ruling, page 169, 2026 Rule Book).

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LOCAL RULES

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

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

- **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 (Rule 4.01(d), NOTE 2, page 120, 2026 Rule Book).
- **Regulation Games:** instead of a required number of innings to establish a regulation game, there will be a minimum of 1 hour and 45 minutes time limit whereby no new inning will begin after the expiration of this time in order to establish a regulation game.

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LITTLE LEAGUE RULES – GENERAL

- **BATS (Major Division and Below):** Non-wood and laminated bats used in Little League (major division and below), Intermediate (50/70) Division, and Junior League shall bear the **USA Baseball logo** signifying that the bat meets the USA Baseball Performance Standard. **All BPF – 1.15 bats are prohibited.** Additionally, **the bat diameter shall not exceed 2 5/8 inches** for these divisions of play (Rule 1.10 pages 94, 95, and 96, 2026 Rule Book). Please note that this means big-barrel bats are allowed at all levels of play as long as they have the “USA Baseball” logo on them. **Bats for minor and major league: cannot be more than 33 inches in length nor more than 2 and 5/8 inches in diameter and non-wood or laminated bats shall be printed with a USA Baseball mark (Rule 1.10, page 94, 2026 Rule Book).**
- **BATS (Intermediate (50/70) or Junior Divisions):** Cannot be more than 34 inches in length nor more than 2 and 5/8 inches in diameter and non-wood or laminated bats shall be printed with a USA Baseball mark. Bats meeting the Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution (**BBCOR**) standard **may also be used** in the **Intermediate (50/70) Division and Junior League Division.** **NOTE:** There is **no “drop-#” restriction** on BBCOR bats in **50/70 or Junior Divisions** (Rule 1.10, pages 94 and 95, 2026 Rule Book).

BATS (Senior League): cannot be more than 36 inches in length nor more than 2 5/8 inches in diameter (cannot use a 2 3/4 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 95, 2026 Rule Book).
- **Tee Ball Bats:** Under the USA bat standard, certified Tee Ball bats (26 inches and shorter) will feature the USA Baseball mark and text which reads “ONLY FOR USE WITH APPROVED TEE BALLS”. All Tee Ball bats must feature the USA Baseball mark and accompanying text. Tee Ball bats that were produced or purchased prior to the implementation of the new standard can be certified using an approved Tee Ball Sticker via the USA Baseball Tee Ball Sticker Program (Rule 1.10, page 94, 2026 Rule Book).
- **Intermediate (50/70), JR, & SR Leagues ONLY:** shoes with metal spikes or cleats **are permitted** (Rule 1.11(h), page 98, 2026 Rule Book).

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LITTLE LEAGUE RULES – GENERAL

- **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), pages 137 and 138, and Rule 6.09(b), page 145, 2026 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 138, 2026 Rule Book). **NOTE:** first base is occupied if, at the time of the pitch, a runner occupies first base even though that runner then attempts a steal of second base at the time of the pitch. In this situation, first base was not unoccupied.
- **LEAVING BASE EARLY (MAJOR league and below):** when a pitcher is in contact with the pitcher's plate and in possession of the ball and the catcher is in the catcher's box ready to receive delivery of the ball, base runners shall not leave their bases until the ball has been delivered and has reached the batter. Violation of this rule by one base runner shall affect all other base runners, if any (Rule 7.13 and EXAMPLES, pages 156, 157, and 158, 2026 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 98, 2026 Rule Book).
- **Bunts:** the mere holding of the bat in the strike zone is not an attempted bunt. If no attempt is made to make contact with a ball outside the strike zone while in the bunting stance, it shall be called a ball. The batter must offer at the pitch for it to be a strike (Rule 2.00, BUNT and Approved Ruling, page 103, 2026 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 123, 2026 Rule Book).
- **Doubleheaders by Major and Minor League Teams:** a minor league team may play one (1) doubleheader game in a calendar week and a major league team may play two (2) doubleheader games in a calendar week. No team shall play three games in a day. **JR/SR League only:** doubleheaders are permitted (Regulation VII(d), page 70 and Rule 4.13, page 129, 2026 Rule Book).
- **SPECIAL GAMES:** may be counted towards a team's regular season schedule and a player's Tournament participation eligibility. Approval is required from the District Administrator instead of the Regional Office as in the past (Regulation IX(a), page 73, and Tournament Player Eligibility, pages 183 and 184, 2026 Rule Book).

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LITTLE LEAGUE RULES – GENERAL

- **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**. **EXCEPTION:** a manager or coach is permitted to use one-way electronic devices from the dugout to the catcher while the team is on defense for the purpose of calling pitches. A manager or coach is prohibited from using the device to communicate with any other team member while on defense or any team member (including a manager or coach) while on offense, and a manager or coach shall not use the device outside the dugout/bench area. (Rule 3.17, page 119, 2026 Rule Book).
- Any part of the pitcher's undershirt or T-shirt exposed to view shall be of a solid color. The pitcher's undershirt sleeves, if exposed, shall not be white or gray. Neoprene sleeves, if worn by a pitcher, do not need to be covered by an undershirt, provided it is one solid color and not white or grey. **NOTE:** a pitcher shall not wear any items on his/her hands, wrists, or arms which may be distracting to the batter, ie, sweat bands (Rule 1.11(a)(3), page 97, 2026 Rule Book).
- **Play-calling bands are permitted to be worn on the non-pitching wrist or arm** (Rule 1.11(a)(3), page 97, 2026 Rule Book). Play-calling bands are permitted as long as **(1)** the equipment is worn on the wrist or forearm as the manufacturer intended, **(2)** the band is not attached to the belt or any other location on the person, and **(3)** for pitchers, the band may be worn on their non-pitching arm provided the band is a solid color that is **NOT** white, gray, or optic yellow. If the umpire considers the band distracting to the batter, the umpire may have the band removed.
- **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, **the batter is out**, and: (Rule 1.10, NOTE 4, page 96, Rule 3.01, page 113, and Rule 6.06(d), page 140, 2026 Rule Book).
 - 1) 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),
 - 2) both the manager and the batter who violated the rule will be **ejected** from the game and the offensive team will lose one eligible adult base coach for the duration of the game.

An illegal bat **must** be removed from the game once discovered (Rule 1.10, NOTE 4, page 96, and Rule 6.06(d) Approved Ruling, page 140, 2026 Rule Book).

