



RULES OF PLAY: AAA DIVISION RIDGEFIELD LITTLE LEAGUE - 2024

GAME RULES

- Teams must have a minimum of 8 players to begin a game.
- If one or more players are hurt or have to leave during a game, teams may continue with 7 players.
- If a team has less than 7 players that team must forfeit.
- If a team does not have at least 8 players 15 minutes after the scheduled starting time of the game, that team must forfeit.
- A game will start at the scheduled time if both teams have at least 8 players. Teams will not wait for the 9th player. Any players who arrive after the game has started will immediately be placed at the end of the batting order, and will bat as soon as that spot comes up in the order. The player bats in the lineup, even if he or she has not yet played the field.
- Regular 4 balls, 3 strikes, 3 outs apply.
- 5-run limit rule per inning. Only the last inning is unlimited in order to arrive at a winner. Teams must declare the last inning (if not the 6th) before the first pitch of the inning.
- No new inning may start more than 1 hour and 45 minutes after the beginning of the game. The game is over at the end of an inning if the inning ends 2 hours or more since the game began. The official scorer (home team) should write down in the scorebook the exact start time of the game at the beginning of the game. Both managers should review this time at the beginning of the game. No manager shall request that the umpire or opposing manager suspend this rule for any reason. No manager shall intentionally delay play in order to shorten the game and, therefore, benefit his team.
- Games are 6 innings. Teams must play all 6 innings (except when the time rule above takes precedence), including the bottom of the inning, even if the outcome is already determined. If the score is tied at the end of 6 innings, the game goes down as a tie.
- Each team will supply one new ball per game. Each team will be provided a box of balls for game use only.
- Home team will sit in the first base dugout.
- In case of a sudden forfeit at the field, please make best efforts to “share” a player or two to get a game played regardless of the outcome. The umps get paid and fields are scarce so use the time to play.
- The Home Team is responsible for paying the umpire. At end of the season, managers can submit to RLL for reimbursement, with necessary details including, date, field, opponent. We recommend keeping a spreadsheet during the season to make it easier at the end of the season.

TEAM RULES

- All players appear in the batting order, and bat in their appropriate turn in the batting order, even if they didn't play in the field in that particular inning.
- If a player is injured and cannot bat due to the injury, their position in the batting order is skipped for that time (an out is not registered). If the person is able to bat later, he/she shall bat in their proper place.
- Nine players play the field each inning. Substitutes may enter or re-enter a game at any time between half-innings. Substitutes may enter during a half-inning only for an injury or pitching change.
- All players should play at least 4 innings in the field during a game at least one (1) of which must be in the infield. For this rule, both pitcher and catcher are counted as infield positions.
- Batting order will be the manager's option. Please use the batting order in a reasonable fashion to encourage the kids to grow as players. It's best practice to shuffle lineups during the season.
- Please make best efforts to put kids in a position that they can handle in the field as well. A kid that can't catch may not be best utilized at first base.



- Catchers must use a catcher's mitt whenever possible.
- Please provide opposing manager a copy of your batting order.

BUNTING

- Bunting is allowed.
- No fake bunts or slash bunts -- player showing bunt may not fake bunt and swing in an effort to hit the ball. If this rule is not followed, the penalty is the batter is out and ball is dead.
- A base runner (in a sacrifice situation) must still observe all base running rules i.e. runner cannot leave base until ball crosses home plate or is bunted.

LIVE BALL

The ball is considered **LIVE** while in play at any point of the game. The ball is considered dead when:

1. It is hit or thrown into the out of bounds/**foul area**,
2. In possession of the pitcher in the dirt pitching circle, or
3. Once an umpire calls "**TIME**" or "**TIME OUT**."

Infield players, with control of the ball after a play, may request "**TIME**" or "**TIME OUT**" from the Umpire. Coaches and players should not assume a timeout is in place without asking an Umpire.

AAA will play the following LIVE ball rules during the REGULAR season:

Dropped 3rd Strike is **NOT** a considered a **LIVE** ball.

Base on Balls – the ball is **LIVE** until the pitcher possesses the ball in the dirt circle of the pitcher's mound.

