

## **2019 Verona Little League Local Rules MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL**

**Emphasis:** The Major League is structured to give the most skilled players a highly competitive baseball experience. While the emphasis will continue to be on learning to play and enjoy baseball, Major League players will naturally demonstrate increased competitiveness. All players should be exposed to playing both infield and outfield positions. Coaching should focus on fundamental skills development, teamwork and more advanced drills and strategies.

**Rules:** The official rulebook will be Little League Baseball Official Regulations and Playing Rules, copyright 2019 by Little League Baseball, Incorporated. The only exceptions allowed are those spelled out in this document.

**Please note these key safety rules:**

**Rule 1.08 Note 1 – No on deck batters are permitted**

**Rule 1.08 Note 2 – Only the first batter of each half-inning is allowed outside the dugout between half innings**

**Rule 3.17 - Players and substitutes shall sit on their team's bench or in the dugout unless participating in the game or preparing to enter the game**

**Game Length:** Games will be six innings in length. **No new inning can begin after the game is one hour and thirty minutes old.** If there was no preceding game, the one hour and thirty minutes will be measured from the schedule starting time. If a preceding game on the field ran long, every attempt should be made to still start your game at the scheduled starting time. In this situation the one hour and thirty minute time will begin when the game begins. An inning is considered started after the third out of the home team is registered. Coaches are encouraged to hustle players on and off the field as there will be a one minute limit between half innings. A new pitcher will be allowed a maximum of 8 warm-up pitches or one minute between innings, whichever occurs earlier. A returning pitcher will be allowed a maximum of 5 warm-up pitches or one minute between innings, whichever occurs earlier. The plate umpire is the official timekeeper. Even when a game is tied, you are subject to the time limits.

For games that do not have a succeeding game scheduled the umpires and coaches must agree **prior to the start of the game** to go beyond the 1½-hour limit. However, in no case will games exceed 2 hours.

**Players/Substitution:** Nine players will be used on defense. All players in attendance will be included in the batting order and must play at least three innings in the field. A player cannot sit on the bench twice until all other players have sat on the bench at least once. There will be free substitution of all players. Once a player has been used as a pitcher and removed from pitching they cannot be reinserted as a pitcher. A player may play a specific fielding position for a maximum of three innings per game (except for a pitcher who is limited to a maximum of two innings per game and subject to pitch count limitations). Playing a position for one legal pitch in an inning constitutes playing an entire inning at that position. Teams with fewer than nine players may gather up to two players from other teams to reach a total of nine players. These substitute players must play the outfield and bat last. Teams with fewer than seven of their own players will forfeit their game. If a team cannot find sufficient substitutes from other teams, but can field at least seven of its own players, there is no forfeit.

**Special Pinch Runners:** Special pinch runners will not be allowed except for the following exceptions.

- A courtesy runner for the player who will be catcher in the next half inning is required when there are 2 outs. The player making the last out will be the runner.
- Prior to the game a coach may seek an exception from the opposing coach to accommodate a special situation

**Infield fly rule:** The infield fly rule will be enforced in Major League games.

**Intentional Walks:** While Intentional walks are not encouraged, if you choose to intentionally walk a batter you are still required to deliver the pitches (4 balls).

**Dropped Third Strike:** The batter will be able to run on a dropped third strike. The normal baseball rule will be used on dropped third strikes, so if a runner is on first base when the pitch is thrown and there are less than two outs, the batter is immediately out on the third strike even if the ball is dropped. If there are two outs or there is no runner on first when the pitch is thrown, the batter may run on a dropped third strike. In such event, the play is a force play at first base and at any

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base at which there would be a force play if a ground ball had been hit. So if the bases are loaded, and there are two outs and the catcher drops the third strike, the catcher may complete a final out in the inning by touching home plate before the runner on third reaches home plate.

**Balks:** Balks will not be called in Major League games.

**No Leading Off:** Runners may not lead off base until the ball has reached the batter.

**Stealing:** Stealing will be permitted in Major League games.

**Home Plate Open:** Players may steal home or advance to home on a passed ball.

**Bunting:** Bunting is allowed in Major League games. Slash bunting is strictly prohibited.

**Base Coaches:** Both base coaches may be adults or players. Players must wear batting helmets.

**Runs Scored:** There are no maximum number of runs that can be scored in any inning. Rule 4.10(e) applies: If after four innings, three and one half innings if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of ten runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede victory to the opponent.

**Sliding:** The runner has the primary responsibility to avoid a collision with the fielding player. Headfirst slides by an advancing runner are disallowed. An advancing runner who slides headfirst will be declared out and the ball will remain in play. This does not apply to a runner returning to a base from a run down or a pick-off situation [rule 7.08(a)(4)]

**Obstruction (Fielder Interference):** If a fielder who, while not in possession of the ball, impedes the progress of any runner, obstruction shall be called on the fielding player who blocks off a base, base line or home plate from a base runner while not in possession of the ball. Note that the catcher must not block any part of the plate from a runner attempting to score unless they are in possession of the ball.

**Runner Interference:** If a runner intentionally interferes with a thrown ball, the runner is declared out. If a runner, hinders a fielder attempting to make a play on a batted ball that has not been fielded (whether such hindrance is intentional or unintentional), the runner is declared out. Aggressive attempts by the runner to dislodge the ball from a fielding player or to breakup double plays will result in the runner being declared out. If a fielding player is in possession of the ball, the runner is responsible for doing one of 4 things: sliding, attempting avoid the fielder while remaining in his base line, returning to the previous base (if not forced) or giving himself or herself up and being tagged out. If the runner does not slide and makes any contact other than incidental contact with the fielding player (often the catcher), the runner normally will be called for interference for failing to attempt to avoid the fielder with the ball and declared out.

