



SOUTH OTTAWA LITTLE LEAGUE

HOUSE LEAGUE RULES

2010

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PRIORITIES TO CONSIDER

Safety	Safety should come first in practices and games. Minimize all possibilities for baseball accidents
Sportsmanship	Teach it, promote it, demonstrate it, and enforce it. It isn't all about winning!
Commitment	Explain to our young players their responsibility to be at practices and games on time.
Team Play	Introduce the basics of working towards a common goal as a team, i.e. offence, defence, praising one another.
Rules of the Game	Teach the rules of the game to the players. Baseball is a game of situations. Explain these situations.
Self-Confidence	Playing sports and mastering athletic skills builds self-esteem. As a coach, you can help your players by praising their skills, efforts, and dedication to their tasks.

There are at least four very good reasons that we follow rules, even if we don't agree with them:

1. We follow the rules to ensure the safety of our children.
2. We follow the rules because we agree to when we pay for the Charter granted us by Little League.
3. We follow the rules so that no team can protest our teams' eligibility at any District, Provincial, National, or World tournament.
4. We follow the rules so that there is no question that our players and volunteers are covered by Little League's insurance.

The Value of Playing Baseball

- Acquire an appreciation for an active lifestyle
- Develop a positive self-concept to mastering baseball skills
- Learn how to work as part of a team
- Develop social skills
- Learn about managing success and disappointment
- Learn good sportsmanship in baseball and in life
- Learn respect for others

House League Rules

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Code of Conduct, Sportsmanship, and Decorum

The use of tobacco products and alcoholic beverages in any form is strictly prohibited on the field. Profanity, verbal abuse, and obnoxious or objectionable behaviour by players, coaches, or spectators will not be tolerated.

All ejections carry an automatic next game suspension. If there is a second suspension, the offender will be automatically suspended for the remainder of the season.

Coaches and managers are responsible and accountable for the conduct of their players, coaching staff, and fans. Often the umpires are learning the game as well as the players. Our umpires are young and they do the best they can. They will make mistakes. You may respectfully request clarification of an umpire's interpretation of the play, but not the decision. If they miss a call, coaches will NOT discuss it with them. Teach your players respect for officials through your own actions and behaviour.

Umpires will not engage problem fans. Should a parent's or a fan's behaviour become a problem, the umpire will notify the coach and give him/her the opportunity to address the situation. If the behaviour continues, the umpire will eject the parent/fan without further warning. If the umpire feels the coach did not attempt to address the situation, he/she may also eject the coach for the remainder of the game. The ejected coach/player/parent/fan must leave the field immediately or the umpire will contact the police and award the game to the opposing team. If an ejected player's parents/guardians are not in attendance, the player will **remain seated** in the bleachers until the end of the game or until such time as a parent/guardian arrives.

The umpire will report the incident immediately to the President and the Umpire-in-Chief, and, as required by our Constitution, the situation will be reviewed by the Disciplinary Committee who will determine whether any further action should be taken (please refer to South Ottawa Little League's Code of Conduct available on our website at www.southottawalittleleague.ca).

A player who carelessly or unintentionally throws their bat or helmet shall receive 1 warning. Further infractions by the same player, or a player who intentionally throws their bat or helmet, shall result in the player being called out and forfeiture of their next turn at bat (automatic out).

No coach or spectator is allowed to coach a player at bat from the backstop area. No one is allowed to stand directly behind the backstop to coach the pitcher or second-guess the umpire. Anyone who violates this rule after one warning will be asked by the umpire to leave the field.

Coaches and players must not cheer against nor harass the opposing team. Support for their own players is expected.

Little League rules are in order when situations are not covered in these House League rules.

Player Discipline

The coach may discipline a player for unacceptable behaviour (missing games / practices / foul language, etc.). The plate umpire and scorekeeper must be informed as soon as a benching begins. The player may not field or bat until the time, as set by the coach, is over. No player may be disciplined for missing games due to medical or religious reasons.

Team Equipment

The League entrusts each manager / coach with the care and safekeeping of team equipment. Return all baseballs at the end of the season along with all other equipment. These balls are used as practice balls for future seasons.

Inclement Weather / Rainouts

The decision to cancel a game prior to start time rests with the Convenor. Safety for players is the key factor in making this decision. This is done on an "as feel" basis. Generally, if it is raining hard during the day and still is at 4:00 p.m., the Convenor will call the coaches and cancel. The Convenor will also call the umpire scheduler to ensure the umpires are informed.

If it is only a light drizzle and it looks like it might clear, the game is left on. Once at the park, the decision is up to the Convenor and umpire before the game starts, and only the umpire after the game starts.

Play will be stopped immediately if lightening occurs.

Players must come to the game if they have not heard from their coach – frequently the field conditions are not as bad as we think.

If a game is cancelled prior to the umpires arriving, and the umpires are contacted directly and told not to go to the game, they are not paid. However, if we can't or don't contact them and they arrive at the diamond, they will be paid for the game.

The coaches are responsible for rescheduling the game as soon as possible. The Convenor must be notified. If a mutually convenient time cannot be agreed upon, the Convenor will reschedule the game. No points will be awarded for games not completed by the end of the regular season.