Each team will be allowed stealing bases during **LIVE** ball for the **REGULAR** Season. The following rules apply:

- No clean catch by the catcher needed for runner to steal.
- The runner must not leave the base until after the ball passes over the plate. Umpires judgment will prevail. If the runner leaves early that runner will be directed to return to their initial base.
- Unlimited stealing of 2nd and 3rd while ball is **LIVE**.
- 2 successful steals of home per inning. Any run scored on a non-batted ball is considered a steal of home. For example, player on first steals 2nd; throw to 2nd is an overthrow, player is allowed to go to 3rd and even score. Max of 2 runs per inning can be scored in this fashion.
- The "Pitching Sequence" refers to the pitcher delivering the ball to the catcher and the catcher returning the ball back to the pitcher. During the "Pitching Sequence" the runners may take a secondary lead at any time to entice the catcher to make a play to the runner's respective base while the ball is **LIVE**. All runners can advance if the catcher or pitcher decides to make a play on any runner taking a secondary lead during the pitching sequence. The runner **MUST** return to their base once the pitcher has the ball in his possession within the dirt circle of the pitching mound. The runner must remain on their base until the pitched ball passes over home plate.
- When a team has a runner on third base and a runner on first base, should the catcher attempt to throw out the runner stealing from first to second, the runner on third may attempt to steal home.



BASE RUNNING

- Runners may advance until the ball is dead or the Umpire calls time.
- When the ball is in the hands of the pitcher while on the mound (dirt circle) the play is over.
- Runners should slide into a base where there will be a close play. Any runner who attempts to collide with, or collides with, a fielder who has the ball and is waiting to make the tag will be called out.
- Head first slides are not allowed. (Consistent with LL rules, a player may return to a previously occupied base with a head first slide, or be warned should the previous base be occupied.) A second head first slide by the same team will result in the runner being called out.
- Runners may tag up after a caught fly ball/pop up/line drive.
- A batter called out for 3 strikes may not advance on a dropped third strike.
- Any infield position player in possession of the ball may ask for a timeout from the umpire.
- To address offensive/defensive interference for base runners and fielders: Only a player with the ball, or making a play on a batted ball should be in the base paths. Avoid injuries on the base paths by making it clear to offensive players that runners must slide or avoid a fielder with the ball and avoid a fielder making a play on a batted ball. For defensive players, tell them that fielders without the ball must vacate the base paths for runners. In either case, a runner will be called out (offensive interference), or awarded the base (defensive interference).

PITCHING

- AAA pitchers will be limited as follows:
 - 11 years old 85 pitches per day;
 - 9 and 10 year olds 75 pitches per day;
- If the pitcher reaches the limit while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until that batter reaches base or is put out. If the pitcher reaches the limit on the last pitch to a batter, the pitcher must be replaced before a pitch is delivered to the next batter. RLL discourages the removal of a pitcher mid count in order to remain under a specific pitch count.
- 12-year olds may not pitch in AAA. For this rule, a 12-year old is any player that will turn 12 by April 30, 2024.
- Pitches thrown while a game is in progress are counted toward the pitch count (i.e., warm-up pitches are not counted)
- Pitchers are required to rest from pitching for a number of days based on the schedule below:

Number of Pitches	Calendar days of rest
66 or more*	4 days of rest
51-65*	3 days of rest
36-50	2 days of rest
21-35	1 day of rest
1-20	0 days of rest

** RLL house rule states that any pitcher throwing more than 50 pitches must also rest for one game. A one game rest does not apply to pitchers that participate in back-to-back travel/house games.*

- Any pitcher who throws more than 40 pitches CANNOT catch in same game.
- A pitcher, once removed from mound, cannot return as a pitcher.
- The home team is responsible for assigning the official pitch count recorder. The recorder must be introduced to the visiting manager before the game. The pitch count recorder must communicate the



pitch count to the home and visiting managers at the end of each half inning and when the pitch count for any one pitcher reaches their maximum as defined above.