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LITTLE LEAGUE RULES – GENERAL

- A local league may establish a time limit per game to define a regulation game versus innings played. The minimum time limit is set at 1 hour and 45 minutes. Any inning which has started prior to the time limit expiring will be completed but no new inning will begin once the time limit has expired. A new inning starts at the moment the third out is made, completing the preceding inning (Regulation VII(h), page 71, Regulation X(a) and (c), page 75, Rule 2.00, INNING, page 108, Rule 4.10(c)(2), page 124, and Rule 4.11(d), page 126, 2026 Rule Book).
- **Pregame Equipment Inspection:** Pursuant to Rule 3.01(a), page 113, and Tournament Rule 3(b), page 194, 2026 Rule Book, umpires are no longer responsible for inspecting equipment, including bats, prior to the start of games. This responsibility is placed directly on the manager of each team. At each plate meeting, the umpire must confirm with the managers of both teams that all equipment is proper and legal for play according to Little League rules. If illegal equipment is used during the game, the manager of the offending team will be ejected from the game and the player who used the illegal equipment will also be ejected from the game. Both the manager and the player who used the illegal equipment will be suspended for their team's next physically played game and may not be in attendance at the game site. This includes pregame and postgame activities. The penalties noted in Rule 3.01(a) above have been updated in Rule 6.06(d) as well whereby a manager and player are ejected for the use of illegal equipment as well as the batter/player being out.

MINOR LEAGUE DIVISION

- In Minor League and Tee Ball, managers and coaches may be on the field for instructional purposes, but shall not assist runners or touch a live ball. At least one adult manager or coach must be in the dugout at all times (Regulation XIV(d), Field Decorum, **EXCEPTION**, page 80, and Rule 4.05(b), page 122, 2026 Rule Book).
- No one except eligible players in uniform, a manager, and not more than three coaches (in Minor League Instructional Division) shall occupy the bench or dugout (Rule 3.17, page 119, 2026 Rule Book).
 - ✚ Given the above two rules, this would mean that no more than three coaches could be out on the field for instructional purposes since there can only be up to four adults (one manager and three coaches) in the dugout and one of those four adults must remain in the dugout
- Competitive Minor Leagues and above may use no more than nine players on defense (Rule 1.01, **NOTE**, page 85, and Rules 4.16 and 4.17, page 130, 2026 Rule Book).

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LITTLE LEAGUE RULES – GENERAL

- In Tee Ball and Instructional Minor Leagues, all players on the roster may be given a defensive position. Only one player may occupy the catcher’s position (Rule 4.01(d), **NOTE 1**, page 119, 2025 Rule Book)
 - ✚ Given the above two rules, if the minor league is “instructional”, then all players may occupy a defensive position but only one may occupy the position of catcher. If the minor league is “competitive”, then only nine players would be allowed to player defensive positions
- Competitive Minor Leagues and above may use no more than nine players on defense unless the league allows to start with eight players (Rule 1.01, **NOTE**, page 85, and Rules 4.16 and 4.17, page 126, 2026 Rule Book).
- Minor League Only – A five-run limit is to be imposed which would complete the half inning (Rule 2.00, DEFINITIONS – INNING, page 108, 2026 Rule Book). If the VP proposes and 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 133, 2026 Rule Book). This goes hand-in-hand with the minimum play rule in the case where a player occupied a defensive position for a certain half-inning and five runs were earned by the opposing team before three defensive outs were made by the defense. In this case, the defensive player is considered to have played in the field for three defensive outs.
- **In T-Ball ONLY:** the offensive side is retired when (1) three offensive players are legally put out, (2) three offensive players are called out by an umpire, or (3) when all players on the roster have batted one time in the half inning (Rule 5.07, page 133, 2026 Rule Book).

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GAME RULES:

1. A “new inning” is defined as one that **starts the moment that the third out is made**, completing the preceding inning (Section 2.00 – DEFINITIONS, INNING, page 108 and Regulation X(a) – NIGHT GAMES, page 75, 2026 Rule Book).
2. **Continuous Batting Order:** A continuous batting order policy (**if proposed by the divisional VP and approved by the Board of Directors**), may be followed that will include all players on the team roster present for the start of 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. **The continuous batting order is mandatory for all minor league divisions** (Rule 4.04, NOTE 1, page 121, 2026 Rule Book).
3. Only one offensive time-out is permitted **each** inning (Rule 5.10(d) (NOTE), page 135, and Rule T-7, VISITS (NOTE), page 203, 2026 Rule Book).
4. **During games**, there shall be only **one (1) manager and two (2) coaches allowed in the dugout (minor league: only one (1) manager and three (3) coaches)** 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. (Rule 1.01, page 85 and Rule 3.17, page 119, 2026 Rule Book)**.
5. **A manager or coach shall not leave the bench or dugout except to confer with a player or an umpire and only after receiving permission from an umpire.** (EXCEPTION: In Minor League and Tee Ball, managers and coaches may be on the field for instructional purposes, but shall not assist runners or touch a live ball. At least one adult manager or coach must be in the dugout at all times.)” (Regulation XIV(d), Field Decorum, page 80, 2026 Rule Book).
6. 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 not an “emergency”). An adult manager/coach **must be** in the dugout with the players at all times during the game (Rule 3.09, pages 117 and 118, Rule 3.17, page 119, and Rule 4.05, pages 122, 2026 Rule Book).

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7. **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 **NOTE – LOCAL LEAGUE OPTION:** A local league may adopt a policy where a game may not be started or continued with less than eight (8) players on each team (Rules 4.16 and 4.17, page 130, and Rule 2.00 – DEFINITIONS, FORFEITED GAME, page 105, 2026 Rule Book).

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 165, 2026 Rule Book).

9. **INTENTIONAL WALKS:** a defensive team may intentionally walk a batter at any time during a player's at-bat **but only once per game per batter without throwing four pitches**. In that case, after calling for and receiving "time" from the plate umpire, the defensive manager will make the intentional walk request, the ball will be dead and no runners may advance unless forced by the batter's award. The appropriate number of "balls" needed based on the count on the batter at the time of the manager's request to complete the Intentional Walk will be added to the pitch count (Rule 6.08(a)(2), pages 143 and 144, 2026 Rule Book). Otherwise, pitches will be required to be thrown.

When the batter is being given an intentional base on balls (Intentional Walk), the catcher must stand with both feet within the lines of the catcher's box until the ball leaves the pitcher's hand. The penalty for this infraction is illegal pitch resulting in a ball to the batter and a pitch added to the pitcher's pitch count (Major League and below) or a balk with runners on base **(50/70, Junior, Senior League)**. **For 50/70, Junior, or Senior Leagues,** the pitch count would only increase if a pitch was delivered on a balk and, in this situation, a pitch would have been delivered (Rule 2.00, DEFINITIONS, PITCH, page 110, Rule 4.03(a), pages 120 and 121, and Rule 8.05(k), page 166, and **PENALTY FOR A BALK**, page 167, 2026 Rule Book).

