

2024 WBL COACH PITCH DIVISION MODIFIED RULES & GUIDELINES

The majority of these rules are modified rules for this division of play. **All other General Rules & Guidelines from the Little League Rule Book shall be followed.** Anything not covered in these rules, will be at the discretion of the umpire.

- **TIME LIMIT- 1 hour or 6 innings, whichever one comes first.** No official league scores or standings will be recorded for this division of play, as this division is considered strictly instructional. Umpires will call for managers to home plate for a brief plate meeting 5 minutes before game time, followed by the pledge. The 1 hour time limit starts as soon as the pledge is completed. **Tied games, will remain tied.** Once the 1 hour has expired, the umpire shall declare the game over regardless of the number of outs and regardless of whether it is the top or bottom of an inning. He shall declare: **“Time has expired; this is the last batter of the game!”** Once that batter has completed his/her time at bat and all play has ceased, the umpire will then officially declare, **“That’s game!”**
- **STARTING/ENDING THE GAME -** **For this division of play, there will be no minimum number of players required to start or play the game.** However, the manager of each team shall inform the player agent at least three hours before game time if less than nine players from their team are expected at the game. If less than 9 players are expected, the player agent shall attempt to find additional pool players so that each team has at least 9 players. The pool players chosen will be on a rotating basis and will be chosen at the discretion of the player agent. If pool players cannot be found, managers of each team should share players between teams so that both teams field as many defensive players on the field as possible, up to 9.
- **5 RUN RULE-** **Once 5 runs score in an inning, the offense switches.** This rule is in effect; for minor division and below.
- **COACHES-** **1 MANAGER AND 3 COACHES** are allowed in the coach pitch division (**Total of ONLY 4 adults allowed**).

First and foremost, all coaches are expected to respect the umpire and the decisions made by the umpire throughout the game. **There is only 1 umpire;** therefore he shall have full authority throughout the game. Coaches who mistreat umpires or who constantly question umpire judgment, may be ejected, confined to the dugout, or may be suspended from further coaching duties (with board approval). All umpires need to be treated appropriately before, during, and after all games.

ONLY the coaches (4 designated adult coaches) and the players on the team are allowed on the field prior to and during the game. No other parents or children are allowed on the playing field. Note: Gates to your dugouts shall remain closed at ALL TIMES. Only send 1 or 2 players to the restroom as needed (3-4 players should NOT be going all at the same time).

- ✓ **One coach MUST REMAIN in the DUGOUT at ALL TIMES** (both on offense and defense). **No exceptions!**

- **WHILE ON OFFENSE** - 1 pitching coach on the pitcher’s mound, 2 base coaches, & 1 coach remains inside the dugout.
 - ✓ Pitching coach may NOT guide or instruct batters; it is the responsibility of the base coaches to assist them.
 - ✓ The coaches shall not leave their coaches boxes, unless a time out has been REQUESTED and GRANTED!
 - ✓ **Coaches will not be allowed to be going back and forth to be picking up the bat. A player with a helmet will be utilized for this purpose, however the designated player should be hustling out on the field ONLY after the play is over. (The umpire should NOT have to keep reminding the coaches of this).**
 - ✓ Coaches shall follow the continuous batting order (all players are active in the batting order and will bat).

- ✓ There are no OFFENSIVE substitutions, every player bats in the continuous order for himself / No subs.
- ✓ All players should remain inside the dugout. Coaches MUST supervise ALL their players at all times!

- **WHILE ON DEFENSE** – **Two coaches may be on the field when their team goes on defense.** The location, in which the coaches ARE ALLOWED to stand, **shall be behind the outfielders.** At no time shall a coach be in front of any of the defensive players (including outfielders) and **SHALL NOT BE STATIONED in the infield.** Only two coaches may coach from the outfield area. **However, the remaining two coaches WILL coach from INSIDE their respective dugouts and shall monitor/supervise the players that are not on the field.** Also, coaches that are on the field shall not be questioning the umpire's judgment; they are there solely to guide/instruct players...not to question the umpire. Remember, coaches are responsible for the safety and well-being of ALL their players on their team. We don't want injuries due to coach negligence.
- (REMINDER: No players shall be swinging bats or throwing balls or fooling around inside the dugout AT ANY TIME.)
 - ✓ **Coaches may NOT be STATIONED outside the dugout (except for the two in the outfield).** If there are no coaches that will be coaching defense from the outfield, then all 4 coaches shall remain in the dugout during their time on defense. Once the 3rd out is made, the 2 outfield coaches may start guiding their players on/off the field.
 - ✓ 10 players are allowed to participate on defense. The 10th player shall be stationed at the position of rover (which is generally shallow outfield grass and may not be placed as an extra infielder). It is not required to have 10 players on defense; however 9 players ARE mandatory to have on the field. A player may be substituted ONLY on defense.
 - ✓ **Mandatory Playing Requirement- Each player shall be given 6 defensive outs (Minimum 2 innings on defense)** A continuous batting order will be utilized; therefore all players are in the batting order and will bat throughout the game in their proper order. There are NO OFFENSIVE substitutions, only defensive substitutions. All players bat in their designated spot in the batting order (whether they are currently playing on defense or not) and cannot change from one spot in the line up to another spot in the line up during the game. Wherever they start in the lineup, is where they remain in the lineup throughout the duration of the game. Everyone hits for themselves and runs for themselves. They may be moved to different defensive positions though when they are playing defense. *NOTE: Softball players are encouraged to wear infielder face masks while on defense (however it is still optional for them to do so).*
 - ✓ All players not currently on defense should remain inside the dugout. Once again, coaches need to supervise these players!