- Pitches thrown in games that are suspended or end in a tie are considered part of the pitch count and calendars days of rest are required for the pitchers.
- There are no balks.
- Three visits to the mound by a coach or manager in the same inning or four visits in game will force the replacement of the pitcher, except with permission from umpire for injury check.
- Hit Batsman – If the pitcher hits a total of three batsmen during his pitching appearance, he must be replaced.
- A pitcher may be changed to another position during an inning; replacement pitchers can be from field or bench as long as the four full innings for the players are not impacted.
- A new pitcher is allowed eight warm-up pitches every inning. Pitchers who pitched the previous inning are allowed six warm-up pitches every inning. (keep the game moving)
- Pitch counts must be entered onto the website by the end of the day of the game.
- The winning team should enter the results and pitch counts for both teams, but the other manager should also log in and verify.
- Once a pitch is thrown, if a game is suspended or cancelled due to darkness or weather, the pitch counts still need to be entered.
- Intentional walks are not allowed.

WARM UPS BEFORE GAMES

- Home team gets the field for 10 minutes starting 25 minutes prior to start of game.
- Visiting team gets the field for 10 minutes starting 15 minutes prior to start of game.
- 5 minutes prior to start of game, field is cleared and umpire covers ground rules with both managers
- All of above predicated on time being available for warm-ups. If games are running late, on field warm ups will be limited or eliminated completely to keep game on schedule
- Batting cages may be used prior to a game only if there is no game in progress. If teams arrive early and wish to use cage, it should be shared equally.

WARM UPS BETWEEN INNINGS:

- The outfield may catch and throw one fly ball.
- The infield may field one ground ball from first baseman and return the ball by throwing back to first baseman.
- The returning pitcher 6 warm up pitches a new pitcher 8. (keep the game moving)
- Managers need to keep the game moving. Post positions so players know where they are playing before the inning starts.

INFIELD FLYS

- The formal infield fly rule will NOT be used in AAA baseball.
 - We do not believe that AAA fielders would intentionally drop an infield fly in an attempt to achieve a double play and coaches should NEVER encourage a fielder to do so. To ensure the equitable result of an infield fly, no double plays will be credited to the defense under an infield fly scenario if the ball is not caught (i.e. a runner who remains on his base during an infield fly may not be put out if the ball



is dropped and he fails to advance to the next base.) Nothing in this rule prohibits a double play when a ball is caught before it touches the ground.

- Outside of above rule, a fly ball is hit to the infield, it will be treated the same as a fly hit to the outfield.

SAFETY

- All teams must use the Batting helmets with the face guard when hitting.
 - All player base coaches must wear a helmet.
 - All male players must wear protective cups (not just catchers).

PLAYOFFS

- All Teams make playoffs. Playoffs will be a random seed, double-elimination format.

We will utilize the same rule as those played during the regular season with the following exceptions:

- The Managers will determine (by majority vote prior to the start of the playoffs) how many steals of home occur during the game. All Managers will abide by the final decision of the number of steals of home per game during the playoffs.
- There will be an unlimited run limit in the 6th or last inning.
- In order to establish seeds for the playoffs, Runs Allowed will be the default.

FIELD MAINTENANCE & CONCESSIONS

- RLL has engaged the services of a landscaping company to assist in field maintenance. During the week, fields should be in game ready condition, bad weather notwithstanding.
- However, during the weekends and at other odd times, some field prep will be required. In this case, the Home Team is responsible for field maintenance, which included pre-game raking and laying foul lines. (Lime is supplied at fields). Look for email regarding days when the landscape company is not working.
- Take the time at the end of each game to clean-up your area (including under the players' and fans' bench.)
- At Serfilippi Field – at the end of the game, each team must empty the garbage can next to their bench in the dumpster.
- At Serfilippi, the VISITING team is responsible for replacing the tarp on the field. (The home team is already burdened at Serf).
- Insure ALL field tools are put away in the shed at Serfilippi and the storage box at Scalzo.
- At Scalzo, the home team is responsible for replacing the tarps on the field.

UMPIRES / RAINOUTS

- Each home team manager will be responsible for paying the umps in cash before the game. Checks will be issued to managers before/after the season based on the number of home games. The payment for the umps is as follows:
 - Plate assignment: \$35.00
 - Field assignment: \$25.00
- In event of a rainout or weather, the Home team manager is responsible for contacting the umpires.