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10. An illegal pitch **in Major or Minor League**, whether or not a pitch is actually delivered to a batter, will count as a pitch in determining the pitch count for that pitcher. The pitch count **will increase** for a balk in 50/70, JR, or SR League divisions, **only if** a pitch was actually delivered (Rule 8.05, PENALTY FOR AN ILLEGAL PITCH/BALK, page 167 and Rule 2.00 – DEFINITIONS, PITCH, page 110, 2026 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**. The pitcher shall not bring the pitching hand in contact with the mouth or lips while in contact with the pitcher's plate. **HOWEVER**, the pitcher may bring the hand in contact with the mouth or the lips provided he distinctly wipes off the pitching hand before contacting the ball (Rule 8.02(a)(1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), and **NOTE**, page 164, 2026 Rule Book).
12. 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, pages 113 and 114, and Rule 8.02(a)(2), page 164, 2026 Rule Book).
13. Pitchers shall not wear any item on the pitching hand, wrist, or arm. Any part of the pitcher's undershirt or T-shirt exposed to view shall be of a solid color. The pitcher's undershirt sleeves, if exposed, shall not be white or gray. Neoprene sleeves, if worn by a pitcher, do not need to be covered by an undershirt, provided it is one solid color and not white or grey. **NOTE:** a pitcher shall not wear any items on his hands, wrists, or arm which may be distracting to the batter, ie, sweat bands. Players may wear jewelry **unless** it poses harm to injury **with the exception of medical alert jewelry that alerts medical personnel of a specific medical condition.** Play-calling bands are permitted to be worn on the non-pitching wrist or arm (Rules 1.11(a)(3) and 1.11(j), pages 97, and 98, 2026 Rule Book).
14. A player who is 12 years old **cannot** pitch in the Minor League and a local league may prohibit 15-year-olds from pitching within the Junior Division (Regulation VI – PITCHERS, section (j), pages 67 and 68, 2026 Rule Book).
15. Managers and coaches **may** warm up a pitcher at home plate or in the bull pen or elsewhere at any time (this includes **before or during the game**) **FOR REGULAR SEASON ONLY!** (Rule 3.09, pages 117 and 118, and Rule T-3(f), pages 195 and 196, 2026 Rule Book).

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PITCHING AND PITCHERS:

16. Any player who has played the position of catcher in four (4) or more innings in a game is not eligible to pitch on that calendar day. A player who played the position of catcher for three (3) innings or less, moves to the pitcher position, and delivers 21 pitches or more (**15- and 16-year-olds:** 31 pitches or more) in the same day, may not return to the catcher position on that calendar day. **EXCEPTION:** If the pitcher reaches the 20-pitch limit (**15- and 16-year-olds:** 30-pitch limit) while facing a batter, **the pitcher may continue to pitch, and maintain their eligibility to return to the catcher position,** until any of the following conditions occur: (1) that batter reaches base; (2) that batter is retired; (3) the third out is made to complete the half-inning or the game, or (4) the pitcher is removed from the mound prior to the batter completing his/her at-bat. (Regulation VI(a), page 65, and Rule T-4(a), pages 196, 199, and 200, 2026 Rule Book).
17. If a player delivers 41 or more pitches, and is not covered under the threshold exceptions, the player may not play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day. **THRESHOLD EXCEPTION:** If a pitcher reaches 40 pitches while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch, and maintain their eligibility to play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day, until any of the following conditions occur: (1) that batter reaches base; (2) that batter is retired; (3) the third out is made to complete the half-inning or the game or (4) the pitcher is removed from the mound prior to the batter completing his/her at-bat. The pitcher would be allowed to play the catcher position provided that pitcher is moved, removed, or the game is completed before delivering a pitch to another batter (Regulation VI(c), **NOTE,** pages 65 and 66, and Rule T-4(d), **NOTE,** pages 196, 197, and 200, 2026 Rule Book).
18. The pitcher's glove shall be of one solid color or multi-colored **as long as the color(s) are not the color of the ball being used in the game.** Umpires can remove a pitcher's glove if the umpire determines it to be a distraction to the batter (Rule 1.15(a) and (b), page 100, 2026 Rule Book).
19. Pitching rules are as follows pursuant to Regulation VI – Pitchers, sections (b), (c) and (d), pages 65, 66, and 67 in the 2026 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

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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: A pitcher's pitch count for the purposes of day(s) rest threshold is determined by the first pitch thrown to a batter. The pitcher may not start a new batter once the per game limit amount of pitches has been met.

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

DAYS OF REST FOR PLAYERS AGE 15 OR 16:

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

NOTE FOR DAY(S) OF REST EXCEPTION: If a pitcher reaches a day(s) of rest threshold while facing a batter, the pitcher's pitch count for the purposes of determining day(s) rest threshold is determined by the first pitch thrown to a batter.

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 NOTE 2**, pages 66 and 67, 2026 Rule Book).

It is highly recommended 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.

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- 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 (Regulation VI – PITCHERS, section (g), page 69, 2025 Rule Book). **FOR 50/70 and JR/SR LEAGUE ONLY:** If the pitcher is removed prior to reaching his maximum pitch counts for a game, that pitcher may return to the mound if he remains in the game in another field position, but only once per game (Regulation VI – PITCHERS, section (b), page 67, 2025 Rule Book). A pitcher once removed as pitcher may return as pitcher even if they have no visit remaining and have not exceeded the daily pitch count for that pitcher; in such cases, the manager or coach may come out only to remove the player as pitcher and is prohibited from conferring with any defensive player (Rule 8.06 Note 2 and Approved Ruling, 2026 Rule Book).
20. 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. When a balk is called, if the pitch is delivered, a pitch shall be charged against the pitch count regardless of whether the batter put the pitch into play. However, on a balk that is called on a pickoff attempt or in an instance that the pitcher does not deliver the pitch, no pitch count shall be charged to the pitch count. Straddling the pitcher’s plate without the ball is to be interpreted as intent to deceive and ruled a balk (Rule 8.05, **PENALTY FOR A BALK** and **NOTE**, page 167, 2026 Rule Book).
21. 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 (Rule 8.01(b), NOTE, pages 164 and 165, 2026 Rule Book).** 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(a)(3) and Rule 8.01(b) **NOTE**, pages 162 and 163, 2026 Rule Book; also, see Rule 8.01 in its entirety, pages 162 and 163, 2026 Rule Book).