Start of Game

The key to completing a game by curfew is to start the game at the scheduled time (by the umpire's watch). Team warm-up and pre-game coach talks should be completed and the home team ready to throw the first pitch at the scheduled start time. Coaches and the umpire should confer and agree on the start time at the beginning of the game, and ***the scorekeeper should note the start time on the game sheet.*** For all games, the home team will occupy the third base dugout and the visiting team will occupy the first base dugout.

Game Pace

A maximum of five (5) pitches per inning will be permitted for pitching warm-up. This will allow time for infielders and outfielders to warm-up. The pace of the game should be aggressive and players should know their assigned defensive position prior to transitioning from offence to defence. One catcher warm-up throw to 2nd base will be allowed, however, no warm-up throw shall be permitted to 3rd base. This guideline will accelerate the game and allow for more playing time. Umpires can declare a forfeit if a team, despite a warning, wilfully and persistently violates the rules, or uses tactics designed to delay or shorten the game.

A courtesy runner may be inserted for the catcher with two (2) outs, who must be the last player to record an out while at bat.

Field Set-up

The home team is responsible for picking up field equipment, spiking the bases in the proper location, providing a scorekeeper / pitch counter, returning all equipment after the game, and providing two game balls. Each team is responsible for ensuring their dugout is cleared of all debris after each game.

Forfeits

In Coach Pitch and Minors, each team must field seven (7) players before the game can start. Majors, Juniors, and Seniors must have eight (8). All games are expected to start at the scheduled time, however, to avoid forfeits a ten-minute grace period is allowed for a team to ensure that the required number of players are available to start. In the event a team is unable to field the required number of players, the umpire shall declare the game forfeited. The score shall be recorded as 4-0 for the team with the required number of players in Coach Pitch, 6-0 in Minors and Majors, or 7-0 in Juniors and Seniors. In the event that both teams are unable to field sufficient players, the game will be rescheduled. If a team is unable to continue the game with the required number of players, for whatever reason, the game will be forfeited. Should the home team not have bases in place and a scorekeeper / pitch counter ready, they are not ready to play for the purposes of this rule and a forfeit may be declared.

Call-Ups

In an effort to reduce or eliminate the number of forfeits, teams are permitted to call up players. A call-up is a **second year player** in the lower division and has the ability to play at the next level. **Call-ups must be indicated on the score sheet with a "CU" marked beside their names.**

Coaches must attempt to call up players only when they expect fewer than ten (10) players at any game **and only to bring the number of players up to 10**. They must also use call-ups in situations where they can be expected to succeed. Convenors must be notified.

Call-ups are not permitted at the Junior level in order to safe guard player eligibility for the tournament team.

Game Length and Curfews

A regulation game consists of 6 innings (4 for Coach Pitch and 7 for Junior/Senior/Big League), unless shortened 1) because the home team needs none of its half of the 6th inning (7th for Junior/Senior/Big League) or only a fraction of it; or 2) because the umpire calls the game.

For all levels except Coach Pitch, no inning may start 2 hours and 15 minutes after the scheduled start time. See Division Specific Rules for Coach Pitch starting on page 14. If an inning is incomplete when it becomes too dark to continue OR the field time is up and other teams are ready to take over, the game must end and the score will be determined as per Schedule "A" on page 9.

Base Coaches

You may have two **registered** adult base coaches as long as there is a **registered** adult coach in the dug-out at all times. If there are no registered coaches available to coach a base, both base coaches must be players in uniform, wearing helmets.

Uniforms

Players will receive a shirt and cap at the start of the year which **must** be worn for a player to be eligible to play. **This rule is not optional** - our sponsors pay money for this advertising and we must ensure they get what they pay for. **Players who violate this rule will be removed from the game.** Players may wear a sweatshirt or coat **under** their uniform if they wish. Players may wear athletic or sweat pants - no shorts, jeans, or open toed shoes (sandals) may be worn. Shirts must be tucked in at all times.

Safety

On deck batters are not permitted from BlastBall to Majors. This is a safety issue and is not negotiable. Teams will receive one warning. Subsequent violations by any player will result in the coach being ejected, which comes with an automatic next game suspension. The umpire is responsible for advising the Convenor who will notify the President and Safety Officer.

Players may bring their own bats to the game but they must meet Little League specifications and must be shared with team mates (see bat specifications Rule 1.10 on page 48 of the 2009 Little League International Rules & Regulations).

All players, male and female, with the exception of BlastBall players, must wear an athletic protector to be eligible to play. **This rule is not optional** and no player, parent, coach, Convenor, or umpire may declare this rule differently. Players may not share cups.

Players must supply their own NOSCAE, CSA, or ULC approved helmets. Player base coaches must also wear a helmet. Any helmet not in use must be kept in the player's equipment bag and not on the ground.

Players must remove all watches, body rings, pins (on clothing or cap), and any other item the umpire may deem to be a potential source of injury to the player. Medic Alert bracelets and necklaces may be worn but must be taped down.

Players must sit on the bench unless they are preparing to enter the game.

Runners must slide at home when a collision is “imminent”. The slide is to avoid injury and a collision. This is at the discretion of the umpire and is not meant to be an automatic out if the runner does not slide due to no “imminent” collision. For example, if a ball sails high into the backstop and the catcher leaves the plate to fetch the ball and the runner does not slide, no collision is imminent, and the runner is safe.