**Overthrows:** Runners will be awarded 1 additional base on any overthrows that go out-of-play, however, if the ball remains in-play, runners may continue to advance.

**Mound Visits:** Mound visits by a manager are allowed. Any number of players fielded by the defense at the time of the visit can participate. Note Rule 8.06(b): A third trip to the pitcher in the same inning will cause this pitcher's automatic removal. Note also 8.06(c): The manager or coach is prohibited from making a third visit while the same batter is at bat.

**Thrown Bats:** The first batter of any team who, after swinging at a pitch, intentionally or unintentionally throws the bat shall result in a warning to the entire team. Subsequent infractions by any team member shall result in the batter who threw the bat being called out. It shall be the umpire's judgment whether or not the bat was thrown.

**Severe Weather:** At the sound of a severe weather siren, other official warning, or at first sight of lighting, the game in progress shall be stopped immediately. In the case of rain or wet fields, the coaches are responsible for assessing the playing conditions and making the appropriate decision. In all instances, it is the responsibility of the coaches to properly interpret and enforce the intent of this rule. Rule 4.10 applies as to whether the game is postponed or declared official.

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**Bats:** Coaches (not umpires) are responsible to check each player's bat being used by their team *before their use*. All bats must meet the new bat standards and must have the new USA Baseball logo/sticker.

If you have questions, please refer to the Little League international website or the USA Baseball approved bat list for additional information. Any disputes concerning composite bats used in games should be referred to the Verona Little League President and the VLL Executive Board.

**Protests:** Protests of games will be disallowed.

**Pitch Count and Inning Limits:** - 2 innings maximum per pitcher and pitch count will be enforced. 1 pitch thrown in an inning

League Age 9 - 10:	75 pitches per day
League Age 11 - 12:	85 pitches per day

Exception: If a pitcher reaches the limit while facing a batter the pitcher may continue to pitch during that inning until that batter reaches base or is put out.

Constitutes an inning pitched.

The manager must remove a pitcher when the pitcher has pitched 2 innings or reaches the limit for his/her age group as noted below, but the pitcher may remain in the game at another position:

League age is determined by Little League International using the 2019 baseball age chart:

[http://www.littleleague.org/Assets/forms\\_pubs/2017/age-chart-baseball.pdf](http://www.littleleague.org/Assets/forms_pubs/2017/age-chart-baseball.pdf)

All pitchers must adhere to the following rest requirements:

- If a player pitches 66 or more pitches in a day, four (4) full calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 51 - 65 pitches in a day, three (3) full calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 36 - 50 pitches in a day, two (2) full calendar days of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 21 - 35 pitches in a day, one (1) full calendar day of rest must be observed.
- If a player pitches 1 - 20 pitches in a day, no rest is required.

**Completion of pitching to batter:** If a pitcher reaches the pitch-count limit for their age, or day(s) of rest threshold while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until the batter reaches base, the batter is retired, or the third out is made to complete the half-inning. The pitcher will only be required to observe the calendar day(s) of rest for the threshold he/she reached during that at-bat, provided that pitcher is removed before delivering a pitch to another batter.

Note Rule 8.03 - no more than eight warm-up pitches shall be allowed at the beginning of each inning for a new pitcher or five warm-up pitches for a returning pitcher. Such preparatory pitches shall not consume more than one minute of time. If an emergency requires that a new pitcher be brought in who has had no opportunity to warm-up, more than eight preparatory throws are allowed.

In no instance can a pitcher at this level pitch in more than one game in a day.

**Pitcher to Catcher and Catcher to Pitcher:** A pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day.

A player who has played as a catcher in 4 or more innings in a game is not eligible to pitch for the remainder of that day.

Note that catching one pitch in an inning counts as having played catcher for an inning.

**Tracking Pitch Counts:** Each team is responsible for counting pitches for both teams. A pitch counter will be supplied to each team. It is the responsibility of the coaching staff to report the pitch counts within 24 hours of the completion of the game. You may have a coach or parent in the stands track pitches for your team.

**Reconciling Pitch Counts:** At the end of each inning, a coach from each team will meet near the home plate area and share their pitch counts for the previous two half innings. If there is a difference in the counts, an average of the two

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be used. Each team is required to provide the current pitch count for any pitcher when requested by either manager or any umpire. However, a manager is responsible for knowing when his/her pitcher must be removed. If a parent is tracking pitches, the coach should ask the parent to inform the coach when the pitch count maximum is reached. However, the coach is responsible for removing the player before the maximum pitch count is exceeded even if the parent forgets to inform the coach.

**Eligible Pitchers:** Prior to the game, during the pre-game home plate meeting, each manager must provide the names of which players are ineligible to pitch that evening.

**Pace of Play:** In an attempt to increase the amount of baseball that is played, the one minute maximum between innings will be emphasized. Coaches should warmup pitchers, if necessary, to be sure that they get warmup pitches.

**Umpires:** \*\*\* Under no circumstances and under penalty of coaching privilege suspension or forfeiture, will coaches argue, verbally accost, intimidate, touch, or otherwise cause emotional distress to umpires. Talking calmly with an umpire about a play, call, or rules is permitted. League representatives will be monitoring and can be called to the field to enforce the rule. The league representative will have full authority to remove a coach from the game. THIS WILL BE A MAJOR POINT OF EMPHASIS FOR THE LEAGUE THIS YEAR. The VLL Executive Committee will have the final and binding decision on coaching privilege suspension or forfeiture.