- If a game is called due to the weather or darkness after it has started, it is an official game only if the team that is losing has completed its 4th turn at bat. (The 3-innings-in-the-field rule may not work in these situations.)
- If a game is called due to the weather or darkness after it has started and the losing team has not completed its 4th turn at bat, the game will be scheduled to be completed at a later date. The game will commence from the point when it was stopped. The full 6 innings will be played. The 3-innings-in-the-field rule remains in effect. If a player not present at the beginning of the game is present for the continuation, he/she shall be placed at the end of the lineup, and the manager shall put that player in the field for at least half of the innings to be played.
- The fact that a game is rained out does not change the pitch counts rules. Pitches thrown count and mandatory rest, per the pitch count rule, are required.
- Makeup games - It is the responsibility of the Home Team Manager to secure a playing field (notify Scheduling Director), umpire (notify Director of AAA Umpires) and reschedule with the visiting Team Manager.

ADULT GAME COORDINATOR

- If an adult umpire is not present at the game. From the 2016 LL Rule book:

If no adult umpire is available for a game, and non-adult umpires are used exclusively for that game, the local Little League must assign an adult as Game Coordinator, or the game cannot be played. The Game Coordinator must not be a manager or coach of either team in the game, and cannot be assigned as Game Coordinator for more than one game at a time. The Game Coordinator's duties shall be:

(1) To be included in the pre-game meeting as noted in Rule 4.01.

(2) To remain at the game at all times, including between half-innings, in a position to see all actions on the field and in close proximity to the field (not in any enclosure). If, for some reason, the Game Coordinator is not present or is unable to perform his/her duties for any reason, the game must be suspended until the Game Coordinator returns, or until a new adult Game Coordinator is present and assumes the duties of Game Coordinator for the remainder of the game;

(3) To oversee the conduct of all players, managers, coaches and umpires in the game;

(4) To have the authority to disqualify any player, coach, manager, or substitute for objecting to the decisions of an umpire, for unsportsmanlike conduct or language, or for any of the reasons enumerated in these Playing Rules, and to eject such disqualified person from the playing field. If the Game Coordinator disqualifies a player while a play is in progress, the disqualification shall not take effect until no further action is possible in that play;

(5) To have the sole ability to judge as to whether and when play shall be suspended during a game because of inclement weather conditions or the unfit condition of the playing field; as to whether and when play shall be resumed after such suspension; and as to whether and when a game shall be terminated after such suspension. Said Game Coordinator shall not call the game until at least thirty



minutes after play as suspended. The Game Coordinator may continue suspension as long as there is any chance to resume play. (This supersedes Rule 3.10.)

- It shall be the responsibility of the VISITING TEAM to provide an adult coordinator for each game.

MANAGING / COACHING

- No more than 1 manager and 3 coaches per team in the dugout. Coaches must be in the dugout at all times except when they are coaching first or third base. Please keep players in dugout and orderly.
- Base coaches shall be eligible players, coaches and or manager. Both base coaches may be adult managers or coaches. Players as base coaches must wear protective helmets.
- Coaches are encouraged to teach proper sliding.
- Encourage players to swing the bat, not take walks. Do not deliberately crowd the plate. Please limit asking the batter to take a strike.
- For safety reasons, no bat swinging of any type is permitted except for the person at bat. There is no on-deck swinging. Except fields with appropriate batting cages.
- Managers, coaches and players will abide by all calls and decisions made by the umpire. **ABSOLUTELY NO ARGUING.** You set the tone for your side of the field. A manager who argues balls and strikes risks ejection and suspension.
- Managers or Coaches who participate in an incident between an umpire, another manager/coach, or Parent will be suspended for one game. After the second incident, the Manager or Coach will be dismissed from the Team. (An incident is anything deemed inappropriate by the Ridgefield Little League Board.)
- No manager, coach or player, shall at any time, whether from the bench, playing field or elsewhere, act in a way that intended to distract an opposing player who is pitching, batting or fielding.
- The winning manager must report game score and pitch counts for all pitchers for both teams to the AAA Director and RLL website within 18 hours of the game.
- All teams will play post season so let's attempt to combine teaching with winning and promote sportsmanship at all times. Remember you are representing RLL and we need to promote the game as best we can.

The winning team is responsible to write an article and send to the Ridgefield Press (sports@acorn-online.com). Please try to include different players in each of the articles.