No head first sliding is allowed except when returning to a base.

Rule Book

South Ottawa Little League is a chartered organization with Little League Canada, and uses the official Little League Rule Book for all rules and regulations except for specific local rules outlined in this document. All managers and coaches are required to read, apply, and respect the regulations and rules as laid out in the rule book. Take the time to read the book and apply the philosophy. Share the rules with your players.

Offence

Every player is placed in the batting order. A player who arrives after the start of the game is placed last in the batting order. Coaches must fill out three copies of their batting order (line up cards are found in the back of the score book) - two for the umpire who will give one to the scorekeeper (this is the official line-up) and one to the other team, and a third for their own use. Please have these ready before you come to the field, deleting those who do not show by game time, and notifying the official scorekeeper.

Defence

Only nine (9) players are used in the field for each inning, with the exception of BlastBall which uses all players and Coach Pitch which uses 10.

SOLL uses an equal play rule that states the following:

- * no player may sit for more than one inning in a row; and
- * no player may sit for a second inning unless **all other players** have sat at least one inning (except starting pitchers while still pitching).

The official scorekeeper will record the uniform numbers of the players on the defensive bench at the start of each half-inning, and will advise the offending coach of any equal play violations. The coach must immediately rectify the situation. **Refusal to do so will result in disciplinary action.** All violations of the equal play rule must be reported to the Convenor, who must then report the violation to the President. Any player who is late more than two innings may forfeit their share of playing time at the coach's discretion; umpires and official scorekeepers must be notified.

Pitching

All players, with the exception of call-ups, are eligible to pitch and are encouraged to do so. **Exception: 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.** There is no limit to the number of pitchers a team may use in a game. Coaches are expected to abide by these rules and develop pitchers accordingly. A pitcher once removed from the mound may not return as a pitcher.

JUNIOR, SENIOR, AND BIG LEAGUE DIVISIONS ONLY: a pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position, can return as a pitcher anytime in the remainder of the game, but only once per game.

All coaches shall have their pitching log available at every game.

A pitcher used while ineligible to pitch shall be declared ineligible to pitch in the next two games (including playoffs), and the coach responsible will be suspended for two games.

The number of pitches allowed is based on the pitcher's age. Specific rest periods are in place when a pitcher reaches a higher threshold of pitches delivered in a day.

The table below gives an overview of the number of pitches that will be allowed per day for each age group during the regular season.

League Age	Pitches Allowed Per Day
17 – 18	105
13 – 16	95
11 – 12	85
9-10	75

League Age 9 – 14 (see * Below)		League Age 15 – 18 (see * Below)	
# of Pitches	Days Rest Required	# of Pitches	Days Rest Required
1 – 20	0	1 – 30	0
21 – 35	1	31 - 45	1
36 - 50	2	46 - 60	2
51 - 65	3	61 - 75	3
66 +	4	76 +	4

* **NOTE:** A player may not pitch in more than one game in a day.

The coach must remove the pitcher when said pitcher reaches the limit for his/her age group as noted above, or once she/he has completed 2 innings, whichever comes first, but the pitcher may remain in the game at another position. **Exception:** If a pitcher reaches the limit imposed in Regulation VI (c) for his/her league age while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any one of the following conditions occurs: 1. That batter reaches base; 2. That batter is put out; 3. The third out is made to complete the half-inning. **NOTE 1:** A pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day.

There is no automatic intentional walk. If a pitcher wishes to intentionally walk a batter, she/he must do so by pitching four pitches intentionally outside the strike zone that are not struck by the batter, and are called "balls" by the umpire. All such pitches will count in determining that pitcher's pitch count.

The official scorekeeper / pitch count recorder will be provided by the home team. The official pitch count recorder must provide the current pitch count for any pitcher when requested by either coach or any umpire, however, the coach is responsible for knowing when his/her pitcher must be removed. The official pitch count recorder should inform the plate umpire when a pitcher has delivered his/her maximum limit of pitches for the game as noted in Regulation VI (c). The plate umpire will inform the pitcher's coach that the pitcher must be removed. Failure by the official pitch count recorder to notify the plate umpire and/or failure of the plate umpire to notify the coach, does not relieve the coach of his/her responsibility to remove a pitcher when that pitcher is no longer eligible. Violation of any section of this regulation can result in protest of the game in which it occurs. Protests shall be made in accordance with Playing Rule 4.19.

A player may not pitch in more than one game in a day (Exception: in the Big League division, a player may be used as a pitcher in up to two games in a day).

NOTES:

1. The withdrawal of an ineligible pitcher after that pitcher is announced, or after a warm-up pitch is delivered, but before that player has pitched a ball to a batter, shall not be considered a violation.

Little League officials are urged to take precautions to prevent protests. When a protest situation is imminent, the potential offender should be notified immediately.

2. Pitches delivered in games declared "Regulation Tie Games" or "Suspended Games" shall be charged against the pitcher's eligibility.
3. In suspended games resumed on another day, the pitchers of record at the time the game was halted may continue to pitch to the extent of the eligibility for that day, provided said pitcher has observed the required days of rest.