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22. Note that in **major league and below**, once a pitcher is removed from that position, he cannot return as a pitcher for the remainder of the game (Regulation VI – PITCHERS, section (b), page 65, 2026 Rule Book).
23. Under no circumstances shall a player pitch in three (3) consecutive days (Regulation VI(d), **NOTE 1**, page 66, and Rule T-4(e), **NOTE 1**, pages 198 and 201, 2026 Rule Book).
24. **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 165, 166, 167, and 168, 2026 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 **will increase** for 50/70, JR, or SR League divisions, **only if** a pitch was actually delivered (Rule 8.05, **PENALTY FOR AN ILLEGAL PITCH/BALK**, page 167 and Rule 2.00 – DEFINITIONS, PITCH, page 110, 2026 Rule Book).

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 167, 2026 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),

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- 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 pitcher's hand and crosses the foul line (if the slipped ball remains in fair territory, the call will be "no pitch")
25. **PITCHING IN MORE THAN ONE GAME IN A DAY:** A player may not pitch in more than one game in a day for any division other than Junior or Senior leagues. **Junior/Senior League:** If a player delivers 31 or more pitches in the first game, and is not covered under the threshold exceptions, the player may not pitch in the second game that day. **THRESHOLD EXCEPTION:** If a pitcher reaches 30 pitches while facing a batter in the first game, the pitcher may continue to pitch, and maintain their eligibility to pitch in the second game on that day, until any of the following conditions occur: (1) that batter reaches base; (2) that batter is retired; (3) the third out is made to complete the half-inning or the game; or (4) the pitcher is removed from the mound prior to the batter completing his/her at-bat. The pitcher would be allowed to pitch in a second game provided that pitcher is moved, removed, or the game is completed before delivering a pitch to another batter. A 12-year-old playing in the Junior and/or Senior divisions is not eligible to pitch in two games in a day (Regulation VI(k), pages 68 and 69, and Rule T-4(f), pages 198 (JR) and 200 (SR), 2026 Rule Book).
26. **VISITS:** For major league and above, a manager or coach may come out once (**Minor League – twice**) in one inning to visit the pitcher but the second time (**Minor League – third time**) out, the player must be removed as a pitcher. A manager or coach may come out twice (**Minor League – three times**) in one game to visit the pitcher, but the third time (**Minor League – fourth time**) out, the player must be removed as a pitcher. (Rules 8.06 (a) and (b), pages 168 and 169, 2026 Rule Book). When a manager requests timeout to make a pitching change, it shall not be counted as a visit to the pitcher provided the manager makes the pitching substitution prior to speaking to any defensive player (Rule 8.06(c), Approved Ruling 1, page 169, and Rule T-7, page 203, 2026 Rule Book). Injury time-outs **are not** considered visits to pitchers **unless** the manager **discusses strategy with the pitcher.** **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 defensively, but only once per game (VI – PITCHERS, section (b), page 65, 2026 Rule Book). A pitcher moving to a different position and returning as the pitcher of record shall retain the number of visits from their previous appearance as pitcher. To calculate the number of visits for a pitcher, all visits, regardless of the pitcher being removed and returned to the pitcher's position, shall be applied (Rule 8.06(b) **NOTE 2**, page 169, 2026 Rule Book).

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27. **FOR 50/70/JR/SR LEAGUE ONLY:** a pitcher once removed as pitcher may return as pitcher even if they have no visits remaining; in such cases, a manager or coach may only come out to remove the player as pitcher and is prohibited from conferring with any defensive player (Rule 8.06(b) **NOTE 3**, page 169, 2026 Rule Book).
28. If a player who is not the pitcher delivers one warm-up pitch to the catcher, that player now becomes the pitcher of record (assuming eligibility) and must pitch to at least one batter and, for major league and below, would result in the prior pitcher being ineligible to return to the pitching position (Rule 3.08(a)(1), page 118, 2026 Rule Book and pages 14 and 15, 2025 Make The Right Call Manual).
29. **FIFTEEN-RUN AND TEN-RUN RULES:** If after three (3) innings (**Junior/Senior League:** four (4) innings), two and one-half innings (**Junior/Senior League:** three and one-half innings) if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of **fifteen (15) runs** or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede the victory to the opponent. If after four (4) innings (**Junior/Senior League:** five (5) innings), three and one-half innings (**Junior/Senior League:** four and one-half innings) if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of **ten (10) runs** or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede victory to the opponent. During regular season, the local Little League may adopt the option of not utilizing this rule. However, this rule will apply during Tournament Play at all levels. **There is no 8-run rule in Tournament Play** (Rule 4.10(e), pages 124 and 125, and Rule T-12, page 206, 2026 Rule Book).
30. Other than the normal plays getting a **BATTER** out, a batter is also out when (Rules 6.05 and 6.06, pages 137, 138, 139, and 140, 2026 Rule Book):
- 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 94, 95 and 96, 2026 Rule Book) or is discovered having used an illegal bat prior to the next batter entering the batter's box

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31. **LOCAL LEAGUE OPTION:** After entering the batter's box, the batter must remain in the box with at least one foot throughout the at bat. **Exceptions:**
1. On a swing, slap, or check swing.
 2. When forced out of the box by a pitch.
 3. When the batter attempts a "drag bunt".
 4. When the catcher does not catch the pitched ball.
 5. When a play has been attempted.
 6. When time has been called.
 7. When the pitcher leaves the dirt area of the pitching mound or takes a position more than five feet from the pitcher's plate after receiving the ball or the catcher leaves the catcher box.
 8. On a three ball count pitch that is a strike that the batter thinks is a ball.

PENALTY: If the batter leaves the batter box or delays play and none of the exceptions apply, the umpire shall warn the batter. After one warning on a batter, the umpire shall call a strike. Any number of strikes can be called on each batter.

Minor/Major Division: No pitch has to be thrown, the ball is dead, and no runners may advance. **Intermediate (50/70), Junior, Senior Divisions:** NO pitch has to be thrown and the ball is live.

NOTE: The batter may return to their position in the batter's box and assume the new count at any time during the at-bat, unless such enforced penalty is the third strike. (Rules 6.02(c), pages 136 and 137 and T-3(a), pages 193 and 194, 2026 Rule Book). **THIS WILL BE A RULE DURING TOURNAMENTS.**

A pitcher's pitch count will not be increased for strikes called under this rule (See RULING, Page 25, 2025 Make The Right Call Manual)

32. **Major and above:** 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 146, 2026 Rule Book). **NOTE:** first base is occupied if, at the time of the pitch, a runner occupies first base even though that runner then attempts a steal of second base at the time of the pitch. In this situation, first base was not unoccupied.
33. 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. The ball is dead and no runner may advance (Rule 6.08(b), **NOTE** and **APPROVED RULING**, page 144, 2026 Rule Book).