GUIDELINES FOR OFFENSE- Basic Scoring Allowance & Batter Requirements

- **No On-Deck batters are allowed.** all players shall remain in the dugout until their turn at bat. Once the play has finished, then the next batter will be allowed to leave the dugout and enter the batter's box. **At no time shall there be TWO BATTEES outside the dugout at the same time.** You may send a player with a helmet on (between batters) to retrieve the bat (from the previous batter who just hit). This will help keep the game moving smoothly.
Each batter will be allowed to receive a maximum of 5 pitches during an at bat.
3 swing and misses will rule the batter out.
 - ✓ Exception: If a player hits a foul ball on the 5th pitch, they may receive an additional pitch. If they foul it off another time, they receive an extra pitch until it is a missed, hit fair, or no swing. Continue the process, if necessary.
- **There are NO STRIKES OR BALLS called. Therefore, there are NO WALKS.** Note: If a batter is hit by a pitch, the batter WILL NOT be awarded first base. Instead, the batter will be charged with a pitch toward their 5 pitch count.
- Note: If by the 5th pitch (the last pitch to that batter) the batter hasn't hit the ball, the batter will be ruled out. Even if ALL pitches are away from the batter (like thrown in the dirt or over the head of a batter) and the batter had no chance of hitting the ball, the batter will still be ruled out (for not hitting the ball within their 5 pitch opportunities given to them by their coach).

- **There are NO BUNTS allowed.** Such pitch will be ruled an immediate dead ball. It is a strike/pitch on the batter and all runners shall return to their bases. Any player attempting to bunt in the umpire's judgment will be reminded not to bunt.
- **All runners shall remain in contact with their bases until the ball is hit. STEALING IS NOT ALLOWED.**
- **Regarding Pitching Distance: Coaches may pitch from anywhere in front of the pitcher's plate, but BOTH feet must remain in the dirt circle while the pitch is made.** This is basically the part of the mound where the dirt and the grass meet which is about 8-10 ft in front of the pitching plate. Coach Pitching from a knee is ok, provided the pitching coach has both feet inside the dirt area AND can get out of the way in time. In either case, both feet must remain in the dirt while the pitch is made.
- **GUIDELINES FOR DEFENSE**- Basic rules to abide by when on defense. Important: Regarding "TIME" called.
 - ✓ Outfielders must play on the outfield grass, and infielders must play their regular positions. Infielders will NOT be allowed to play in the grass. Infielders will start in the dirt area and once the ball is hit they can move freely. Outfielders will start in the outfield grass and may move freely once the ball is hit by the batter.
 - ✓ The ball is dead when the umpire calls time. All play will cease and no runners may advance.
 - ✓ Runners who have NOT reached the next base (while running) will be asked to return to the previous base. (Exception: IF IN THE JUDGEMENT OF THE UMPIRE, the base-runner has already attained the midpoint of the base path while advancing, then that runner WILL BE AWARDED THE NEXT BASE BY THE UMPIRE.
 - ✓ **A live ball shall be declared dead when it has been returned to the pitcher. "Returned to the pitcher" shall be defined as when an infielder has released the ball in his or her throwing motion toward the player pitcher or coach pitcher who is in the area of the pitching mound.** Note: It doesn't mean that it has to be caught, it states that the ball has been released to the pitcher, which at that point, the ball will be ruled a dead ball. This will be considered UMPIRE JUDGEMENT and TIME will be called. This CAN NOT be questioned by any coach; it is in fact, umpire judgment!
 - ✓ No other player may catch the ball in the pitcher's place in order to get the umpire to call "TIME". It is the **pitcher's responsibility** to be there **around the pitcher's mound ready for the thrown ball from the defense.** If the pitcher fields it himself, then the pitcher must simply run toward the pitcher's mound to get the umpire to call time.
 - ✓ **A pitching coach shall immediately move away from the playing field once the ball is put into play** and avoid all possible contact with the defensive player, so that they may make a play. If a THROWN ball hits a coach, play continues.
 - ✓ **If a BATTED ball hits a coach in fair territory, it will be ruled a DEAD BALL automatically.** The Batter Runner will only be given 1st base and runners would return back to their bases (located prior to the batted ball). [IMPORTANT NOTE: Base runners only advance one base, when FORCED to advance because of the batter-runner acquiring first base.]
 - ✓ Regarding the pitcher, **the player pitcher must remain to the right or left of the coach-pitcher with BOTH feet in the dirt circle and LINED UP with the pitchers plate (horizontally even with 1st and 3rd base) until batter hits the ball.**
- There are NO PROTESTS allowed in the Coach Pitch division of play. As mentioned before, this division is strictly instructional.

Updated 2/25/24