Example 1: A league age 12 pitcher delivers 70 pitches in a game on Monday when the game is suspended. The game resumes on the following Thursday. The pitcher is not eligible to pitch in the resumption of the game because he/she has not observed the required days of rest.

Example 2: A league age 12 pitcher delivers 70 pitches in a game on Monday when the game is suspended. The game resumes on Saturday. The pitcher is eligible to pitch up to 85 more pitches in the resumption of the game because he/she has observed the required days of rest.

Example 3: A league age 12 pitcher delivers 70 pitches in a game on Monday when the game is suspended. The game resumes two weeks later. The pitcher is eligible to pitch up to 85 more pitches in the resumption of the game, provided he/she is eligible based on his/her pitching record during the previous **four** days.

Game Record

All teams are provided with a scorebook which includes a pitching log and a pitching eligibility form that must be signed off by both coaches and the scorekeeper after each game. Coaches and scorekeepers are encouraged to check the scores and number of pitches between each inning – no changes can be made once the next inning starts. Games that cannot be completed due to darkness, rain, or curfews will revert back to the score of the last completed inning provided that enough innings have been played to constitute an official game, UNLESS the home team is at bat and has tied or gone ahead during this partial inning, in which case the score at the time the game is called stands (see Schedule A below).

Schedule "A" below is for use during regular (spring) season play.

SCHEDULE "A"

GAMES ABANDONED AS PER RULE 3 ABOVE FOR DARKNESS, BAD WEATHER OR THE FIELD TIME IS UP AND OTHER TEAMS ARE READY TO TAKE OVER.

SCORE AT END OF LAST COMPLETED INNING	SITUATION WHEN GAME ABANDONED	OUTCOME
HOME TEAM AHEAD	Away team at bat, regardless of additional scoring	Score reverts to last completed inning
HOME TEAM AHEAD	Home team at bat, regardless of additional scoring	Score stands as per time of abandonment (Home Team wins)
AWAY TEAM AHEAD	Away team at bat, regardless of additional scoring	Score reverts to last completed inning
AWAY TEAM AHEAD	Home team at bat, still behind in score	Score reverts to last completed inning
AWAY TEAM AHEAD	Home team at bat, scored enough runs to tie game	Score stands as per time of abandonment (tie)
AWAY TEAM AHEAD	Home team at bat, scored enough runs to go ahead in the score	Score stands as per time of abandonment (Home Team wins)
TIE	Away team at bat, regardless of additional scoring	Score reverts to last completed inning (tie)

TIE	Home team at bat, score still tied	Score stands as a tie
TIE	Home team at bat, scored at least one run to go ahead in the score	Score stands as per time of abandonment (Home Team wins)

An inning is considered to have started when the third out is made in the last half of the previous inning. No inning should begin unless there is a reasonable expectation of completing it.

Coaches, umpires, and the official scorekeeper must sign the score sheet at the end of the game.

Both coaches are responsible for calling in game scores and pitching record to the Convenor after each game.

Attendance

Eligibility for selection to competitive / tournament teams requires at least 60% participation during the house league spring season. ***Please keep attendance records by noting absences on the score sheet. Players who miss the 60% target due to medical reasons will be required to provide a medical certificate.***

Tie Games

During the regular season, tie games will stand and count as one point (wins will be counted as two points). Extra innings are not played.

During playoffs, tie games will result in extra innings in order to determine a winner. Umpires will keep the curfew rule in mind. If the game cannot be completed to break the tie, Little League Rule 4.12 shall take effect.

Incomplete Games

An incomplete game shall be declared a “no game”, and the entire game will be rescheduled. Pitches pitched will be charged against the pitcher’s eligibility.

Umpires

Umpires are assigned by the League – if there are no umpires on the field by the scheduled start time, the home team coach should attempt to find a volunteer. If one cannot be found, the game will be rescheduled as soon as possible. The home team coach must inform the Convenor of this fact as soon as possible after the game.

Pennant Play

At the end of the regular season, the team with the most points is the Pennant winner. Ties are broken as follows: 1 – win/loss record between tied teams; 2 – win/loss record against the team directly below the tied teams; 3 – runs for/against record between tied teams; 4 – each team’s runs for minus runs against for the entire season.

Playoffs

All teams from Coach Pitch to Big League will be in the playoffs. In all rounds, the team with the higher place finish in the regular season will be the home team for any playoff game and must pick up the equipment and set up the field – failure to do so may result in a forfeit.

The Convenor will attempt to inform coaches before each playoff game who cannot pitch, but it is the coach’s responsibility to confirm this information as correct. Errors by Convenors, umpires, and/or coaches will not change this rule.

Playoff Format

- All playoff games are sudden death **(except Coach Pitch – please check with your Convenor)**
- It is understood that the games will be played at the earliest time that a field is available, but, unless absolutely unavoidable, teams will not be required to play more than two playoff

games in a week.