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34. 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 144, 2026 Rule Book).
35. **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) and APPROVED RULINGS, pages 140, 141, 142, and 143, 2026 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 141, 2026 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 140, 141, 142, and 143, 2026 Rule Book).

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36. **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 156, 157, and 158, 2026 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,
- 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**.

POINTS TO REMEMBER WHEN DEALING WITH LEAVING EARLY:

- One runner leaving early effects all runner (team penalty),
- Leaving early cannot be undone by returning to tag-up or re-touch,
- There can never be an automatic out,
- The batter cannot be penalized as a result of a runner leaving early. That is, he cannot be sent backward; treat the batter as a “closed gate” that no other runner may pass through,

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- There is a situation where a scored run can be nullified without recording an out (runner at third on bases loaded and batter bunts or hits the ball within the infield), and
 - Leaving early violation may effect base awards for balls thrown out of play. The violation of leaving early occurred prior to the ball being thrown out of play by the defense.
37. 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; ball is dead and if a runner is touched by the fair ball, that runner is 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 (Rules 6.08(d), pages 144 and 145, and Rule 708(f), page 152, 2026 Rule Book).
38. **Minor and Major League Only – Runners Leaving Bases Early and Tag-Up:** If a runner leaves prior to the pitch being delivered and reaching the batter, and if the batter hits a pop fly that is caught, the runner **cannot advance on a tag-up** and will be required to return to the base formerly occupied. The act of returning to tag-up does not negate the violation of leaving early (Rule 7.13(b) and Rule 7.13 in its entirety, pages 156, 157, and 158, 2026 Rule Book; also see Rule 7.13, pages 35 and 36, 2025 Make The Right Call Manual).
39. 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, pages 133 and 134, 2026 Rule Book).
40. 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 134, 2026 Rule Book).
41. The ball becomes dead when a pitched ball lodges in the catcher’s or umpire’s mask or paraphernalia. Runner(s) advance one base and the ball is dead. **For Majors and above:** On a third strike or fourth ball, then the batter is entitled to first base and all runners advance one base (Rule 5.09(g) and APPROVED RULING, page 134, 2026 Rule Book).
42. **BUNTS and ATTEMPTS AT BUNT:** If no attempt is made to make contact with a ball outside the strike zone while in the bunting stance, **it shall be called a ball**. The batter **must offer** at the pitch for it to be called a strike. The position of the bat is irrelevant unless the batter attempts to make contact with the ball (Rule 2.00 – DEFINITIONS, BUNT, page 103, 2026 Rule Book).

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43. **Major and Minor Leagues Only:** There is **no On-deck Circle** for warm-up swings by batters (Rule 1.08, **NOTE 1**, page 93, 2026 Rule Book).

50/70/JR/SR League Only: There **is an On-deck Circle** for warm-up swing by batters. The on-deck batter is to be positioned in the on-deck circle closest to their dugout (Regulation XIV(b), Approved Ruling, Field Decorum, page 80, 2026 Rule Book)

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.

44. **The traditional batting donut is not permissible** (Rule 1.10, **NOTE 1**, page 95, 2026 Rule Book).

45. **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, page 107, 2026 Rule Book).

The infield dirt and the outfield grass do not form a boundary line for infield fly purposes. In other words, an infielder may station himself under the ball while standing in the outfield grass just beyond the infield clay. It is the umpire's duty to determine the position of the infielder and the trajectory of the ball to determine if "Infield Fly" should be called (2.00 – DEFINITIONS, Infield Fly, Approved Ruling, page 107, 2026 Rule Book).

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- 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 139, 2026 Rule Book).
46. The catcher **must wear** a catcher’s mitt and wear a long or short model chest protector as well as **dangling throat guard**; “hockey-style” catcher helmets must also contain a “dangling” throat protector (Rules 1.12 and 1.17, pages 99 and 100, 2026 Rule Book).
47. **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), page 150, 2026 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.
48. **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 150, 2026 Rule Book). **There is no “must slide rule”, only the “no slide to avoid contact” rule** (Rule 7.08(a)(3), Approved Ruling, page 150, 2026 Rule Book).
49. **RUNNING THROUGH FIRST BASE RULE:** Any runner is out when failing to return **at once** to first base and overrunning or over-sliding that base. If attempting to run to second base, the runner is out when tagged (Rule 7.08(j), page 152, 2026 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.
50. 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), pages 145 and 146, 2026 Rule Book).
51. Any runner is out when that runner passes a preceding runner before that preceding runner is put out (Rule 7.08(h), page 152, 2026 Rule Book).

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52. 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 155, 2026 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 138, 2026 Rule Book). On the way to the dugout but before entering that dugout, a batter will create a new base path for himself/herself by the batter running from his position in the field (live-ball territory) to first base.
53. All fielders, except the catcher, must be positioned in fair territory when play begins (including first- or third-basemen attempting to hold on runners). **NOTE:** There is no penalty for this infraction; the umpire should just have the player move into fair territory (Rule 4.03, pages 120 and 121, 2026 Rule Book).
54. **FOUL AND FAIR BALLS:** 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.

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, FAIR BALL, FOUL BALL, and FOUL TIP, pages 104, 105, and 106, 2026 Rule Book).

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55. **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 – OBSTRUCTION, page 109, 2026 Rule Book and Rule 7.06, pages 149 and 150, 2026 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.

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), **NOTE 2**, page 150, 2026 Rule Book).

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56. **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 – INTERFERENCE, page 108, 2026 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 152 and Rule 7.09(c), page 153, 2026 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 153, 2026 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 152, 2026 Rule Book).

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 153, 2026 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 154, 2026 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**.

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- 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 154, 2026 Rule Book).
57. 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), and (e), page 148, 2026 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**.
58. Each batter-runner and/or runner may advance without being put out and **the ball becomes a dead ball** (versus a live ball) (Rule 7.05(g) and (h) and APPROVED RULING, pages 148 and 149, 2026 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.
- Examples: 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.

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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.
58. **REMOVING A BATTING HELMET DURING PLAY:** If a player, during play, removes his/her helmet or causes his/her helmet to come off, he/she shall **NOT** be called out, but shall be warned not to intentionally remove his/her helmet and, if it continues, the player may be removed (ejected) from the game for unsportsmanlike conduct, as this can cause an unsafe condition (Rule 1.16, Approved Ruling, page 100, 2026 Rule Book).
59. Players, managers, and coaches of the participating teams **shall not** address or mingle with spectators, nor sit in the stands during a game in which they are engaged. 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 not an “emergency”). (Regulation XIV(d), Field Decorum, page 80, Rule 3.09, pages 117 and 118, Rule 3.17, page 119, and Rule 4.05(b), page 122, 2026 Rule Book).
60. **Mandatory Play – Regular Season Only:** Every player on a team roster is required to play at least six (6) defensive outs and one time at bat per game. The term “at-bat” is defined as a player who comes to bat and is either (1) retired, (2) retired as a batter-runner or runner, (3) scores, or (4) after reaching base, the inning or game ends. Pinch runners cannot be utilized on any runner who has not completed the “at-bat” requirement as that will constitute an illegal substitution (Regulation IV(i), pages 60 and 61, and Rule 2.00, AT-BAT, page 101, 2026 Rule Book). 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. **Does not apply to SR League – see NOTE 6** (IV – THE PLAYERS, section (i), pages 60 and 61, 2026 Rule Book).

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NOTE ON MANDATORY PLAY PENALTY: There is no exception to this rule unless the game is shortened for any reason, at which time the local league may elect not to impose a penalty on the manager/coach. **HOWEVER, the penalty** of this regulation regarding the player who did not meet mandatory play **cannot be reduced or waived in a shortened game** (IV- THE PLAYERS, section (i), **Note 2**, pages 60 and 61, 2026 Rule Book).

61. When the winning run is scored in the last half-inning of a regulation game, the umpire shall not declare the game ended **until** the runner forced to advance from third has touched home plate **and** the batter-runner has touched first base (Rule 4.09(b), pages 123 and 124, 2026 Rule Book).
62. Tie game in the bottom of the sixth inning, two outs. Batter receives ball four and all runners begin to advance. The runner from third base touches home plate. The batter rushes to join in the endgame celebration without having first touched first base. The batter then enters the dugout with the rest of the team. **RULING:** Umpire will call the batter out for abandoning his/her effort to advance. In this instance, the third out is a result of the batter being called out before touching first base, therefore it is a force out. No run scores and the game continues with the score still tied. (**NOTE:** the player must enter dead ball territory before he/she can be called out for abandonment.) (Rule 4.09(b) Situation, page 19, 2025 Make The Right Call Manual).
63. With a runner on third base, the umpire begins to clean the plate without calling “Time”, the runner on third base breaks for home and slides under the catcher’s tag. The play stands even though the umpire may “believe” there was an implied time-out. There is no such thing as an implied time-out. The ball is alive until the umpire calls “Time”. Umpires should get in the habit of clearly calling and signaling a time-out when necessary (Rule 5.02, page 134, 2026 Rule Book).
64. Any appeal under Rule 7.10 (tag-ups on fly balls, runners advancing or returning to a base and failing to touch each base, or a runner failing to touch home plate and making no attempt to return to touch home plate, and home plate is tagged. Any appeal under this rule must be made before the next pitch, or any play or attempted play. **No appeal can be made if the ball is dead.** If the violation occurs during a play which ends a half inning, the appeal must be made before all the defensive players have left fair territory.

In making an appeal, the pitcher shall not throw to a base while the foot is in contact with the pitcher’s plate. In putting the ball back into play, after taking the pitching position, the pitcher shall step backwards off the pitcher’s plate (with the pivot foot first) to begin the appeal. **Successive appeals may not be made on a runner at the same base.** If the defensive team on its first appeal errs, a request for a second appeal on the same runner at the same base shall not be allowed by the umpire (Rule 7.10, pages 154, 155, and 156, 2026 Rule Book).

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65. The game is under the jurisdiction of one or more umpires (Rule 1.01, page 85, 2026 Rule Book).
66. **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 respective divisional League Vice-president or members of the Board of Directors. (Rule 9.02(a), page 171, 2026 Rule Book).
67. **UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT:** The actions, **on or off the field**, 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 **including through online or social media**, is subject to disciplinary action by the local league Board of Directors (Regulation XIV(a), FIELD DECORUM, page 80, 2026 Rule Book).
68. **COURTESY RUNNER-REGULAR SEASON ONLY:** a local league may implement a courtesy runner for the pitcher and/or the catcher when there are two (2) outs. If using a traditional batting order, the same courtesy runner, who must be a substitute at the time, may not run for both the pitcher and the catcher at any time during the game. If a continuous batting order is used, the courtesy runner must be the player in the batting order who made the last out. Pitchers and catchers can have courtesy runners for both if both are on base at the same time with the player who made the last out running for the most forward runner (pitcher or catcher) and the player who made the second-to-last out running for the preceding runner (pitcher or catcher). If a pitcher or catcher made the last out, they **must be** the courtesy runner (Rule 2.00, COURTESY RUNNER, pages 103 and 104, Rule 3.04, pages 116 and 117, and Rule 7.14(b), page 159, 2026 Rule Book)
69. The possession and/or use of firearms, tobacco products, cigarettes (including e-cigarettes and vapors), controlled substances, and alcoholic beverages in any form is **prohibited on the playing field, benches, or dugouts**. **Alcohol is prohibited at the game site** (Regulation XIV(e), Field Decorum, page 80, 2026 Rule Book).
70. Leagues are **required to ensure** that first, second, and third **bases will disengage** from their anchors (Rule 1.06, pages 92 and 93, 2026 Rule Book).
71. **Regulation Game:** A game is a regulation game if four innings (five innings for Junior and Senior Divisions) have been completed. A local league may establish a time limit per game to define a regulation game versus innings played. The minimum time limit is set at 1 hour and 45 minutes. Any inning which has started prior to the time limit expiring will be completed but no new inning will begin once the time limit has expired. A new inning starts at the moment the third out is made, completing the preceding inning (Regulation VII(h), page 71, Regulation X(a) and (c), page 75, Rule 2.00, INNING, page 108, Rule 4.10(c)(1) and (2), page 124, and Rule 4.11(d), page 126, 2026 Rule Book).

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72. **EJECTIONS OF MANAGERS, COACHES, PLAYERS, PARENTS:** When the manager, coach, or a player is ejected from a game, they shall leave the field immediately and take no further part in that game. They may not sit in the stands and may not be recalled. **A manager or coach ejected from a game must not be present at the game site for the remainder of that game.** Any manager, coach, or player ejected from a game is suspended for his or her team's next physically played game and may not be in attendance at the game site. This includes pregame and postgame activities. 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 170, 171, 172, and 173, 2026 Rule Book). If the manager, coach, or player is in attendance at the next physically played game, the umpire should refuse to start the game until the ejected manager, coach, or player leaves the premises. (Rule 4.07, page 123, 2026 Rule Book). All umpires have authority at their discretion to eject from the playing field (1) any person whose duties permit that person's presence on the field, such as ground crew members, photographers, newsmen, broadcasting crew members, etc. and (2) any spectator or other person not authorized to be on the playing field (Rule 9.01(f), page 171, 2026 Rule Book).
73. 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 174, 2026 Rule Book).

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74. **RULE 8.02(a)(1), PITCHER BRINGING HANDS TO MOUTH:** the pitcher may bring the hand in contact with the mouth or the lips provided he distinctly wipes off the pitching hand before contacting the ball. Pitchers may only use dirt, powdered rosin, or comparable drying agents that are listed on the USA Softball's certified equipment webpage to dry the hand. Rosin bags are to be used only for the hands, not ball, uniform or glove (Rule 8.02(a)(1), page 164, 2026 Rule Book).
75. **PITCHER VISIT LIMITS:** For **9- to 11-Year-Old Division and above**, a manager or coach may come out once in one inning to visit the pitcher but the second time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher. A manager or coach may come out twice in one game to visit the pitcher, but the third time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher. For **8- to 10-Year-Old Division**, a manager or coach may come out twice in one inning to visit the pitcher but the third time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher. A manager or coach may come out three times in one game to visit the pitcher, but the fourth time out, the player must be removed as a pitcher. A manager or coach who is granted time out to talk to any defensive player will be charged with a visit to the pitcher. When a manager requests timeout to make a pitching change, it shall not be considered a visit to the pitcher provided the manager makes the pitching substitution prior to speaking to any defensive player (Rule 8.06(c), APPROVED RULING 1, page 169, and Rule T-7, page 203, 2026 Rule Book).
76. **PITCHING THRESHOLDS (Catcher To Pitcher):** Any player who has played the position of catcher in four (4) or more innings in a game is not eligible to pitch on that calendar day. A player who played the position of catcher for three (3) innings or less, moves to the pitcher position, and delivers 21 pitches or more (**SENIOR LEAGUE:** 31 pitches or more) in the same day, may not return to the catcher position on that calendar day. **EXCEPTION:** If the pitcher reaches the 20-pitch limit (**SENIOR LEAGUE:** 30-pitch limit) while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch, and maintain their eligibility to return to the catcher position, until any of the following conditions occur: (1) that batter reaches base; (2) that batter is retired; (3) the third out is made to complete the half-inning or the game, the pitcher is removed from the mound prior to the batter completing his at-bat (Rule T-4(a), pages 196, 199, and 200, 2026 Rule Book).
77. **PITCHING THRESHOLDS (Pitcher To Catcher):** If a player delivers 41 or more pitches, and is not covered under the threshold exceptions, the player may not play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day. **THRESHOLD EXCEPTION:** If a pitcher reaches 40 pitches while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch, and maintain their eligibility to play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day, until any of the following conditions occur: (1) that batter reaches base; (2) that batter is retired; (3) the third out is made to complete the half-inning or the game, or (4) the pitcher is removed from the mound prior to

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the batter completing his at-bat. The pitcher would be allowed to play the catcher position provided that pitcher is moved, removed, or the game is completed before delivering a pitch to another batter (Rule T-4(d), **NOTE**, pages 196, 197, and 200, 2026 Rule Book).

78. **DAYS OF PITCHING LIMITS:** Under no circumstances shall a player pitch in three (3) consecutive days (Rule T-4(e) **NOTE 1**, pages 198 and 201, 2026 Rule Book).
79. **PITCHING IN MORE THAN ONE GAME IN A DAY:** A player may not pitch in more than one game in a day for any division other than Junior or Senior leagues. **Junior/Senior League:** If a player delivers 31 or more pitches in the first game, and is not covered under the threshold exceptions, the player may not pitch in the second game that day. **THRESHOLD EXCEPTION:** If a pitcher reaches 30 pitches while facing a batter in the first game, the pitcher may continue to pitch, and maintain their eligibility to pitch in the second game on that day, until any of the following conditions occur: (1) that batter reaches base; (2) that batter is retired; (3) the third out is made to complete the half-inning or the game, or (4) the pitcher is removed from the mound prior to the batter completing his at-bat. The pitcher would be allowed to pitch in a second game provided that pitcher is moved, removed, or the game is completed before delivering a pitch to another batter. **League age 12-year-olds participating in the Junior or Senior Divisions are not eligible to pitch in two games in a day.** (Rule T-4(f), pages 198 and 201, 2026 Rule Book).
80. **MANAGERS/COACHES IN THE DUGOUT:** A maximum of three (3) adults who are named on the affidavit will be permitted to act as manager/coaches for that game and in the team dugout (Tournament Rules, page 180, 2026 Rule Book). **NOTE:** Pursuant to Rule 4.05(b), page 122, of the 2026 Rule Book, base coaches may be adults and/or players provided at least one adult manager or coach remains in the dugout.
81. **DIAMOND-LEADER PROGRAM:** All managers and coaches will be required to complete the Little League Diamond Leader Training Program by obtaining a certificate of completion at LittleLeague.org/DiamondLeader. The completed certificate will be required to be available for inspection at all tournament sites (Tournament Rules, page 179, 2026 Rule Book).

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TOURNAMENT-RELATED RULES:

82. **15-RUN RULE/10-RUN RULE:** If after three (3) innings (**50/70, Junior, & Senior League:** four (4) innings), two and one-half innings (**50/70, Junior, & Senior League:** three and one-half innings) if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of fifteen (15) runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede the victory to the opponent. If after four (4) innings (**50/70, Junior, & Senior League:** five (5) innings), three and one-half innings (**50/70, Junior, & Senior League:** four and one-half innings) if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of ten (10) runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede victory to the opponent. During regular season, the local Little League may adopt the option of not utilizing this rule. However, this rule will apply during Tournament Play at all levels. (Rule T-12, page 206, 2026 Rule Book).
83. **REGULATION GAME:** A game is a regulation game if four innings (five innings for Junior and Senior Divisions) in which one team has scored more runs than the other [three and one-half (3 ½) if the home team is ahead or four and one-half (4 ½) if the home team is ahead in **Junior and Senior Divisions**] (Tournament Rule 13(a), page 206, 2026 Rule Book).
84. **NO TIME LIMITS:** There are no time limits on games; there are curfews on games: no inning shall start after midnight (12:30 AM for **50/70 and Junior League;** 1:00 AM for **Senior League**) (Curfew, page 189 and Tournament Rule 13(c), page 207, 2026 Rule Book).
85. **Mandatory Play – (Minor Division through Junior Division):** Tournament teams will adopt a continuous batting order during tournament play to include **all players** on the team affidavit who are present at the start of the game. This will allow defensive players to play when and how much a manager decides. If a player arrives late to a game and the manager chooses to enter her in the lineup, that player would be placed at the bottom of the lineup. Managers are solely responsible for ensuring that all players fulfill this mandatory play requirement. **This rule does not apply to Senior Division.** (Rule T-9, pages 203 and 204, 2026 Rule Book).

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86. **MANAGER RESPONSIBILITY-MANDATORY PLAY:** Managers are responsible for fulfilling the mandatory play requirements, even if notification is not made by umpires or tournament directors. **Failure to meet the mandatory play requirements in this rule is a basis for protest and, if protested or brought to the Tournament Committee’s attention, it may result (by action of the Tournament Committee) in the removal of the team’s manager, without replacement, for the remainder of the International Tournament.** (Rule T-9(h), page 204, 2026 Rule Book).
87. **SPECIAL PINCH RUNNER USAGE – SENIOR DIVISION ONLY:** Twice a game but not more than one time per inning, a team may utilize a player who is not in the batting order as a special pinch-runner for any offensive player. A player may only be removed for a special pinch-runner one time during a game. The player for whom the pinch-runner runs is not subject to removal from the lineup. If the pinch-runner remains in the game as a substitute defensive or offensive player, the player may not be used again as a pinch-runner while in the batting order. However, if removed for another substitute that player or any player not in the lineup, is again eligible to be used as a pinch-runner (Rule T-3(d), page 195, 2026 Rule Book).
88. **COURTESY RUNNER (Minor Division through JR Division):** A tournament team may permit a “courtesy runner” for the catcher and/or pitcher of record when there are two (2) outs. Utilizing a continuous batting order, the courtesy runner may be in the team’s batting order and must be the player in the batting order who made the last out (Rule T-3(d), page 194, 2026 Rule Book). This rule does not limit the number of times a catcher and/or pitcher can utilize a courtesy runner during a tournament game. **Pitchers and catchers can have courtesy runners for both if both are on base at the same time.** Pitchers and catchers can have courtesy runners for both if both are on base at the same time with the player who made the last out running for the most forward runner (pitcher or catcher) and the player who made the second-to-last out running for the preceding runner (pitcher or catcher). If a pitcher or catcher made the last out, they **must be** the courtesy runner. (Rule 2.00, COURTESY RUNNER, pages 103 and 104, Rule 3.04, pages 115 and 116, and Rule 7.14(b), page 159, 2026 Rule Book).
89. **MANAGERS/COACHES NOT PERMITTED TO WARM UP PITCHERS:** managers or coaches are not permitted to warm up a pitcher at home plate or in the bullpen or elsewhere at any time; they may stand by to observe a pitcher during warm-up in the bullpen (Rule T-3(f), pages 195 and 196, 2026 Rule Book).

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TOURNAMENT-RELATED RULES:

90. **BATTERS TO REMAIN IN BATTER’S BOX:** During regular season play (if proposed by the divisional VP and approved by the Board of Directors), after entering the batter’s box, the batter must remain in the box with at least one foot throughout the at bat. **Exceptions:**

1. On a swing, slap, or check swing.
2. When forced out of the box by a pitch.
3. When the batter attempts a “slap” or “slap bunt”.
4. When the catcher does not catch the pitched ball.
5. When a play has been attempted.
6. When time has been called.
7. When the pitcher leaves the eight-foot circle or the catcher leaves the catcher box.
8. On a three ball count pitch that is a strike that the batter thinks is a ball.

PENALTY: If the batter leaves the batter box or delays play and none of the exceptions apply, the umpire shall warn the batter. After one warning on a batter, the umpire shall call a strike. Any number of strikes can be called on each batter. No pitch has to be thrown, the ball is dead, and no runners may advance.

NOTE: The batter may return to their position in the batter’s box and assume the new count at any time during the at-bat, unless such enforced penalty is the third strike. (Rule T-3(a), pages 193 and 194, 2026 Rule Book).

91. **SUBSTITUTION AND RE-ENTRY – SENIOR DIVISION:** Any player who has been removed for a substitute may re-enter the game in the **SAME** position in the batting order. Defensive substitutions must be made while the team is on defense. Offensive substitutions must be made at the time the offensive player has his turn at bat or is on base. A starter and his substitute must not be in the lineup at the same time, except for injury, illness, or ejection. Designated Hitter (DH) **WILL** apply. Any player in the starting lineup, including the DH, who has been removed for a substitute may re-enter the game **ONCE**, provided such player occupies the same batting position as he did in the starting lineup. A substitute may not re-enter the game in any position once they are removed from the lineup. (Rule T-10(a), (b), (d), (e), (h), and (i), page 205, 2026 Rule Book.).

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TOURNAMENT-RELATED RULES:

92. There is no 8-run rule in Tournament Play (Rule T-12, NOTE 3, page 206, 2026 Rule Book).
93. **TIE GAMES:** During tournament play, at the completion of six innings (**Junior/Senior League:** seven innings) and the score is tied, the following tie-breaker will be played to determine a winning team (Rule T-14, pages 207, 2026 Rule Book):
- a. starting in the top of the seventh inning (**50/70, Junior, & Senior League:** eighth inning) and each half inning thereafter, the offensive team shall begin its turn at bat with the player who is scheduled to bat last in that respective half inning being placed on second base. **EXAMPLE:** If the number five batter is the lead-off batter, the number four batter in the batting order will be placed on second base. An eligible substitute or special pinch runner may be inserted for that runner.

PRELIMINARY PRE-GAME DUTIES:

- Inspect field for playing conditions, including filling of any holes in outfield, as well as provision of break-away bases on first, second, and third as required by Rule 1.06, pages 92 and 93, 2026 Rule Book.
- Note that the plate umpire should inquire of both managers at the plate meeting prior to the start of the game whether or not all their players are properly equipped per Little League rules. The game cannot start until the plate umpire receives an affirmative answer from each manager. Any **illegal equipment** that is used during the game will result in immediate ejection of both the manager and the player who used the illegal equipment. This is generally **bats**, including those with **choke-knobs or choke-assists**. **Improper equipment** would be considered a catcher's mask without a required throat guard. Penalties are assessed for illegal equipment but not improper equipment. Umpires should instruct players to take improper equipment off the field or correct such equipment.
- Discuss signs to be used during game with partner(s) (lost count, infield fly, etc.), who will call fair/foul balls and up to what point on the field, etc. as well as rotations if an umpire goes out on a "trouble ball".

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"
- 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

St. Augustine Little League, Inc.
Major, 50/70, and Junior/Senior **Baseball** League Division – 2026

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.

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

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