- **4 TEAM LEAGUE**
 - ROUND 1: Team 4 at Team 1; Team 3 at Team 2
 - FINAL: Round 1 winners play for the championship.
- **5 TEAM LEAGUE**
 - ROUND 1: Team 5 at Team 4.
 - ROUND 2: Winner from Round 1 at Team 1; Team 3 at Team 2.
 - FINAL: Round 2 winners play for championship.
- **6 TEAM LEAGUE**
 - ROUND 1: Team 6 at Team 1; Team 5 at Team 2; Team 4 at Team 3.
 - ROUND 2: Of the three winning teams, the one with the highest place finish in regular season gets bye to final. The other two teams play.
 - FINAL: The winner plays team on bye for championship.
- **7 TEAM LEAGUE**
 - NOTE: if it seems more appropriate, based on the standings in the league, a 7 team league may be divided into A and B divisions.
 - ROUND 1: Team 1 has a bye; Team 7 at Team 2; Team 6 at Team 3; Team 5 at Team 4
 - ROUND 2: Team 1 plays the winning team with the lowest place finish in the regular season and the other two teams play.
 - FINAL: Winners from Round 2 play for championship.
- **8 TEAM LEAGUE (4-4 split)**
 - The teams ranked from 1 to 4 will play on the "A" side and teams ranked from 5 to 8 will play on the "B" side. Both playoffs will use the format for a 4 team league as stated above.
- **9 TEAM LEAGUE (5-4 split)**
 - The teams ranked from 1 to 5 will play on the "A" side using the format for a 5 team league as stated above.
 - The teams ranked from 6 to 9 will play on the "B" side using the format for a 4 team league as stated above.
- **10 TEAM LEAGUE (5-5 split)**
 - The teams ranked from 1 to 5 will play on the "A" side using the format for a 5 team league as stated above.
 - The teams ranked from 6 to 10 will play on the "B" side using the format for a 5 team league as stated above

DIVISION SPECIFIC RULES

BLASTBALL

Introduction

BlastBall!® is an excellent introductory game for a bat and ball sports. It provides an ideal entry level of play for the youngster who will go on to other advanced levels of the game. It allows for constant action for young people's short attention span. It is designed to generate fast-paced action, provide recreation and exercise, create enthusiasm, and thru simplicity, allow retention of youth participants in the game.

BlastBall!® teaches all five basic fundamentals of baseball and softball...*hitting, throwing, catching, running, and fielding.* It is also just a ton of fun with fast and continuous action and simple rules.

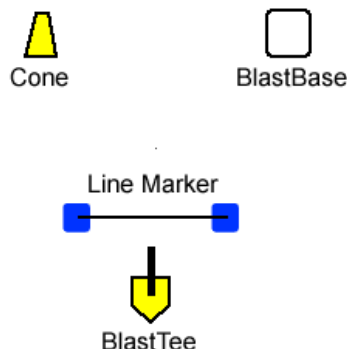
The BlastBase is audible, emitting a loud "**H O N K**" that the kids love whenever the runner stomps on the base.

Rules & Field Set-Up

Position your BlastTee so that hitting allows you a safe area of play. Like a regular ball diamond, from the Tee pace off 30 feet to the right and position your BlastBase. This establishes your fair/foul line to the right. To the left of the Tee and perpendicular to your BlastBase line, pace of an equal distance and position your cone. This establishes your fair/foul line to the left. Now pace off 15 feet directly in front of the Tee and lay out your Line Marker running between the (hypothetical) first and third base lines. This becomes the fair/foul line for play. If a ball is hit inside of that line it is foul and should be re-teed for another try. If it goes beyond the line, either in the air or on a roll, it is considered in play.

A BlastBall is placed on the BlastTee and the first batter hits the ball and runs to the BlastBase while the defenders go after the ball. If the batter reaches the BlastBase before a defensive player either catches the BlastBall in the air (an automatic out) or fields it and yells "Blast", the BlastBase will "honk", the runner scores a run. If the ball is caught or fielded and "Blast" is yelled before the runner gets to the BlastBase, then the runner does not score a run. Every player gets to hit once and then the teams switch from hitting to defense and vice versa.

To retrieve the throwback of the defensive players, have a parent positioned to the left and rear of the Tee by about 15 feet.



Uniforms and Equipment

- BlastBase
- BlastTee
- BlastBall
- BlastBat
- Cone
- Line Markers

Players will be provided with a T-shirt and hat. Running shoes are okay for BlastBall, and a glove and helmet are required. Helmets must be NOSCAE, CSE, OR ULC approved.

Games and Practices

All games will begin at 6:30 p.m. with a ½ hour practice. Both teams will practice together to more effectively use the coaches. These practices are a mandatory part of the season and all players are expected to attend them. Games will start at 7:00 and finish at 7:30.

Skills to teach during practice time:

- Toss ball in air and catch with 2 hands (thumbs or pinkies together).
- Short catch with a partner (close at first, gradually get farther apart).
- Grip on throwing ball, two or three fingers along with thumb.
- When throwing, use opposite leg to step, i.e. if you throw with your right hand, step with your left foot.
- Pointing shoulder when throwing to a target.
- Overrunning the base.
- Proper positioning next to batting-tee while hitting - HINT: Most kids have a tendency to want to stand too close to the tee when batting. Keep them back to allow arms to extend.
- Fielding ground balls - get down low just like an alligator and keep back flat. Here comes the ball, let it roll to you. Put your glove on the ground like the alligator's mouth and with the top (throwing) hand, close those jaws down and lock that ball in your glove. Even teach them to growl while they close down the jaws. That will allow them to expend air and make the play much easier.
- Fielding from the "ground up" one motion (hands start on ground)

Key - keep the game moving, with little or no standing around. "6 up" - "6 down". As soon as the last batter has completed batting, hustle in and out. It is extra motivation for offensive players when changing innings, to have to touch the base on their way to their defensive positions in the field.

COACH PITCH

Objectives

- To promote interest in the game.
- To promote a desire to improve skills.
- To develop knowledge and understanding of the basic rules of baseball.
- To provide an opportunity to get some exercise.
- To have FUN!

Coach Pitch is intended to be a fun, non-competitive, skills development program.

Only children registered with the League are permitted to play or practice. Players must be in uniform for every game (team T-shirt, hat, and long pants).

Each game will consist of a 45-minute practice, followed by a one-hour game. In an effort to develop basic skills and ensure all the kids develop at a similar pace, a practice plan will be provided by the League and should be followed by all coaches. Players should be taught positions, batting, running the bases, how a run is scored, what an out is, and how to throw and catch.

One umpire will be provided for each game. The umpire will announce the game start time to the official scorekeeper for recording. A parent from the home team may ump first base and a parent from the visiting team may ump 3rd base, but they must not interfere with the play or coach the player.

Please ensure they aren't wearing open toed shoes or sandals.

A game is considered official when three (3) full innings have been played (2 ½ if home team is leading). The maximum number of innings played for each game is four (4).

The pitching rubber should be at 38'. All bases must be pegged at 50' apart. A safety base will be used at first base.

All players are in the batting order. Ten (10) players are used in the field for each inning. Positions are Catcher, Pitcher Guard (see "Defensive Play" on page 14 for positioning), 1st Base, 2nd Base, Shortstop, 3rd Base (these infield positions must be at the proper position), Left Field, Left Centerfield, Right Centerfield, and Right Field (these outfielders must stand on the grass whenever a batter is up).

No player can play the same defensive position twice in a game. It is the Coach's responsibility to teach the kids how to play the different positions.

Curfew

Any inning under play at 8:00 p.m. (by the umpire's watch) will be completed.

Mercy

There will be a mercy rule for all innings, including the 4th, or final, inning, as follows: In May, if the 4th run crosses the plate before the 3rd out is made, the inning is over. In June, if the 5th run crosses the plate before the 3rd out is made, the inning is over

Pitching

A coach from the team at bat will pitch to the batter. **Pitches will be thrown in an overhand motion** from the pitching rubber. Pitches can be thrown from one knee on the ground to put the pitcher at the same level as the batter. No pitch is made until all players are ready. The pitcher/coach will hold the ball up in the air at arm's length and ensure everyone is ready. There are no restrictions as to how many adult pitchers are used in one game. If an adult pitcher is not able to throw strikes consistently, a new adult pitcher should be brought in. No warm-up pitches are permitted. The adult pitcher should only receive the ball from the Pitcher Guard. If an adult pitcher, in the judgement of the umpire, intentionally fields a batted ball, the batter is declared out. If an adult pitcher, in the

judgement of the umpire, intentionally fields a thrown ball, all runners, including the batter-runner, will be declared out.

The batter is out after 3 swinging strikes or 5 pitches, whichever occurs first. If the last pitch is batted foul, another pitch is made.

Defensive Play

Outfielders must have both feet completely in the outfield grass when the batter is batting. Any defensive player may field a batted ball hit into fair territory.

The defensive player must make an attempt to make a play to get an out, i.e. the ball is not to be thrown immediately to the Pitcher Guard in order to stop the play.

There is a limit of 4 coaches per team. It is strongly recommended there be at least 3. You must be an officially registered volunteer to be permitted on the field or in the dugout. Two registered adult coaches may be stationed in the outfield grass (as long as one properly documented adult coach remains in the dugout at all times) during the team's turn in the field to instruct and position players. These defensive coaches may not touch either the ball or their players during the course of play in the field (i.e., when the ball is live).

The Pitcher Guard must be within six feet of the pitching rubber (at least one foot inside the pitcher's mound dirt circle) until the ball is hit. If the Pitcher Guard does not comply and the batter is put out or any runner is put out, the ball will be declared dead and the batter will be awarded first base and all runners will advance one base from the base they occupied at the time the ball was hit. If the batter reaches first base safely and no runners are put out, the play will stand, the ball is live, and no penalty will be imposed.

Overthrows

Alive and In Play – after the first thrown ball which gets past a fielder covering a base, the base runners may advance one base beyond the base which they were traveling to at the time of the release of the throw. This advancement is at their own risk. NOTE: After the second error of this type, a dead ball shall be called, i.e. with a runner on first, the batter hits a ball to the short stop who fields it and overthrows first base. The ball remains in play so the base runner from first advances at their own risk to third. The batter-base runner attempts to advance to second. The first baseman fields the overthrow and throws a second overthrow to second base. A dead ball is called.

Out of Play – if a defensive overthrow goes out of play, runners advance one base beyond the base last occupied / touched at the time, unless it is the second overthrow occurring during the play, in which case a dead ball shall be called.

Offensive Play

Play stops whenever the ball is controlled by the Pitcher Guard in the circle around the pitcher's mound. Runners that have advanced halfway to the next base may proceed to that base at their own risk. Runners not halfway must return to the previous base. The umpire has final discretion. Once the Pitcher Guard has control of the ball, runners must remain in contact with their bases until the ball crosses home plate. The first time a runner leaves too soon, a warning will be issued to the runner. The second time, the runner will be called out. Each runner will be issued one warning per time on base. Warnings and penalties will be called immediately, and the ball will be considered dead before the pitch. Coaches should not "push" or run players around the bases just because a pitcher has not fielded a return throw cleanly. The umpire will provide a warning if s/he feels this is happening.

There will be a generous strike zone.

All players, other than the batter, must be seated in the dugout, with no bats in their hands. The only time a player should have a bat in his/her hands is when they are at bat.

If a batted ball hits the coach-pitcher, the ball is declared “no pitch”, the ball is dead, no runners may advance, and the pitch does not count against the batter’s count. A thrown ball which hits the coach-pitcher is considered live and the ball is in play.

Two **registered** adult offensive coaches may be stationed at 1st and 3rd bases as long as there is at least one **registered** adult coach in the dugout at all times. These offensive coaches may not touch either the ball or their players during the course of play in the field (i.e., when the ball is live), or the player will be called out.

When a team has a stronger batter up to bat, the coach must inform the opposing coach so smaller players can be protected.

There will be no bunting, infield fly rule, leading, stealing, or on-deck batters.

Running up the score will not be tolerated.

Coaches and players must shake hands after each game – this encourages good sportsmanship.

MINORS / MAJORS

A game is considered official when four full innings have been played (3 1/2 if home team is leading). The maximum number of innings played for each game is six (6). Only three (3) consecutive “no-pitch” calls are permitted, after which they will be called balls.

There will be a mercy rule for all innings, **except the 6th inning (if the game goes that long) when there will be unlimited runs**, as follows: In May, if the 4th run crosses the plate before the 3rd out is made, the inning is over. In June, if the 5th run crosses the plate before the 3rd out is made, the inning is over.

Stealing is allowed, but the player must not leave the base before the pitched ball crosses the plate. A base runner is not in violation of the **leading off rule** unless **all** of the following occur: 1 - the runner, in the umpire's opinion, is making no visible effort to advance; 2 - the pitcher has the ball and is in contact with the pitching rubber; **and** 3 - the catcher is crouched in the catching position behind home plate. Please remember, umpires do not order base runners back to their base until after the pitch and subsequent play is complete.

JUNIORS / SENIORS

A game is considered official when five (5) full innings have been played (4½ if home team is leading). The maximum number of innings played is seven (7).

If one team is ahead by 10 runs or more after 5 complete innings of play (4 ½ innings if the home team is ahead), the game is officially over.

Metal spikes are permitted.

MAJOR SOFTBALL

Each team shall consist of a minimum of 7 players between the ages of 9 and 13.

All coaches must be properly documented and registered with the League.

Each player present at the game will be in the batting order. There is no automatic out for a 9th player not present.

All games are to start promptly at the scheduled time, by the umpire's watch. If one team is short players (fewer than 7) the game will be forfeited to the team with 7 or more players (wait 10 minutes before declaring a forfeit). If neither team is able to field a minimum of 7 players, both teams forfeit. Once a forfeit is declared, the coaches of the affected teams may agree to redistribute their players and play an exhibition game.

There is free substitution at all positions, however, if a pitcher moves to a different position or leaves the game she may not return as the pitcher in that game.

Pitchers may pitch a maximum of 3 innings per game. Windmill pitching may be used.

A regulation game consists of 6 innings, unless extended because of a tie or shortened because the home team does not need its half of the seventh inning or only a fraction of it; or because the umpire calls the game or for some other reason.

The top and bottom of each inning shall end on the 3rd out or the completion of the play that scores the 6th run of that half inning (only 6 runs are scored). This includes the final inning of play.

In the event of a rainout, the coaches will attempt to reschedule. If that option is not available the District Convenors, in consultation with the team coaches, will determine a date.

Pitchers can throw warm-up pitches to any team member (including coach). The player must wear a mask.

Stealing bases is permitted however the base runner may not leave the base **until the ball crosses the plate**.

There will be no running by the batter on a passed ball on the third strike. The batter is out whether the ball is caught or not.

Jewellery of any kind is not permitted and must be removed prior to the game. The taping of newly pierced ears is the only exception to this rule.

Catchers may use any appropriate baseball/softball glove at their position, including a fielding glove.

The first baseman must not touch the 'safety side' (orange section) of first base during a play at first, or the runner will be declared "safe".

Throwing equipment in anger or protest will not be tolerated. On the 1st offence, the player will be warned. On the second offence, the player will sit out the following inning of play. In the case of a third offence, the player will sit out the remainder of the game.

A new ball is required at the start of each game. Each coach is to bring new game balls, Spalding 177s (or an equivalent 11" ball).

Base coaches may be players, or one adult and one player. Only **one adult coach** is allowed on the field as a base coach.

Visits: Once the plate umpire is alerted, the coach may confer with the pitcher at the mound. On the third visit to the same pitcher in a single inning, or the fourth visit in the course of the game, the player must be removed as pitcher. Visits by the coach to defensive players will be charged as visits to the pitcher.

Only one offensive time-out will be permitted per inning.

No protest shall be considered on a decision involving an umpire's play-call or judgement. Other matters, such as the interpretation of playing rules or the ineligibility of players, shall be referred to the District Convenors for decision.

All bases must be pegged to avoid injury. Failure to do so will result in forfeiture.

JUNIOR / SENIOR SOFTBALL

Each team shall consist of a minimum of 7 players between the age of 14 – 18.

All coaches must be properly documented and registered with the League.

Each player present at the game will be in the batting order. There is no automatic out for a 9th player not present.

All games are to start promptly at the scheduled time, by the umpire's watch. If one team is short players (fewer than 7) the game will be forfeited to the team with 7 or more players (wait 10 minutes before declaring a forfeit). If neither team is able to field a minimum of 7 players, both teams forfeit. Once a forfeit is declared, the coaches of the affected teams may agree to redistribute their players and play an exhibition game, at their discretion.

There is free substitution at all positions. However, if a pitcher moves to a different position or leaves the game she may not return as the pitcher in that game.

Pitchers may pitch a maximum of 4 innings per game. Windmill pitching may be used.

A regulation game consists of 7 innings unless extended because of a tie or shortened because the home team does not require its half of the seventh inning or only a fraction of it; or because the umpire calls the game for some other reason.

The top and bottom of each inning shall end on the 3rd out or the completion of the play that scores the 6th run of that half inning (only 6 runs are scored). This includes the final inning of play.

In the event of a rainout, the coaches will attempt to reschedule. If that option is not available the District Convenors, in consultation with the team coaches, will determine a date.

Pitchers can throw warm-up pitches to any team member (including coach). The player must wear a mask.

Stealing bases is permitted, however, the base runner may not leave the base **until the ball crosses the plate**.

The "infield fly rule" will apply.

There will be no running by the batter on a passed ball on the third strike. The batter is out whether the ball is caught or not.

Jewellery of any kind is not permitted and must be removed prior to the game. The taping of newly pierced ears is the only exception to this rule.

Catchers may use any appropriate baseball/softball glove at their position, including a fielding glove.

The first baseman must not touch the 'safety side' (orange section) of first base during a play at first, or the runner will be declared "safe".

Throwing equipment in anger or protest will not be tolerated. On the 1st offence, the player will be warned. On the second offence, the player will sit out the following inning of play. In the case of a third offence, the player will sit out the remainder of the game.

A new ball is required at the start of each game. Each coach is to bring new game balls, 12" diameter in accordance with LL rules.

Base coaches may be players, or one adult and one player. Only **one adult coach** is allowed on the field as a base coach.

Visits: Once the plate umpire is alerted, the coach may confer with the pitcher at the mound. On the third visit to the same pitcher in a single inning, or the fourth visit in the course of the game, the player must be removed as pitcher. Visits by the coach to defensive players will be charged as visits to the pitcher.

Only one offensive time-out will be permitted per inning.

No protest shall be considered on a decision involving an umpire's play-call or judgement. Other matters, such as the interpretation of playing rules or the ineligibility of players, shall be referred to the District Convenors for decision.

All bases must be pegged to avoid injury. Failure to do so will result in forfeiture.

HOUSE LEAGUE RULES SUMMARY OF DIFFERENCES

Rule	Coach Pitch	Minors	Majors	Juniors / Seniors	Major Softball	Junior / Senior Softball	Big League
Leading	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Stealing – after ball crosses plate	No	Yes	Yes	N/A	Yes	Yes	N/A
Stealing – any time	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Bunting	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Balks	No	Illegal Pitch (ball called)	Illegal Pitch (ball called)	Yes	N/A	N/A	Yes
Max # of innings per game	4	6	6	7	7	7	7
Max # of pitches per day	N/A	75	85	95	N/A	N/A	105
Max # of innings pitched per game	N/A	2 in regular season OR maximum pitch count, whichever comes first	2 in regular season OR maximum pitch count, whichever comes first	N/A	3	4	N/A
# of pitches / days of rest required	N/A	66 + / 4 51 – 65 / 3 36 – 50 / 2 21 – 35 / 1 1-20 / 0	66 + / 4 51 – 65 / 3 36 – 50 / 2 21 – 35 / 1 1-20 / 0	66 + / 4 51 – 65 / 3 36 – 50 / 2 21 – 35 / 1 1-20 / 0	N/A	N/A	76 + / 4 61 – 75 / 3 45-60 / 2 31 – 45 / 1 1 – 30 / 0
Mercy Rule	4 runs per inning in May; 5 runs per inning in June No unlimited last inning	4 runs per inning in May; 5 runs per inning in June Unlimited 6th Inning Only	4 runs per inning in May; 5 runs per inning in June Unlimited 6th Inning Only	10 run lead after 5 complete innings (4½ if home team is leading) No unlimited last inning	6 runs per inning	6 runs per inning	10 run lead after 5 complete innings (4½ if home team is leading)
On Deck Batters	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes