

# Rule 1.00 – Objectives of The Game

**1.01** Little League Baseball in all divisions is a game between two teams of nine players each, under the direction of a manager and not more than two rostered coaches, played on a regulation Little League field in accordance with these rules, under the jurisdiction of one or more umpires. **NOTE: Competitive Minor Leagues and above may use no more than nine players on defense. Local League Option: A game may not be started with less than eight (8) players on each team. See Rules 4.16 and 4.17.**

**Tee Ball/Minor League Instructional Division** is a game between two teams, under the direction of a manager and not more than three coaches, played on a regulation Little League field in accordance with these rules, under the jurisdiction of one or more umpires. See Rules 4.16 and 4.17.

**1.02** The objective of each team is to win by scoring more runs than the opponent. **Tee Ball:** It is recommended that no score be kept.

**1.03** The winner of the game shall be that team which shall have scored, in accordance with these rules, the greater number of runs at the conclusion of a regulation game.

**1.04 THE PLAYING FIELD.** The field shall be laid out according to the instructions, supplemented by Diagrams No. 1 and No. 2. Diagrams No. 3, No. 4 and No. 5 for **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League.**

The infield shall be a 60-foot square for Little League (Major) division and below. For **Intermediate (50-70) Division**, the infield shall be a 70-foot square. For **Junior/Senior League**, the infield shall be a 90-foot square. **Tee Ball option:** The infield may be a 50-foot square. **Junior League Option:** The base paths may be 80 feet.

The outfield shall be the area between two foul lines formed by extending two sides of the square, as in Diagram 1. The distance from home base to the nearest fence, stand, or other obstruction on fair territory should be 200 feet or more [200 feet or more for **Intermediate (50-70) Division** and 300 feet or more for **Junior/Senior League**]. A distance of 200 feet or more [200 feet

or more for **Intermediate (50-70) Division** and 300 feet or more for **Junior/Senior League**] along the foul lines and to center field is recommended. The infield shall be graded so that the base lines and home plate are level.

The pitcher's plate shall be six inches [eight inches for **Intermediate (50-70) Division** and 10 inches for **Junior/Senior League**] above the level of home plate. The infield and outfield, including the boundary lines, are fair territory and all other area is foul territory.

It is desirable that the line from home base through the pitcher's plate to second base shall run east-northeast.

It is recommended that the distance from home base to the backstop, and from the base lines to the nearest fence, stand, or other obstruction on foul territory should be 25 feet or more [45 feet or more for **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/ Senior**]. See Diagrams.

When the location of home base is determined, with a steel tape measure 84 feet, 10 inches (99 feet for **Intermediate (50-70) Division** and 127 feet, 3<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>inches for **Junior/Senior League**) in the desired direction to establish second base. From home base, measure 60 feet (70 feet for **Intermediate (50-70) Division** and 90 feet for **Junior/Senior League**) towards first base; from second base, measure 60 feet (70 feet for **Intermediate (50-70) Division** and 90 feet for **Junior/Senior League**) towards first base, the intersection of these lines establishes first base. From home base, measure 60 feet (70 feet for **Intermediate (50-70) Division** and 90 feet for **Junior/Senior League**) towards third base; from second base, measure 60 feet (70 feet for **Intermediate (50-70) Division** and 90 feet for **Junior/Senior League**) towards third base, the intersection of these lines establishes third base. The distance between first base and third base is 84 feet, 10 inches (99 feet for **Intermediate (50-70) Division** and 127 feet, 3<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>inches for **Junior/Senior League**). All measurements from home base shall be taken from the point where the first and third base lines intersect. (Base paths of 80 feet are optional for **Junior League** regular season play only.)

The catcher's box, the batter's box, the base coaches boxes, and the three-foot runner's lane shall be laid out as shown in Diagrams.

The catcher's box extends approximately 6 feet 4¾ inches to the rear of home plate. It is determined by extending each foul line 9 feet beyond the back point of home plate. **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League:** The rear line of the catcher's box is 8 feet directly back from the point of home plate. It extends forward to the rear line of the batter's box. It is 3 feet 7 inches wide.

The batter's box shall be rectangular, 6 feet by 3 feet [6 feet by 4 feet for **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League**]. The inside line, if used, shall be parallel to and 4 inches [6 inches for **Intermediate (50-70) Division/ Junior/Senior League**] away from the side of home plate. It shall extend forward from the center of home plate 3 feet and to the rear 3 feet.

The base coaches boxes shall be 4 feet by 8 feet (10 feet by 20 feet for **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League**) and shall not be closer than 6 feet [10 feet for **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League**] from the foul lines.

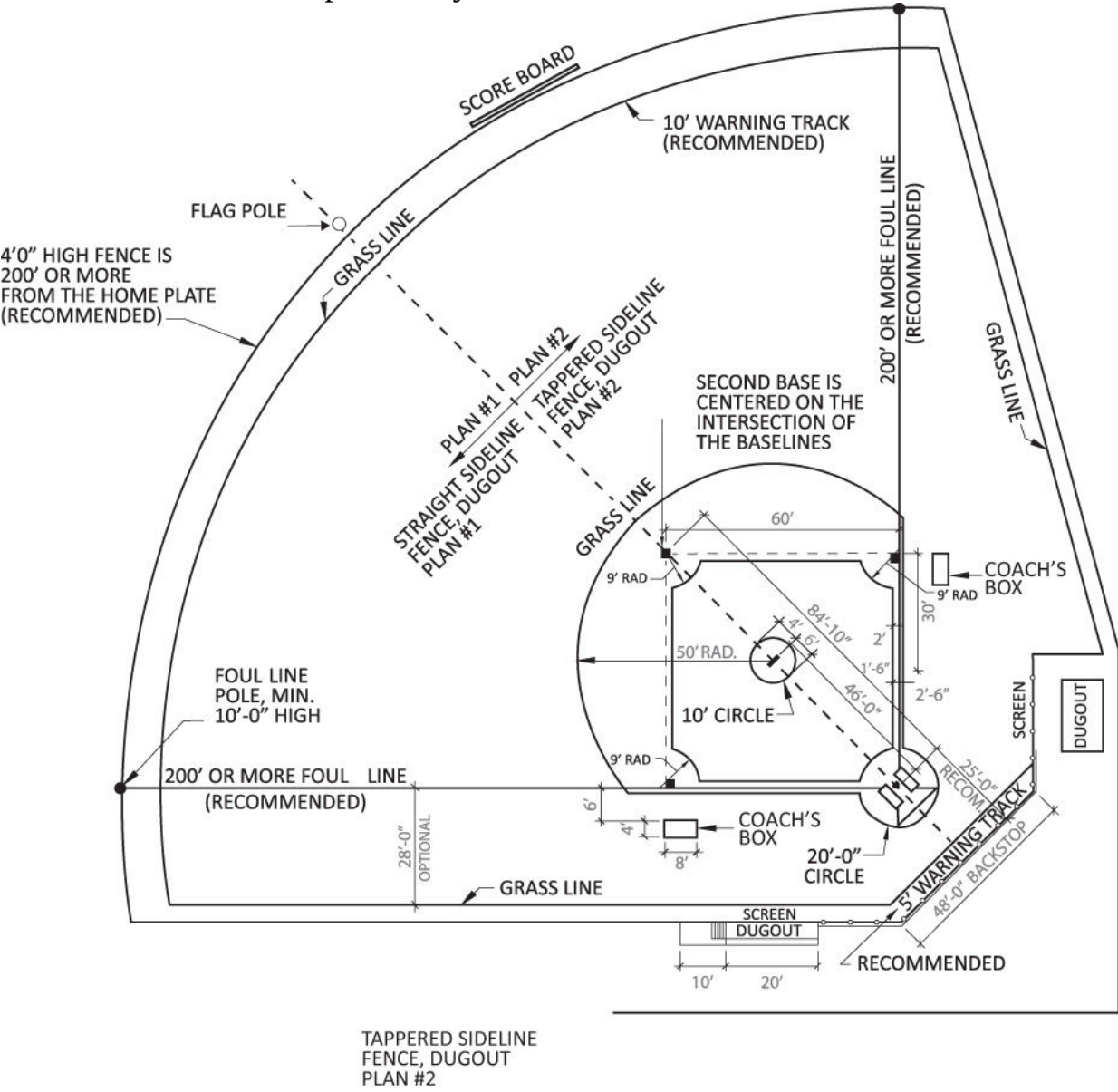
The foul lines and all other playing lines indicated in the diagrams by solid black lines shall be marked with chalk or other white material. Caustic lime must not be used.

The grass lines and dimensions shown on the diagrams are those used in many fields, but they are not mandatory. Each league shall determine the size and shape of the grassed and bare areas of its playing field.

### **Diagram No. 1**

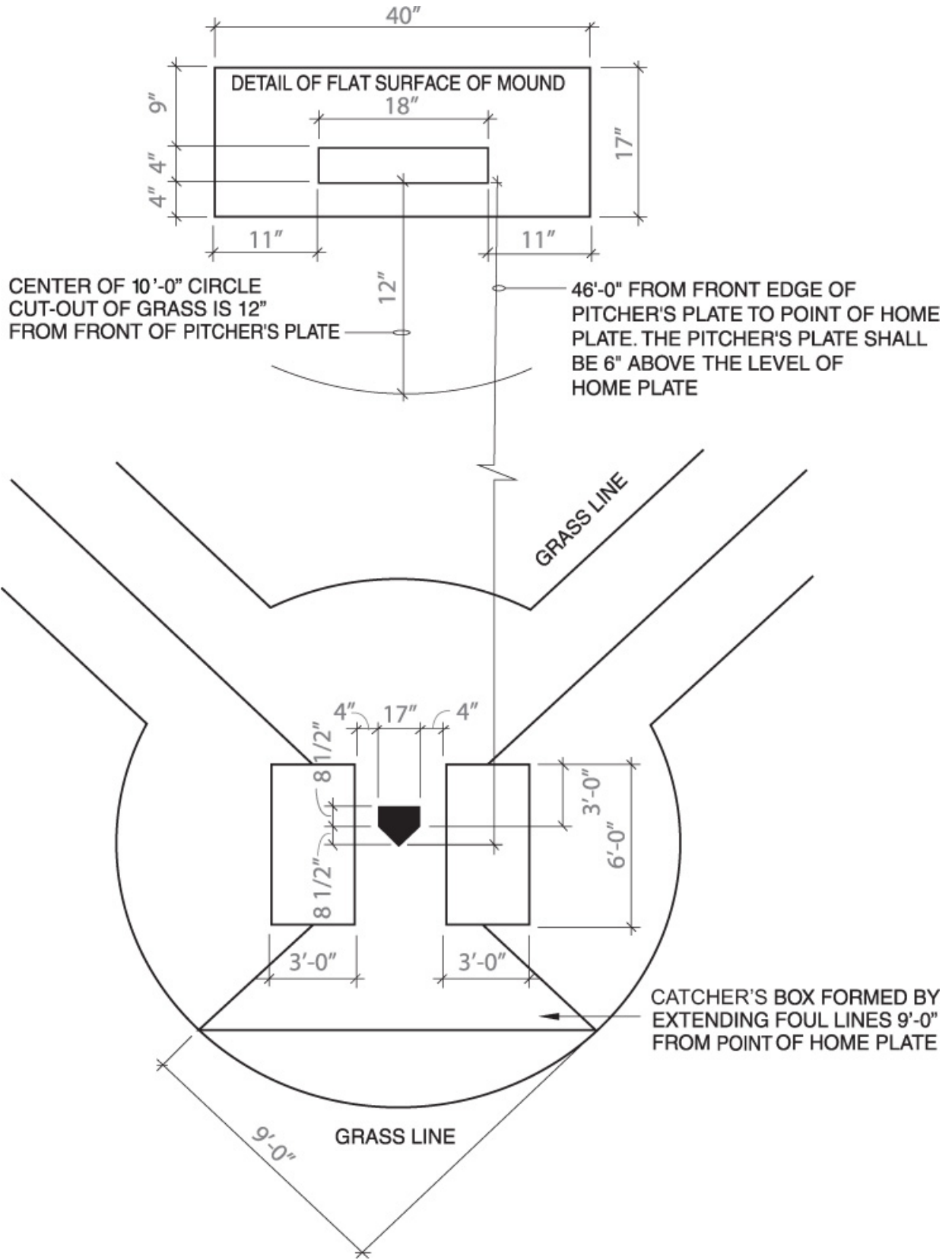
Diagram showing Tee Ball/Coach Pitch/Machine Pitch/Minor League/Little League (Major) field layout. All dimensions are compulsory unless marked "optional" or "recommended."

**NOTE:** Tee Ball base paths may be 50 feet.



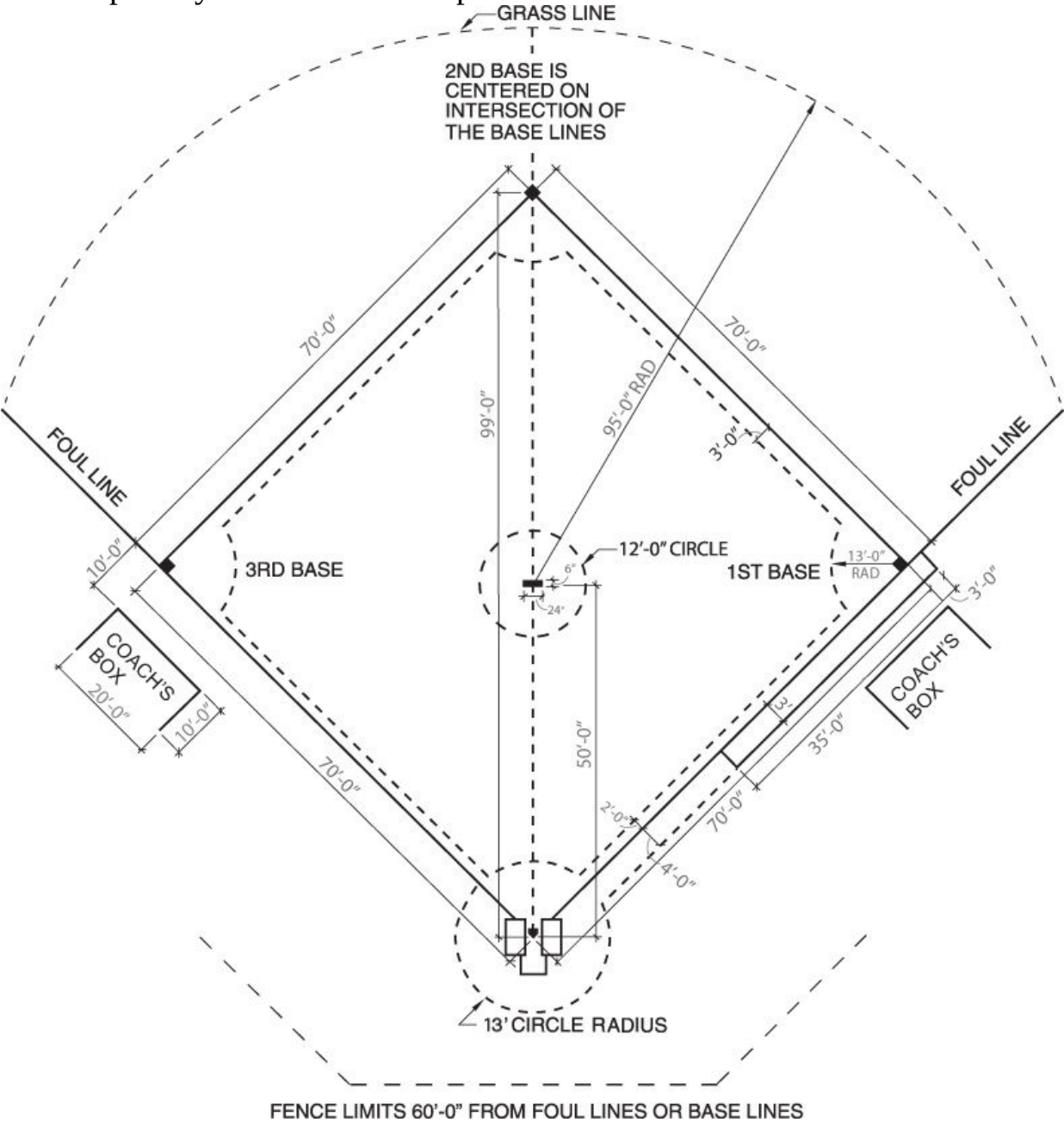
**Diagram No. 2**

Diagram showing layout of Tee Ball/Coach Pitch/Machine Pitch/Minor League/Little League (Major) batter's box and compulsory dimensions.



**Diagram No. 3**

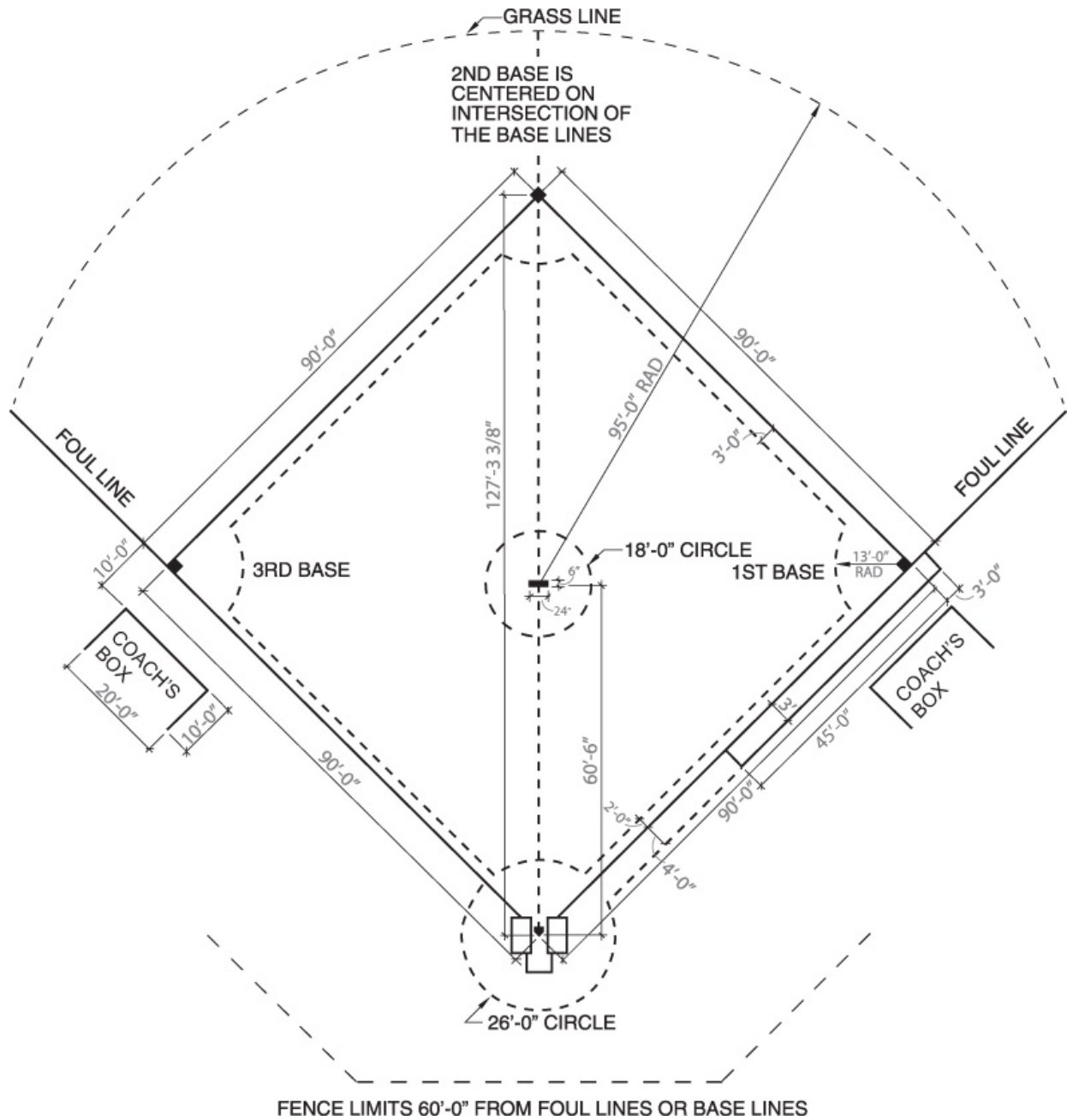
Diagram showing Intermediate (50-70) Division field layout. All dimensions are compulsory unless marked “optional” or “recommended.”



**Diagram No. 4**

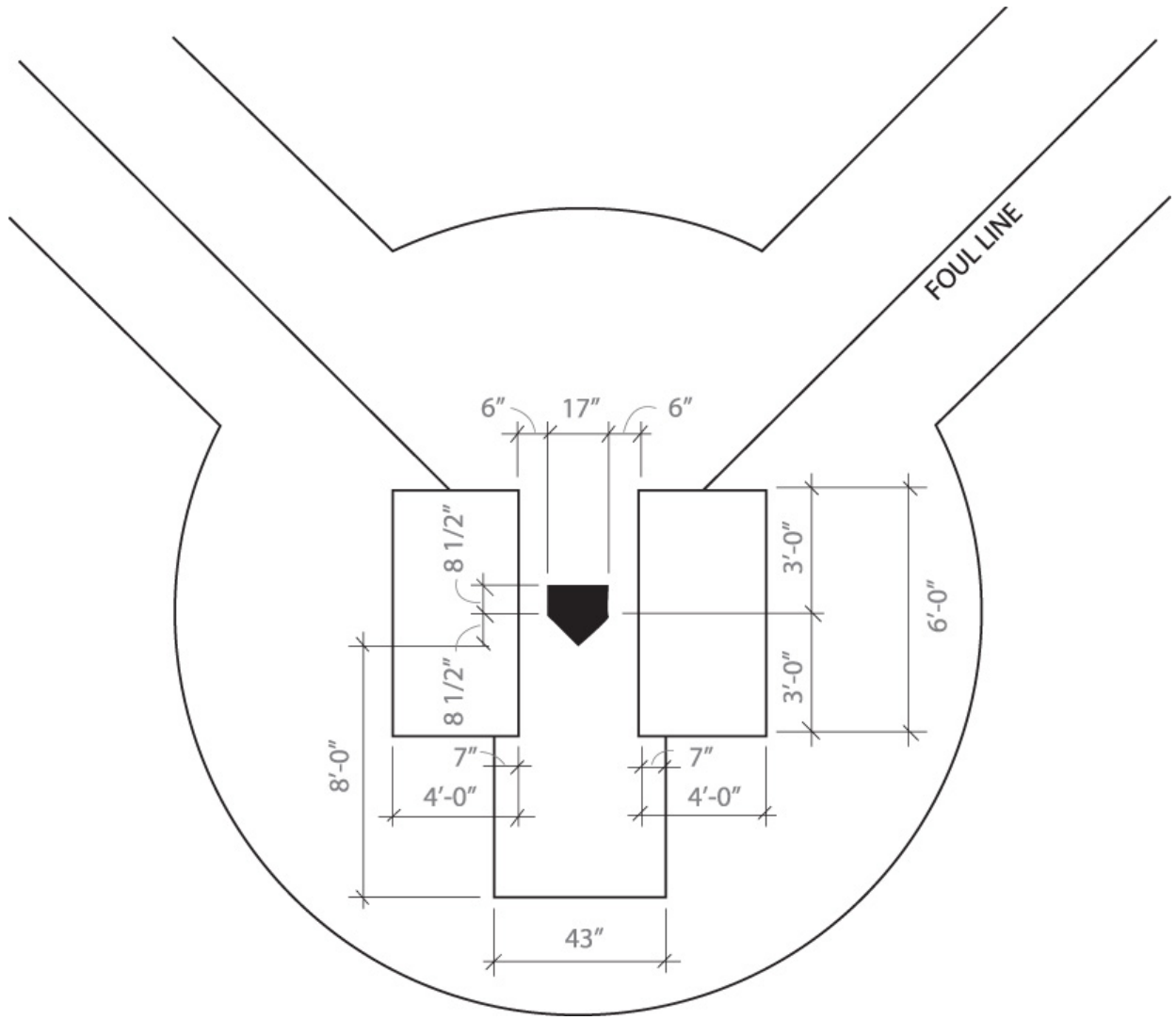
Diagram showing Junior/Senior League field layout. All dimensions are compulsory unless marked “optional” or “recommended.”

**NOTE:** Junior base paths may be 80 feet.



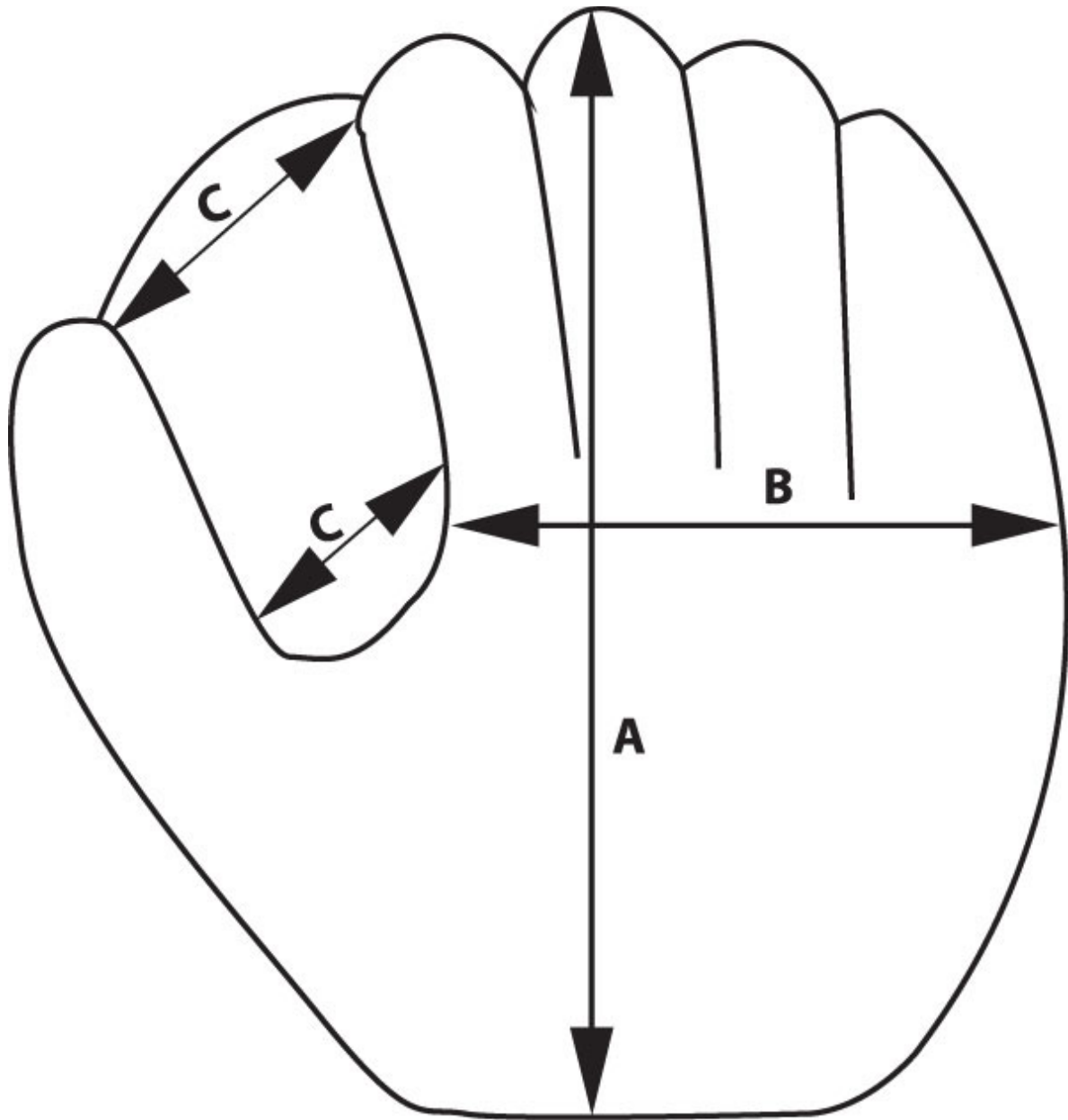
**Diagram No. 5**

Diagram showing layout of Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League batter's box and compulsory dimensions.



**Diagram No. 6**





See Rule 1.13 and Rule 1.14.

**1.05** Home base shall be marked by a five-sided slab of whitened rubber. It shall be a 17-inch square with two of the corners filled in so that one edge is 17 inches long, two  $8\frac{1}{2}$  inches, and two are 12 inches. It shall be set in the ground with the point at the intersection of the lines extending from home base to first base and to third base; with the 17-inch edge facing the pitcher's plate and the two 12-inch edges coinciding with the first and third base lines. The top edges of home base shall be beveled and the base shall be fixed in

the ground level with the ground surface. The black beveled edge is not considered part of home plate.

**1.06** First, second, and third bases shall be marked by white canvas or rubber covered bags, securely attached to the ground. The first and third base bags shall be entirely within the infield. The second base bag shall be centered on second base. The base bags shall not be less than fourteen (14) nor more than fifteen (15) inches square and the outer edges shall not be more than two and one-fourth (2¼) inches thick and filled with a soft material.

**Leagues are required to ensure that first, second, and third bases will disengage their anchor.** A list of licensed, disengageable bases can be found at [LittleLeague.org/FieldSupplies](http://LittleLeague.org/FieldSupplies).

**NOTE 1:** If a base is dislodged from its position during a play, any following runner on the same play shall be considered as touching or occupying the base if, in the umpire's judgment, that runner touches or occupies the dislodged bag or the point marked by the original location of the dislodged bag.

**NOTE 2: Use of the "Double First Base" is permissible at all levels of play. See Rule 7.15.**

**1.07** The pitcher's plate shall be a rectangular slab of whitened rubber 18 inches by 4 inches [24 inches by 6 inches for **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League**]. It shall be set in the ground as shown in the Diagrams, so that the distance between the front side of the pitcher's plate and home base (the rear point of home plate) shall be 46 feet [50 feet for **Intermediate (50-70) Division** and 60 feet, 6 inches for **Junior/Senior League**]. (Detailed diagrams may be downloaded at [LittleLeague.org/FieldLayout](http://LittleLeague.org/FieldLayout).);

**NOTE:** 54 feet pitching distance is optional for Junior League regular season only.

**1.08** The league shall furnish players' benches, one each for the home and visiting teams. Such benches should not be less than 25 feet from the base lines. They shall be protected by wire fencing.

**NOTE 1:** The on-deck position is not permitted in **Little League (Major) Division and below.**

A.R. – Fenced-in areas MAY NOT be used for an on-deck batter.

**NOTE 2:** Only the first batter of each half-inning will be permitted outside the dugout between half-innings in **Little League (Major) Division and below.**

A.R. – The next batter should be ready with a helmet on, but may not pick up a bat until it is his/her turn at bat.

**1.09** The ball used must meet Little League specifications and standards. It shall weigh not less than five (5) nor more than five and one-fourth (5¼) ounces, and measure not less than nine (9) nor more than nine and one-fourth (9¼) inches in circumference. (**Tee Ball:** The ball may carry the words “Little League Tee Ball.”) **NOTE:** Baseballs licensed by Little League will be printed with one of two designations: “RS” (for regular season play) or “RS-T” (for regular season and tournament play).

**1.10** The bat must be a baseball bat which meets the USA Baseball Bat standard (USABat) as adopted by Little League. It shall be a smooth, rounded stick, and made of wood or of material and color tested and proved acceptable to the USA Baseball Bat standard (USABat).

**Non-wood and laminated bats used in the Little League (Majors) and below, Intermediate (50-70) Division, and Junior League divisions shall bear the USA Baseball logo signifying that the bat meets the USABat – USA Baseball’s Youth Bat Performance Standard. All BPF – 1.15 bats are prohibited. The bat diameter shall not exceed 2-5/8 inches for these divisions of play. Bats meeting the Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution (BBCOR) standard may also be used in the Intermediate (50-70) Division and Junior League Division. Additional information is available at [LittleLeague.org/BatInfo](http://LittleLeague.org/BatInfo).**

**Tee Ball:** Under the USABat standard, certified Tee Ball bats (26” and shorter) will feature the USA Baseball mark and text which reads ONLY FOR USE WITH APPROVED TEE BALLS. **NOTE 1:** Approved Tee Ball bats may also be used for Coach Pitch/Machine Pitch Minor Divisions only with the use of approved Tee Balls.

**Minor/Major Divisions:** It shall not be more than 33 inches in length; nor more than 2-5/8 inches in diameter, and if wood, not less than fifteen-sixteenths (15/16) inches in diameter (7/8 inch for bats less than 30") at its smallest part. Wood bats taped or fitted with a sleeve may not exceed sixteen (16) inches from the small end. **NOTE 1:** Solid one-piece wood barrel bats do not require a USA Baseball logo. **NOTE 2:** Approved Tee Ball bats may also be used for Coach Pitch/Machine Pitch Minor Divisions only with the use of approved Tee Balls.

**Intermediate (50-70) Division and Junior League:** It shall not be more than 34" inches in length; nor more than 2-5/8 inches in diameter, and if wood, not less than fifteen-sixteenths (15/16) inches in diameter (7/8 inch for bats less than 30") at its smallest part. Wood bats taped or fitted with a sleeve may not exceed eighteen (18) inches from the small end. **NOTE 1:** Solid one-piece wood barrel bats do not require a USA Baseball logo. **NOTE 2:** Also, permitted for the Intermediate (50-70) Division and Junior League Division are bats meeting the BBCOR performance standard, and so labeled with a silkscreen or other permanent certification mark. The certification mark shall be rectangular, a minimum of a half-inch on each side and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting color. Aluminum/alloy and composite bats shall be marked as to their material makeup being aluminum/alloy or composite. This marking shall be silkscreen or other permanent certification mark, a minimum of one-half-inch on each side, and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting color.

**Senior League:** It shall not be more than 36 inches in length, nor more than 2-5/8 inches in diameter, and if wood, not less than fifteen-sixteenths (15/16) inches in diameter (7/8 inch for bats less than 30") at its smallest part. Wood bats taped or fitted with a sleeve may not exceed eighteen (18) inches from the small end. The bat shall not weigh, numerically, more than three ounces less than the length of the bat (e.g., a 33-inch-long bat cannot weigh less than 30 ounces). All bats not made of a single piece of wood shall meet the Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution (BBCOR) performance standard, and such bats shall be so labeled with a silkscreen or other permanent certification mark. The certification mark shall be rectangular, a minimum of a half-inch on each side and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting color. Aluminum/alloy and composite bats shall be marked as to

their material makeup being aluminum/alloy or composite. This marking shall be silkscreen or other permanent certification mark, a minimum of one-half inch on each side, and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting color.

In all divisions, non-wood bat must have a grip of cork, tape, or composition material, and must extend a minimum of 10 inches from the small end. Slippery tape or similar material is prohibited.

**NOTE 1:** The traditional batting donut is not permissible.

**NOTE 2:** The use of pine tar or any other similar adhesive substance is prohibited at all levels of Little League Baseball. Use of these substances will result in the bat being declared illegal and removed from play.

**NOTE 3:** Non-wood bats may develop dents from time to time. Bats that have cracks or sharp edges, or that cannot pass through the approved Little League bat ring for the appropriate division must be removed from play. The 2-1/4-inch bat ring must be used for bats labeled 2-1/4. The 2-5/8-inch bat ring must be used for bats labeled for 2-5/8.

**NOTE 4:** An illegal bat must be removed. Any bat that has been altered shall be removed from play. **PENALTY** – See Rule – 6.06(d).

A.R. – If the certification mark/s on a bat are not legible, that bat cannot be used and shall be removed from the game.

### **1.11 (a)**

**(1)** All players on a team shall wear numbered uniforms identical in color, trim, and style.

**(2)** The Little League Official Shoulder Patch must be affixed to the upper left sleeve or left chest of the uniform shirt. Patches shall be placed centered on the left shoulder sleeve; or, centered on the left chest for sleeveless style. The patch may not be screen-printed or sublimated. Little League International has established a new, unified patch that reflects all levels of the program. This patch, which matches our new Little League logo, can be used, regardless of the division of play, on your league's uniforms. "Rocker patches" that can go above the new patch for all divisions and roles will also be available, for those who wish to add those distinctions to your uniforms, including umpires. If your league still has patches that have been previously purchased, you do not need to replace those patches, and limited quantities

of our previous patches are still available, while supplies last. Additional information can be found at [LittleLeague.org/ Patch](http://LittleLeague.org/Patch).



Patches worn centered on the left shoulder sleeve.



Patches centered over left chest on sleeveless style.

**(3)** Any part of the pitcher's undershirt or T-shirt exposed to view shall be of a solid color. The pitcher's undershirt sleeves, if exposed, shall not be white or gray. Neoprene sleeves, if worn by a pitcher, must be covered by an undershirt. The use of play calling bands by defensive players is permitted under the following conditions:

- The equipment must be worn as the manufacturer intended (i.e. on either the wrist or forearm)
- The play calling band may not be attached to the belt or any other location on the player's person.
- Baseball and Softball pitchers are permitted to wear a play calling band on their non-pitching (glove) arm, provided it is a solid color and not white,



gray, or optic yellow. If the umpire considers it distracting to the batter, he/she may have it removed.

**NOTE:** A pitcher shall not wear any items on his/her hands, wrists, or arms which may be distracting to the batter, e.g. sweat bands.

**(b)** A league must provide each team with a distinctive uniform. Uniforms are the property of the league. **Tee Ball and Minor League:** T-shirts and caps are recommended, but hand-me-down uniforms may be worn.

**(c)** Sleeve lengths may vary for individual players, but the sleeves of each individual shall be approximately the same length. No player shall wear ragged, frayed, or slit sleeves.

**(d)** No players shall attach to a uniform tape or other material of a different color than the uniform

**(e)** No part of the uniform shall include a pattern that imitates or suggests the shape of a baseball.

**(f)** Glass buttons and polished metal shall not be used on a uniform.

**(g)** No player shall attach anything to the heel or toe of the shoe other than a toe plate.

**(h)** Shoes with metal spikes or cleats are not permitted. Shoes with molded cleats are permissible. [**Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League:** shoes with metal spikes or cleats are permitted.]

A.R. – Little League (Majors) and below: Removable spikes or cleats are permitted if, when removed, no metal remains exposed.

**(i)** Managers and coaches must not wear conventional baseball uniforms or shoes with metal spikes but may wear cap, slacks, and shirt. [**Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League:** Managers and coaches may wear conventional baseball uniforms or cap, slacks, and shirts. They may not wear shoes with metal spikes.]

**(j)** Players must not wear jewelry such as, but not limited to, rings, watches, earrings, bracelets, necklaces, nor any hard cosmetic/decorative items. This rule applies regardless of the composition of such jewelry, hard cosmetic



item, or hard decorative item. Hard items to control the hair, such as beads, are permitted.

**EXCEPTION:** Jewelry that alerts medical personnel to a specific condition is permissible.

**(k)** Casts may not be worn during the game by players and umpires.

**NOTE:** Persons wearing casts, including managers and coaches, must remain in the dugout during the game.

**1.12** The catcher must wear a catcher's mitt (not a first baseman's mitt or fielder's glove) of any shape, size, or weight consistent with protecting the hand.

**1.13** The first baseman must wear a glove or mitt of any weight with the following maximum specifications:

**(a)** not more than 14 inches long (measured from the bottom edge or heel straight up across the center of the palm to a line even with the highest point of the glove or mitt), and;

**(b)** not more than eight inches wide across the palm (measured from the bottom edge of the webbing farthest from the thumb in a horizontal line to the outside of the little finger edge of the glove or mitt), and;

**(c)** webbing not more than 5¾ inches wide (measured across the top end or along any line parallel to the top). See Diagram No. 6.

**1.14** Each defensive player (other than the first baseman and catcher) must wear a glove of any weight, with the same maximum specifications as noted in Rule 1.13.

**1.15 (a)** The pitcher's glove may not, exclusive of the piping, be white or light gray, nor, in the judgment of an umpire, distracting in any manner.

**(b)** No pitcher shall attach to the glove any foreign material of a color different from the glove. The pitcher may wear a batting glove on the non-pitching hand under the pitcher's glove provided the batting glove is not white, gray, or optic yellow.

**1.16** Each league shall provide in the dugout or bench of the offensive team six (6) [seven (7) for **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League**] protective helmets which must meet NOCSAE (National Operating

Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment) specifications and standards. Use of the helmet by the batter, all base runners, and base coaches is mandatory. Use of a helmet by an adult base coach or any defensive player is optional. Each helmet shall have an exterior warning label. Helmets must have a non-glare surface and cannot be mirror-like in nature. Each helmet must meet NOCSAE specifications and bear the NOCSAE stamp as well as an exterior warning label as noted above. **Warning!** Manufacturers have advised that altering helmets in any way can be dangerous. Altering the helmet in any form, including painting or adding decals (by anyone other than the manufacturer or authorized dealer) may void the helmet warranty. Helmets may not be re-painted and may not contain tape or re-applied decals unless approved in writing by the helmet manufacturer or authorized dealer.

A.R. – If a player, during play, removes his/her helmet or causes his/her helmet to come off, he/she shall NOT be called out, but shall be warned not to intentionally remove his/her helmet and, if it continues, the player may be removed for unsportsmanlike conduct, as this can cause an unsafe condition.

**1.17** All male players must wear athletic supporters. Male catchers must wear the metal, fibre, or plastic type cup, and approved long or short-model chest protector. Female catchers must wear long or short model chest protectors. All catchers must wear chest protectors with neck collar, throat guard, shin guards, and catcher's helmet, all of which must meet Little League specifications and standards. The catcher's helmet must meet NOCSAE specifications and standards, and bear the NOCSAE stamp. All catchers must wear a mask, "dangling" type throat protector, and catcher's helmet during infield/outfield practice, pitcher warm-up, and games.

**NOTE:** Skull caps are not permitted. **Warning!** Manufacturers have advised that altering helmets in any way can be dangerous. Altering the helmet in any form, including painting or adding decals (by anyone other than the manufacturer or authorized dealer) may void the helmet warranty. Helmets may not be re-painted and may not contain tape or re-applied decals unless approved in writing by the helmet manufacturer or authorized dealer.

A.R. – Wearing of a catcher's helmet with mask and dangling throat guard (even if the mask has a wire extension) is required during games, pitcher warmup, and any form of infield or infield/outfield practice. The "Hockey

Style” helmet is authorized for use at all levels of play. The “dangling” throat guard still must be attached properly.

# Rule 2.00 – Definition of Terms

(All definitions in Rule 2.00 are listed alphabetically)

**ADJUDGED** is a judgment decision by an umpire.

An **APPEAL** is an act of a fielder in claiming a violation of the rules by the offensive team.

An **AT-BAT**, for the purposes of meeting the requirements of Mandatory Play (if applicable), is when a player assumes the position of a batter with no count and one of the following occurs:

- He/she is retired as a batter; or
- He/she is retired as a batter-runner; or
- He/she reaches base and scores; or
- After he/she reaches base, the inning or game ends

**APPROVED RULING:** While at-bat, if the third out of the half-inning is recorded by putting out another base-runner prior to the occurrence of any of the above, that batter must return as the first batter in the next half-inning.

**NOTE:** For the purpose of satisfying the requirements of Mandatory Play, when appearing offensively for the first time in the game, a player must remain in the game until one of the following occurs:

- He/She is retired as a batter; or
- He/She is retired as a batter-runner; or,>
- He/She reaches base and scores: or
- After he/she reaches base, the inning or game ends.

A **BACKSTOP** is the barrier erected behind the catcher in order to allow the catcher to retrieve passed balls easily.

A **BALK** is an illegal act by the pitcher with a runner or runners on base entitling all runners to advance one base [**Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League**]. A balk is not called in the **Little League (Major) Division and below**. (See Rule 8.05 –

Illegal Pitch.)

A **BALL** is a pitch which does not enter the strike zone in flight and is not struck at by the batter.

**NOTE:** If the pitch touches the ground and bounces through the strike zone it is a “ball.” If such a pitch touches the batter, the batter shall be awarded first base. If the batter swings at such a pitch and misses, it is a strike.

**Majors/Intermediate (50-70) Division/ Junior/Senior League:** If the batter swings at such a pitch after two strikes, the ball cannot be caught for the purposes of Rule 6.05(b)(2) and 6.09(b). If the batter hits such a pitch, the ensuing action shall be the same as if the batter hit the ball in flight.

A **BASE** is one of four points which must be touched by a runner in order to score a run; more usually applied to the canvas bags and the rubber plate which mark the base points.

A **BASE COACH** is a team member in uniform or an adult manager and/or coach who is stationed in the base coach’s box at first and/or third base to direct the batter and the runners.

**NOTE:** Two (2) adult base coaches are permitted at all levels. The second coach may be 16 years or older. See Rule 4.05 for restrictions.

A **BASE ON BALLS** is an award of first base granted to batters who, during their time at bat, receive four pitches outside the strike zone. See Rule 6.08(a).

A **BATTER** is an offensive player who takes a position in the batter’s box.

**BATTER-RUNNER** is a term that identifies the offensive player who has just finished a time at bat until that player is retired or until the play on which that player becomes a runner ends.

The **BATTER’S BOX** is the area within which the batter must stand during a time at bat.

The **BATTERY** is the pitcher and catcher.

The **BATTING ORDER** is the list of current defensive players (and the designated hitter in **Senior League**) in the order in which they are to bat.

**Exceptions:** In all divisions, the batting order may contain the entire roster

of players. In **Tee Ball and Minor League**, the batting order shall contain the entire roster of players.

**BENCH** or **DUGOUT** is the seating facilities reserved for players, substitutes, one manager, and not more than two coaches when they are not actively engaged on the playing field. Batboys and/or batgirls are not permitted.

A.R. – Bench or dugout is not for additional coaches or scorekeepers.

A **BUNT** is a batted ball not swung at, but intentionally met with the bat and tapped slowly. The mere holding of the bat in the strike zone is not an attempted bunt. (**Tee Ball:** Bunts are not permitted. Batters are not permitted to take a half-swing. If the umpire feels the batter is taking a half-swing, the batter may be called back to swing again.)

A.R. – If no attempt is made to make contact with a ball outside the strike zone while in the bunting stance, it shall be called a ball. The batter must offer at the pitch for it to be a strike.

A **CALLED GAME** is one in which, for any reason, the Umpire-in-Chief terminates play.

A **CATCH** is the act of a fielder in getting secure possession in the hand or glove of a ball in flight and firmly holding it before it touches the ground providing such fielder does not use cap, protector, pocket, or any other part of the uniform in getting possession. It is not a catch, however, if simultaneously or immediately following contact with the ball, the fielder collides with a player, or with a wall, or if that fielder falls down, and as a result of such collision or falling, drops the ball. It is not a catch if a fielder touches a fly ball which then hits a member of the offensive team or an umpire and then is caught by another defensive player. If the fielder has made the catch and drops the ball while in the act of making a throw following the catch, the ball shall be adjudged to have been caught. In establishing the validity of the catch, the fielder shall hold the ball long enough to prove complete control of the ball and that release of the ball is voluntary and intentional. A catch is legal if the ball is finally held by any fielder, even though juggled, or held by another fielder before it touches the

ground. Runners may leave their bases the instant the first fielder touches the ball.

The **CATCHER** is the fielder who takes the position back of the home base. The **CATCHER'S BOX** is that area within which the catcher shall stand until the pitcher delivers the ball. (See Rule 4.03)

A **COACH** is an adult appointed to perform such duties as the manager may designate.

**NOTE:** If two (2) coaches are appointed, the second coach may be age 16 or older.

**COURTESY RUNNER** is a player not currently in the batting order who may become a base runner for the pitcher and/or catcher provided there are two (2) outs in the half inning. See Rules 3.04 and 7.14(b) for conditions if adopted by the local league during the regular season only. **NOTE:** The same courtesy runner may not run for both the pitcher and the catcher at any time during the game.

A **DEAD BALL** is a ball out of play because of a legally created temporary suspension of play.

**DEAD BALL AREA** is the area beyond any intended physical boundary, such as a fence, rope, chalk line, any stands, bleachers, dugouts, player's benches, or designated media areas, or any other boundary line as determined in the pregame conference. If a ball becomes lodged in a fence, backstop, umpire's equipment, or catcher's equipment, it is considered to be in a dead ball area.

The **DEFENSE** (or **DEFENSIVE**) is the team, or any player of the team, in the field.

A **DOUBLE HEADER** is two regularly scheduled or rescheduled games, played by the same team or teams on the same day.

A **DOUBLE PLAY** is a play by the defense in which two offensive players are retired as a result of continuous action, providing there is no error between putouts.

(a) A force double play is one in which both putouts are force plays.

(b) A reverse force double play is one in which the first out is made at any base and the second out is made by tagging a runner who originally was forced, before the runner touches the base to which that runner was forced.

**DUGOUT** (see definition of “**BENCH**”)

A **FAIR BALL** is a batted ball that settles on fair ground between home and first base, or between home and third base, or that is on or over fair territory when bounding to the outfield past first or third base, or that touches first, second, or third base, or that first falls on fair territory on or beyond first base or third base, or that, while on or over fair territory touches the person of an umpire or player, or that, while over fair territory, passes out of the playing field in flight.

**NOTE:** A fair fly shall be adjudged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, including the foul pole, and not as to whether the fielder is on fair or foul territory at the time such fielder touches the ball.

**FAIR TERRITORY** is that part of the playing field within, and including the first base and third base lines, from home base to the bottom of the playing field fence and perpendicularly upwards. Home plate, first base and third base and all foul lines are in fair territory.

A **FIELDER** is any defensive player.

**FIELDER’S CHOICE** is the act of a fielder who handles a fair grounder and, instead of throwing it to first base to put out the batter-runner, throws to another base in an attempt to put out a preceding runner. The term is also used by scorers (a) to account for the advance of the batter-runner who takes one or more extra bases when the fielder who handles the safe hit attempts to put out a preceding runner; (b) to account for the advance of a runner (other than by stolen base or error) while a fielder is attempting to put out another runner; and (c) to account for the advance of a runner made solely because of the defensive team’s indifference. (Undefended steal).

A **FLY BALL** is a batted ball that goes high in the air in flight.

A **FORCE PLAY** is a play in which a runner legally loses the right to occupy a base by reason of the batter becoming a runner.



( **NOTE:** Confusion regarding this play is removed by remembering that frequently the “force” situation is removed during the play. **Example:** Runner on first, one out, ground ball hit sharply to first baseman, who touches the base and the batter-runner is out. The force is removed at that moment and the runner advancing to second must be tagged. If there had been a runner at second or third, and either of these runners scored before the tag-out at second, the run(s) would count. Had the first baseman thrown to second and the ball had been returned to first, the play at second would have been a force-out, making two outs, and the return throw to first would have made the third out. In that case, no run would score.)

A.R. – Runners forced to advance as a result of the batter-runner being awarded first base.

A **FORFEITED GAME** is a game declared ended by the Umpire-in-Chief in favor of the offended team by the score of 6 to 0 [7-0 for **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/ Senior League**], for violation of the rules. **Tee Ball:** There shall be no forfeits in Tee Ball.

A **FOUL BALL** is a batted ball that settles on foul territory between home and first base, or between home and third base, or that bounds past first or third base on or over foul territory, or that first falls on foul territory beyond first or third base, or that while on or over foul territory, touches the person of an umpire or player, or any object foreign to the natural ground.

**NOTE 1:** A foul fly shall be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line, including the foul pole, and not as to whether the fielder is on foul or fair territory at the time that fielder touches the ball.

**NOTE 2:** In Tee Ball, the ball is foul if it travels less than 15 feet in fair territory from home plate. The ball is also foul if the batter hits the tee with the bat.

**FOUL TERRITORY** is that part of the playing field outside the first and third base lines extended to the fence and perpendicularly upwards.

A **FOUL TIP** is a batted ball that goes sharp and direct from the bat to the catcher’s hands and is legally caught. It is not a foul tip unless caught and any foul tip that is caught is a strike, and the ball is in play. It is not a catch if

it is a rebound, unless the ball has first touched the catcher's glove or hand. A foul tip can only be caught by the catcher.

A **GROUND BALL** is a batted ball that rolls or bounces close to the ground.

The **HOME TEAM** is the team which takes the field first at the start of the game. Adopted schedules will determine which team this will be.

**ILLEGAL** (or **ILLEGALLY**) is contrary to these rules.

An **ILLEGAL BAT** is a bat that has been altered or a bat that is not approved for play because it does not meet specifications with regard to length, weight, barrel diameter, labeling, or performance standard for the division in which it is used. **PENALTY** – See Rule 6.06(d).

An **ILLEGAL PITCH** is (1) a pitch delivered to the batter when the pitcher does not have the pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate; or (2) a quick return pitch. **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League:** An illegal pitch with runners on base is a balk. (See also definition of "Pitch.")

A.R. – This would apply to rule 8.05(e) and 8.05(g). In all other instances of Rule 8.05 with no runners on base, no penalty is enforced. In such cases, the umpire shall call "Time" and the pitcher and batter will resume the count without reference to the pitch.

An **ILLEGALLY BATTED BALL** is one hit by the batter with one or both feet on the ground entirely outside the batter's box.

**INELIGIBLE PITCHER** – Applies to regular season violations of Regulation VI. (See also Rule 4.19.)

**INELIGIBLE PLAYER** – Applies to regular season violations of regulations regarding league age, residence or school attendance (as defined by Little League International), and participation on the proper team within the local league. (See also Rule 4.19.) The **INFIELD** is that portion of the field in fair territory, which includes areas normally covered by infielders.

An **INFIELDER** is a fielder who occupies a position in the infield.

An **INFIELD FLY** is a fair fly ball (not including a line drive nor an attempted bunt) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort, when first and second, or first, second and third bases are occupied, before

two are out. The pitcher, catcher, and any outfielder stationed in the infield on the play shall be considered infielders for the purpose of this rule.

When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an Infield Fly, the umpire shall immediately declare “Infield Fly” for the benefit of the runners. If the ball is near the baseline, the umpire shall declare “Infield Fly, if fair.”

The ball is alive and runners may advance at the risk of that ball being caught, or retouch and advance after the ball is touched, the same as on any fly ball. If the hit becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul.

**NOTE 1:** If a declared Infield Fly is allowed to fall untouched to the ground, and bounces foul and remains foul before passing first or third base, it is a foul ball. If a declared Infield Fly falls untouched to the ground outside the baseline, and bounces fair before passing first or third base, it is an Infield Fly.

**NOTE 2:** The Infield Fly Rule does not apply in Tee Ball.

A.R. – The infield dirt and the outfield grass do not form a boundary line for infield fly purposes.

**IN FLIGHT** describes a batted, thrown, or pitched ball which has not yet touched the ground or some object other than a fielder. If the pitch touches the ground and bounces through the strike zone, without being struck at by the batter, it is a “ball.” If such a pitch touches the batter, that batter shall be awarded first base. **Majors/Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League:** If the batter swings at such a pitch after two strikes, the ball cannot be caught for the purpose of Rule 6.05(b). If the batter hits such a pitch, the ensuing action shall be the same as if the ball was hit in flight.

**IN JEOPARDY** is a term indicating that the ball is in play and an offensive player may be put out.

An **INNING** is that portion of a game within which the teams alternate on offense and defense and in which there are three putouts for each team. Each team’s time at bat is a half-inning. It will be held that an inning starts the moment the third out is made completing the preceding inning. (**Minor League Only – A five-run limit is to be imposed which would complete the half inning.**)

## **INTERFERENCE**

(a) Offensive interference is an act by a member of the team at bat which interferes with, obstructs, impedes, hinders, or confuses any fielder attempting to make a play. If the umpire declares the batter, batter-runner, or a runner out for interference, all other runners shall return to the last base that was, in the judgment of the umpire, legally touched at the time of the interference, unless otherwise provided by these rules.

A.R. – Interference does not have to be intentional for it to be called.

(b) Defensive interference is an act by a fielder which hinders or prevents a batter from hitting a pitch.

(c) Umpire's interference occurs (1) when an umpire hinders, impedes, or prevents a catcher's throw attempting to retire a runner, or (2) when a fair ball touches an umpire in fair territory before passing a fielder.

A.R. – Only the plate umpire may interfere with the catcher and only on a cleanly caught ball or a pitched ball that doesn't cause the catcher to move from his/her position. If the catcher errs on the ball, the umpire will be considered part of the field, and no interference results.

(d) Spectator interference occurs when a spectator reaches out of the stands or goes on the playing field, and touches a live ball.

(e) On any interference the ball is dead.

The **LEAGUE** is a group of teams who play each other in a pre-arranged schedule under these rules for the league championship.

**LEGAL** (or **LEGALLY**) is in accordance with these rules.

A **LINE DRIVE** is a batted ball that goes sharp and direct from the bat to a fielder without touching the ground.

A **LIVE BALL** is a ball which is in play.

The **MANAGER** is an adult appointed by the president to be responsible for the team's actions on the field, and to represent the team in communications with the umpire and the opposing team.

(a) The manager shall always be responsible for the team's conduct, observance of the official rules, and deference to the umpires.

(b) If a manager leaves the field, that manager shall designate an adult coach as a substitute, and such substitute manager shall have the duties, rights, and responsibilities of the manager. If no adult coach is available, the Umpire-in-Chief shall designate a temporary adult manager. If no adult is available, the game or team activities shall be terminated. (See Rule 4.16.)

**OBSTRUCTION** is the act of a fielder who, while not in possession of the ball, impedes the progress of any runner. A fake tag is considered obstruction.

(**NOTE:** Obstruction shall be called on a defensive player who blocks off a base, base line, or home plate from a base runner while not in possession of the ball.)

**OFFENSE** is the team, or any player of the team, at bat.

**OFFICIAL RULES** – The rules contained in this book.

**OFFICIAL SCORER** is appointed by the league president and is a designated volunteer of the league. The scorer shall have sole authority to make all decisions involving judgment, such as whether the batter's advance to first is the result of a hit or an error. If appropriate, the scorer shall communicate such decisions to the press or the announcer. In the event of a question of eligibility of a pitcher, the Official Scorer record shall be deemed official.

An **OUT** is one of the three required retirements of an offensive team during its time at bat.

The **OUTFIELD** is that portion of the field in fair territory which is normally covered by outfielders.

An **OUTFIELDER** is a fielder who occupies a position in the outfield, which is the area of the playing field most distant from home base.

**OVERSLIDE** (or **OVERSLIDING**) is the act of an offensive player when the slide to a base, other than when advancing from home to first base, is with such momentum that the player loses contact with the base.

A **PENALTY** is the application of these rules following an illegal act.

The **PERSON** of a player or an umpire is any part of the body, clothing, or equipment.

A **PITCH** is a ball delivered to the batter by the pitcher. **Little League (Major)/Minor League Exception:** For the purpose of maintaining a pitch count, an illegal pitch shall count as one pitch; even if a pitch is not actually thrown.

A **PITCHER** is the fielder designated to deliver the pitch to the batter. The pitcher's **PIVOT FOOT** is that foot which is in contact with the pitcher's plate as the pitch is delivered.

**"PLAY"** is the umpire's order to start the game or to resume action following any dead ball.

A **QUICK RETURN** is a pitch made with obvious intent to catch a batter off balance. It is an illegal pitch. (See Penalty – 8.05)

**REGULATION GAME** – See Rules 4.10 and 4.11.

A **RETOUCH** is the act of a runner returning to a base as legally required.

A **RUN** (or **SCORE**) is the score made by an offensive player who advances from batter to runner and touches first, second, third, and home bases in that order.

A **RUNDOWN** is the act of the defense in an attempt to retire a runner between bases.

A **RUNNER** is an offensive player who is advancing toward, touching, or returning to any base.

**"SAFE"** is a declaration by the umpire that a runner is entitled to the base for which that runner was trying.

**SET POSITION** is one of the two legal pitching positions.

A **STRIKE** is a legal pitch which meets any of these conditions –

- (a) Is struck at by the batter and is missed;
- (b) Is not struck at, if any part of the ball passes through any part of the strike zone;
- (c) Is fouled by the batter when there is less than two strikes;
- (d) Is bunted foul (batter is out and ball is dead, if the batter bunts foul on the third strike);
- (e) Touches the batter's person as the batter strikes at it (dead ball);
- (f) Touches the batter in flight in the strike zone; or
- (g) Becomes a foul tip (ball is live and in play).

**NOTE:** In Tee Ball, the local league will determine whether or not strikeouts will be permitted.

The **STRIKE ZONE** is that space over home plate which is between the batter's armpits and the top of the knees when the batter assumes a natural stance. The umpire shall determine the strike zone according to the batter's usual stance when that batter swings at a pitch.

A **SUSPENDED GAME** is a called game which is to be completed at a later date.

A **TAG** is the action of a fielder in touching a base with the body while holding the ball securely and firmly in the hand or glove; or touching a runner with the ball, or with the hand or glove holding the ball, while holding the ball securely and firmly in the hand or glove.

A **THROW** is the act of propelling the ball with the hand and arm to a given objective and is to be always distinguished from the pitch.

A **TIE GAME** is a regulation game which is called when each team has the same number of runs.

**"TIME"** is the announcement by the umpire of a legal interruption of play, during which the ball is dead.

To **TOUCH** a player or umpire is to touch any part of the player or umpire's body, clothing, or equipment.

A **TRIPLE PLAY** is a play by the defense in which three offensive players are retired as a result of continuous action, providing there is no error between putouts.

A **WILD PITCH** is one so high, so low, or so wide of the plate that it cannot be handled with ordinary effort by the catcher.

**WIND-UP POSITION** is one of the two legal pitching positions.

# Rule 3.00 – Game Preliminaries

**3.01** Before the game begins the umpires shall –

**(a)** require strict observance of all rules governing team personnel, implements of play, and equipment of players;

**(b)** be sure that all playing lines (heavy lines on Diagrams No. 1 and No. 2) are marked with non-caustic lime, chalk, or other white material easily distinguishable from the ground or grass;

**(c)** receive from the league a supply of baseballs which meet Little League specifications and standards. The umpire shall be the sole judge of the fitness of the balls to be used in the game;

**(d)** be assured by the league that additional balls are immediately available for use if required;

**(e)** have possession of at least two alternate balls and shall require replenishment of such supply of alternate balls as needed throughout the game. Such alternate balls shall be put in play when –

**(1)** a ball has been batted out of the playing field or into the spectator area;

**(2)** a ball has become discolored or unfit for further use;

**(3)** the pitcher requests such alternate ball.

**3.02** No player shall intentionally discolor or damage the ball by rubbing it with soil, rosin, paraffin, licorice, sand-paper, emery-paper, or other foreign substance.

**PENALTY:** The umpire shall demand the ball and remove the offender from the pitching position. In case the umpire cannot locate the offender, and if the pitcher delivers such discolored or damaged ball to the batter, the pitcher shall be removed from the pitching position at once.

**3.03** A player in the starting line-up who has been removed for a substitute may re-enter the game, in the SAME position in the batting order, provided:



**(a)** His or her substitute has completed one time at bat; for the purposes of meeting the requirements of Mandatory Play, is when a player assumes the position of a batter with no count and one of the following occurs:

- He/she is retired as a batter; or
- He/she is retired as a batter-runner; or
- He/she reaches base and scores; or
- After he/she reaches base, the inning or game ends.

**APPROVED RULING:** While at-bat, if the third out of the half-inning is recorded by putting out another base-runner prior to the occurrence of any of the above, that batter must return as the first batter in the next halfinning.

**NOTE:** For the purpose of satisfying the requirements of Mandatory Play, when appearing offensively for the first time in the game, a player must remain in the game until one of the following occurs:

- He/She is retired as a batter; or
- He/She is retired as a batter-runner; or,
- He/She reaches base and scores: or
- After he/she reaches base, the inning or game ends.

**(b)** has played defensively for a minimum of six (6) consecutive outs;

**(c)** pitchers once removed from the mound may not return as pitchers;

**Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior:** A pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position, can return as a pitcher any time in the remainder of the game, but only once per game.

**NOTE:** A player who has met the mandatory play requirements, and is a pitcher at the time he/she is removed, may be removed for a substitute batter and re-enter the game as pitcher once, provided the pitcher was not physically replaced on the mound.

**EXAMPLE:** Player A is a starter and not a pitcher. Player B substitutes into the game for Player A. Both players have met mandatory play by completing one (1) at-bat and six (6) defensive outs and both occupy the same spot in the batting order. In the fifth inning, Player A becomes a pitcher and is scheduled to bat in the sixth inning, but Player B bats for Player A. Both

players have met mandatory play requirements and Player A was not physically replaced on the mound as a pitcher, therefore, Player A can return to pitch in the sixth.

**(d)** a starter and his/her substitute must not be in the line-up at the same time, except as provided in 3.03 NOTE 3. Once mandatory play is met, a starter and substitute(s) can enter/re-enter for each other as desired, but must re-enter in the SAME position in the batting order.

**(e)** Defensive substitutions must be made while the team is on defense. Offensive substitutions must be made at the time the offensive player has her/his turn at bat or is on base.

**NOTE 1:** A substitute may not be removed from the game prior to completion of his/her mandatory play requirements.

**NOTE 2:** When two or more substitute players of the defensive team enter the game at the same time, the manager shall, immediately before they take their positions as fielders, designate to the Umpire-in-Chief such players' positions in the team's batting order and the Umpire-in-Chief shall notify the official scorer. The Umpire-in-Chief shall have authority to designate the substitutes' places in the batting order, if this information is not immediately provided.

**NOTE 3:** If during a game either team is unable to place nine (9) players on the field due to illness, injury, ejection, or inability to make a legal substitution, the opposing manager shall select a player previously used in the line-up to re-enter the game, but only if use of all eligible players has exhausted the roster. A player ejected from the game is not eligible for re-entry.

### **3.03 Senior League Designated Hitter Rule:**

**(a)** At the beginning of a game, each manager may list on the lineup card a designated hitter to bat throughout the game for a designated player in the regular lineup. A designated hitter, who has been removed for a substitute may re-enter the game once, provided such player occupies the same batting position.

**(b)** Only a player not in the regular batting order may be used as a designated hitter.

**(c)** In the event a manager decides to use the designated hitter as a defensive player, the player must remain in the same position in the batting order, unless otherwise replaced by a substitute. If so, the player for whom the designated hitter was batting must be removed from the game. Such player may re-enter the game once, but only in the batting order position of the former designated hitter, who must be removed.

**NOTE:** If during a game either team is unable to place nine (9) players on the field due to illness, injury, or ejection, the opposing manager shall select a player previously used in the line-up to re-enter the game, but only if the use of all other eligible players has exhausted the roster. A player ejected from the game is not eligible for re-entry. This provision does not apply to injury, illness, or ejection of the designated hitter or the player for whom he or she is batting, in which case the role of the designated hitter must be terminated.

**3.04** A player whose name is on the team's batting order may not become a substitute runner for another member of the team. **Local League Option:** A local league may permit a "courtesy runner" for the catcher and/or pitcher of record when there are two (2) outs. **Exception:** If the continuous batting order is used, the "courtesy runner" may be in the team's batting order and must be the player in the batting order who made the last out. See 7.14(b).

**3.05 (a)** The pitcher named in the batting order handed to the Umpire-in-Chief, as provided in Rules 4.01(a) and 4.01(b) shall pitch to the first batter or any substitute batter until such batter or any substitute batter is retired or reaches first base, unless the pitcher sustains an injury or illness which, in the judgment of the Umpire-in-Chief, incapacitates the pitcher from further play as a pitcher.

**(b)** If the pitcher is replaced, the substitute pitcher shall pitch to the batter then at bat, or any substitute batter, until such batter is retired or reaches first base, or until the offensive team is put out, unless the substitute pitcher sustains an injury or illness, which in the Umpire-in-Chief's judgment, incapacitates the pitcher from further play as a pitcher.

**3.06** The manager shall immediately notify the Umpire-in-Chief of any substitution and shall state to the Umpire-in-Chief the substitute's place in the batting order.

**3.07** The Umpire-in-Chief, after having been notified, shall immediately announce, or cause to be announced, each substitution.

**3.08 (a)** If no announcement of a substitution is made, the substitute shall be considered to have entered the game when –

**(1)** if a pitcher, the substitute takes a position on the pitcher's plate and throws one warm-up pitch to the catcher;

**(2)** if a batter, the substitute takes a position in the batter's box; **(3)** if a fielder, the substitute reaches the position usually occupied by the fielder being replaced and play commences;

**(4)** if a runner, the substitute takes the place of the runner being replaced.

**(b)** Any play made by, or on, any of the above mentioned unannounced substitutes shall be legal.

**3.09** Players, managers, and coaches of the participating teams shall not address, or mingle with spectators, nor sit in the stands during a game in which they are engaged. Managers or coaches are permitted to warm up a pitcher at home plate or in the bullpen or elsewhere at any time, including in-game warm-up, pre-game warm-up, and in other instances. They may also stand by to observe a pitcher during warm-up in the bullpen.

**3.10 (a)** The managers of both teams shall agree on the fitness of the playing field before the game starts. In the event that the two managers cannot agree, the president or a duly delegated representative shall make the determination.

**(b)** The Umpire-in-Chief shall be the sole judge as to whether and when play shall be suspended during a game because of unsuitable 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 umpire shall not call the game until at least thirty minutes after play has been suspended. The umpire may continue suspension as long as there is any chance to resume play.

**3.12** When the umpire suspends play, "Time" shall be called. At the umpire's call of "Play" the suspension is lifted and play resumes. Between the call of

“Time” and the call of “Play” the ball is dead.

**3.13** The local league will establish ground rules to be followed by all teams in the league.

A.R. – Local ground rules should pertain to particular situations or field conditions that are not specifically covered in the rulebook, but at no time should they supersede or change the rulebook.

**3.14** Members of the offensive team shall carry all gloves and other equipment off the field and to the dugout while their team is at bat. No equipment shall be left lying on the field, either in fair or foul territory.

**3.15** No person shall be allowed on the playing field during a game except uniformed players, managers, and coaches, umpires and news photographers authorized by the league. In case of intentional interference with play by any person authorized to be on the playing field, the ball is dead at the moment of the interference and no runners on base may advance. Should an overthrown ball accidentally touch an authorized person, it will not be considered interference and the ball will remain live.

**3.16** When there is spectator interference with any thrown or batted ball, the ball shall be dead at the moment of interference and the umpire shall impose such penalties as in the umpire’s opinion will nullify the act of interference.

A.R. – If spectator interference clearly prevents a fielder from catching a fly ball, the umpire shall declare the batter out.

**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. No one except eligible players in uniform, a manager, and not more than two coaches (**Tee Ball/Minor League Instructional Division:** three coaches) shall occupy the bench or dugout. When batters or base runners are retired, they must return to the bench or dugout at once. Batboys and/or batgirls are not permitted. The use of electronic communication equipment during the game is restricted. No team shall use electronic communication equipment, including walkie-talkies, cellular telephones, etc., for any communication with on-field personnel including those in the dugout, bullpen, or field.

**PENALTY:** If, in the umpire's judgment, any player, manager, or coach uses an electronic communications device during the game, the penalty is ejection from the game.

**NOTE:** A manager or coach is permitted to use a rulebook, scorekeeping, and/or pitch-counting application on an electronic device without penalty, provided such device is not used to receive messages of any sort.

**3.18** The local league shall provide proper protection sufficient to preserve order and to prevent spectators from entering the field. Either team may refuse to play until the field is cleared.

# Rule 4.00 – Starting and Ending the Game

**4.01** The umpires shall proceed directly to home plate where they shall be met by the managers of the opposing teams, just preceding the established time to begin the game. In sequence –

**(a)** The home team manager shall give the batting order in duplicate to the Umpire-in-Chief;

**(b)** Next, the visiting manager shall give the batting order in duplicate to the Umpire-in-Chief;

**(c)** The Umpire-in-Chief shall make certain that the original and duplicate copies are the same, then provide a copy of each batting order to the opposing manager. The original copy retained by the umpire shall be the official batting order;

**(d)** As soon as the home team’s batting order is handed to the Umpire-in-Chief, the umpires are in charge of the playing field and from that moment shall have sole authority to determine when a game shall be called, halted, or resumed on account of weather or the conditions of the playing field.

**NOTE 1:** In Tee Ball and Instructional Minor Leagues, all players on the roster may be given a defensive position. Only one player may occupy the catcher’s position.

**NOTE 2:** Rostered players who arrive at the game site after a game begins may be inserted in the lineup, if the manager so chooses. This applies even when a suspended game is resumed at a later date.

**4.02** The players of the home team shall take their defensive positions, the first batter of the visiting team shall take a position in the batter’s box, the umpire shall call “Play” and the game shall start.

**4.03** When the ball is put in play at the start of, or during a game, all fielders other than the catcher shall be in fair territory.

**(a)** The catcher shall be stationed in the catcher's box. The catcher may leave that position at any time to catch a pitch or make a play except that when the batter is being given an intentional base on balls, the catcher must stand with both feet within the lines of the catcher's box until the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.

**PENALTY:** Illegal pitch – ball called on the batter (see Rule 8.05).

**[Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League PENALTY:** Balk with runner or runners on base.]

**(b)** The pitcher, while in the act of delivering the ball to the batter, shall take the legal position.

**(c)** Except the pitcher and the catcher, any fielder may be stationed anywhere in fair territory.

**4.04** The batting order shall be followed throughout the game unless a player is substituted for another. Substitutes must take the place of the replaced player's position in the batting order except as covered by Rule 3.03. A league may adopt a policy of a continuous batting order that will include all players on the team roster present for the game batting in order. If this option is adopted, each player would be required to bat in his/her respective spot in the batting order. However, a player may be entered and/or re-entered defensively in the game anytime provided he/ she meets the requirements of mandatory play. **NOTE 1:** The continuous batting order is mandatory for all Tee Ball and Minor League Divisions. **NOTE 2:** For the Tee Ball and Minor League Divisions (and when the continuous batting order is adopted for other divisions), when a player is injured, becomes ill, or must leave the game site after the start of the game, the team will skip over him/her when his/her time at bat comes up without penalty. If the injured, ill, or absent player returns he/she is merely inserted into their original spot in the batting order and the game continues. Also, if a player arrives late to a game site, if the manager chooses to enter him/her in the lineup (see Rule 4.01 NOTE 2), he/she would be added to the end of the current lineup. **NOTE 3: Local League Option:** When a league permits teams to start and play games with eight (8) players, the Board of Directors will determine if an out is called for



the ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) position in the batting line-up each turn at bat or if the team may skip over the ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) position without penalty.

A.R. – For the purpose of continuous batting order, all players listed in the batting order shall be considered starters.

**4.05** The offensive team shall station two base coaches on the field during its time at bat, one near first base and one near third base. The coaches shall not leave their respective dugouts until the pitcher has completed his/her preparatory pitches to the catcher. Base coaches shall –

(a) be eligible players in the uniform of their team; a manager and/or coach. Both base coaches may be managers or coaches.

(b) be a manager or coach only if there is at least one other adult manager or coach in the dugout.

(c) remain within the base coaches boxes at all times, except as provided in Rule 7.11;

A.R. – Once an inning starts, coaches shall not alternate between the first and third base coaches boxes.

(d) talk to members of their own team only.

An offending base coach shall be removed from the base coach's box.

**4.06** No manager, coach, or player, shall at any time, whether from the bench or the playing field or elsewhere –

(a) incite, or try to incite, by word or sign, a demonstration by spectators;

(b) use language which will in any manner refer to or reflect upon opposing players, manager, coach, an umpire, or spectators;

(c) make any move calculated to cause the pitcher to commit an illegal pitch [a balk in **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League**];

(d) take a position in the batter's line of vision, with the deliberate intent to distract the batter.

The umpire may first warn the player, coach, and/or manager. If continued, remove the player, coach, and/or manager from the game or bench. If such action causes an illegal pitch [a balk in **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League**], it shall be nullified.

**4.07** When a manager, coach, or player is ejected from a game, they shall leave the field immediately and take no further part in that game. They may

not sit in the stands and may not be recalled. **A manager or coach ejected from a game must not be present at the game site for the remainder of that game.** Any manager, coach, or player ejected from a game is suspended for his or her team's next physically played game and may not be in attendance at the game site. This includes pregame and postgame activities.

**4.08** When the occupants of a player's bench show violent disapproval of an umpire's decision, the umpire shall first give warning that such disapproval shall cease. If such action continues –

**PENALTY:** The umpire shall order the offender out of the game and away from the spectators' area. If the umpire is unable to detect the offender or offenders, the bench may be cleared of all players. The manager of the offending team shall have the privilege of recalling to the playing field only those players needed for substitution in the game.

#### **4.09 How A Team Scores**

**(a)** One run shall be scored each time a runner legally advances to and touches first, second, third, and home base before three players are retired to end the inning.

**EXCEPTIONS:** A run is not scored if the runner advances to home base during a play in which the third out is made (1) by the batter-runner before touching first base; (2) by any runner being forced out; or (3) by a preceding runner who is declared out because that runner failed to touch one of the bases (appeal play).

A.R. – One out, Jones on third, Smith on first and Brown flies out to right field for the second out. Jones tags up and scores after the catch. Smith attempted to return to first but the right fielder's throw beat Smith to the base for the third out. But Jones scored before the throw to catch Smith reached first base. Hence, Jones' run counts. It was not a force play.

**(b)** When the winning run is scored in the last half-inning of a regulation game, or in the last half of an extra inning, as the result of a base on balls, hit batter, or any other play with the bases full which forces the runner on third to advance, the umpire shall not declare the game ended until the runner

forced to advance from third has touched home base and the batter-runner has touched first base.

**4.10 (a)** A regulation game consists of six innings [**Intermediate (50-70) Division/ Junior/Senior League:** seven innings], unless extended because of a tie score, or shortened (1) because the home team needs none of its half of the sixth inning [**Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League:** seventh] or only a fraction of it; or (2) because the umpire calls the game.

**(b)** If the score is tied after six completed innings (**Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League:** seven innings), play shall continue until (1) the visiting team has scored more total runs than the home team at the end of a completed inning; or (2) the home team scores the winning run in an uncompleted inning.

**(c)** If a game is called, it is a regulation game:

**(1)** If four innings [**Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League:** five innings] have been completed;

**(2) Local League Option:** If the game has been played for 1 hour and 45 minutes. Any inning which has been started prior to the time limit expiring will be completed. No new inning will begin once the time limit has expired.

A.R. – District Administrators administering interleague play activities and local Little League programs may establish a minimum 2-hour time limit for games in Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/ Senior League.

**(3)** If the home team has scored more runs in three and one-half innings [**Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League:** four and onehalf innings] than the visiting team has scored in four completed halfinnings;

**(4)** if the home team scores one or more runs in its half of the fourth inning [**Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League:** fifth inning] to tie the score.

**(d)** If a game is called before it has become a regulation game, it shall be resumed exactly where it left off.

(e) If after three (3) innings [**Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League:** four innings], two and one-half innings [**Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League:** three and one-half innings] if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of fifteen (15) runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede the victory to the opponent. If after four (4) innings [**Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League:** five innings], three and one-half innings [**Intermediate (50-70) Division/ Junior/Senior League:** four and one-half innings] if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of ten (10) runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede the victory to the opponent. If after five (5) innings [Intermediate (50-70) Division / Junior / Senior League: six innings], four and one-half innings [Intermediate (50-70) Division / Junior / Senior League: five and one-half innings], if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of eight (8) runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede the victory to the opponent.

**NOTE:** (1) If the visiting team has a lead of fifteen (15), ten (10) or eight (8) runs or more respectively, the home team must bat in its half of the inning.  
(2) The local league may adopt the option of not utilizing this rule. A game determined by the 15-run rule, 10-run rule, or 8-run rule, shall be considered a regulation game.

(f) **Tee Ball:** The local league may determine appropriate game length but shall not exceed 6 innings. It is recommended that Tee Ball games be 4 innings or 1½ hour time limit or less.

**4.11** The score of a regulation game is the total number of runs scored by each team at the moment the game ends.

(a) The game ends when the visiting team completes its half of the sixth inning [**Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League:** seventh inning] if the home team is ahead.

(b) The game ends when the sixth inning [**Intermediate (50-70) Division/ Junior/Senior League:** seventh inning] is completed, if the visiting team is ahead.

(c) If the home team scores the winning run in its half of the sixth inning [**Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League:** seventh inning], or its half of an extra inning after a tie, the game ends immediately when the winning run is scored.

**NOTE:** Once a game becomes regulation and it is called with the home team taking the lead in an incomplete inning, the game ends with the home team the winner.

**EXCEPTION:** If the last batter in a game hits a home run out of the playing field, the batter-runner and all runners on base are permitted to score, in accordance with the base-running rules, and the game ends when the batterrunner touches home plate.

A.R. – The batter hits a home run out of the playing field to win the game in the last half of the sixth [Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League: seventh inning] or an extra inning, but is called out for passing a preceding runner. The game ends immediately when the winning run is scored.

(d) A called game ends at the moment the umpire terminates play.

**EXCEPTION:** If the game is called during an incomplete inning, the game ends at the end of the last previous completed inning in each of the following situations:

(1) The visiting team scores one or more runs to tie the score in the incomplete inning, and the home team does not score in the incomplete inning.

(2) The visiting team scores one or more runs to take the lead in the incomplete inning, and the home team does not tie the score or retake the lead in the incomplete inning.

**Local League Option:** A game will be regulation if the game has been played for 1 hour and 45 minutes. Any inning which has been started prior to the time limit expiring will be completed. No new inning will begin once the time limit has expired. See Rule 4.10.

(e) A regulation game that is tied after four [**Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League: five**] or more completed innings and halted by the umpire, shall be resumed from the exact point that play was halted. The game shall continue in accordance with Rule 4.10(a) and 4.10(b).

**NOTE:** When a TIE game is halted, the pitcher of record may continue pitching in the same game on any subsequent date provided said pitcher has observed the required days of rest for his/her particular age group. For scorekeeping purposes, it shall be considered the same game, and all batting, fielding, and pitching records will count.

**LITTLE LEAGUE (MAJOR)/MINOR LEAGUE EXAMPLE: Rule 4.11**  
**Team 1 2 3 4 5 6**

Visitors 0 0 0 4 1 Home 0 0 0 5

Game called in top of 5th inning on account of rain. Score reverts to last completed inning (4th) and the home team is the winner 5 to 4.

**INTERMEDIATE (50-70) DIVISION/JUNIOR/SENIOR LEAGUE**  
**EXAMPLE: Rule 4.11**

**Team 1 2 3 4 5 6 7**

Visitors 0 0 0 0 4 1

Home 0 0 0 0 5

Game called in top of 6th inning on account of rain. Score reverts to last completed inning (5th) and the home team is the winner 5 to 4.

**4.12** TIE games halted due to weather, curfew, or light failure shall be resumed from the exact point at which they were halted in the original game. It can be completed preceding the next scheduled game between the same teams. A player may not pitch in more than one game in a day.

**(EXCEPTION: Junior and Senior League:** If a pitcher reaches 30 pitches while facing a batter in the first game, the pitcher may continue to pitch, and maintain their eligibility to pitch in the second game on that day, until any one of the following conditions occurs: (1) that batter reaches base; (2) that batter is retired; or (3) the third out is made to complete the halfinning or the game. The pitcher would be allowed to pitch in a second game provided that pitcher is moved, removed, or the game is completed before delivering a pitch to another batter. If a player delivers 31 or more pitches in the first game, and is not covered under the threshold exception, the player may not

pitch in the second game that day. **NOTE:** A 12-year-old playing in the Junior and/ or Senior Division is not eligible to pitch in two games in a day.)

The lineup and batting order of both teams shall be the same as the lineup and batting order at the moment the game was halted, subject to the rules governing substitution. Any player may be replaced by a player who was not in the game prior to halting the original game. Substitutions, including entry and re-entry, are covered by Rule 3.03.

**NOTE:** When a TIE game is halted, the pitcher of record may continue pitching in the same game on any subsequent date provided said pitcher has observed the required days of rest for his/her particular age group. For scorekeeping purposes, it shall be considered the same game, and all batting, fielding, and pitching records will count.

**LITTLE LEAGUE (MAJOR)/MINOR LEAGUE EXAMPLE:** Rule 4.12  
Tie games halted due to weather, curfew, or light failure shall be resumed from the exact point at which they were halted in the original game.

**Team 1 2 3 4 5 6**

Visitors 0 0 0 0 4 5

Home 0 0 0 0 4

Game called in top of 6th inning, visiting team batting with two out, no base runners – this is a tie game. Resume the game in the top of the 6th, visiting team at bat, two out.

**INTERMEDIATE (50-70) DIVISION/JUNIOR/SENIOR LEAGUE EXAMPLE:** Rule 4.12

Tie games halted due to weather, curfew, or light failure shall be resumed from the exact point at which they were halted in the original game.

**Team 1 2 3 4 5 6 7**

Visitors 0 0 0 0 0 4 5

Home 0 0 0 0 0 4

Game called in top of 7th inning, visiting team batting with two out, no base runners – this is a tie game. Resume the game in the top of the 7th, visiting team at bat, two out.

#### **4.13 DOUBLE HEADERS Tee Ball and Coach Pitch/Machine Pitch**

**Minor Division:** No team shall be scheduled to play two games in one day.

**Minor (Player Pitch):** A team may play one (1) doubleheader in a calendar week. See Rule 4.12.

**Little League (Major) Division:** A team may play two (2) doubleheaders in a calendar week. No team shall play three games in a day. (See Rule 4.12.)

**Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League:** Doubleheaders are permitted.

**4.14** The Umpire-in-Chief shall order the playing field lights turned on whenever in such umpire's opinion that darkness makes further play in daylight hazardous.

**4.15** A game may be forfeited by the Umpire-in-Chief of the game in progress to the opposing team when a team –

(a) being upon the field, refuses to start play within 10 minutes after the appointed hour for beginning the game, unless such delay, in the umpire's judgment, is unavoidable;

(b) refuses to continue play unless the game was terminated by the umpire;  
(c) fails to resume play, after the game was halted by the umpire, within one minute after the umpire has called "Play";

(d) fails to obey within a reasonable time the umpire's order to remove a player from the game;

(e) after warning by the umpire, willfully and persistently violates any rules of the game;

(f) employs tactics designed to delay, shorten or make a travesty of the game.

**4.16** If a game cannot be played because of the inability of either team to:

(a) place nine players on the field before the game begins (**Local League Option:** A game may not be started with less than eight (8) players on each team.); and/or,

(b) place at least one adult in the dugout as manager or acting manager.

This shall not be grounds for automatic forfeiture, but shall be referred to the Board of Directors for a decision. **NOTE:** A game may not be started with less than nine (9) players on each team, nor without at least one adult manager or substitute manager. **Local League Option:** A game may not be started with less than eight (8) players on each team.



**4.17** If during a game either team is unable to place nine (9) players on the field due to injury or ejection, the opposing manager shall select a player to re-enter the lineup. A player ejected from the game is not eligible for re-entry. If no players are available for re-entry, or if a team refuses to place nine (9) players on the field, this shall not be grounds for automatic forfeiture but shall be referred to the Board of Directors for a decision.

**NOTE:** A game may not be continued with less than nine (9) players on each team. **Local League Option:** A game may not be continued with less than eight (8) players on each team.

**4.18** Forfeited games shall be so recorded in the scorebook and the book signed by the Umpire-in-Chief. A written report stating the reason for the forfeiture shall be sent to the league president within 24 hours, but failure of the umpire to file this report shall not affect the forfeiture.

#### **4.19 PROTESTING A GAME**

**(a)** Protest shall be considered only when based on the violation or interpretation of a playing rule, use of an ineligible pitcher or the use of an ineligible player. No protest shall be considered on a decision involving an umpire's judgment. Equipment which does not meet specifications must be removed from the game.

**Exception:** Illegal bat [see Rule 6.06(d)].

**(b)** The managers of contesting teams only shall have the right to protest a game (or in their absence, coaches). However, the manager or acting manager may not leave the dugout until receiving permission from an umpire.

**(c)** Protests shall be made as follows:

**(1)** The protesting manager shall immediately, and before any succeeding play begins, notify the umpire that the game is being played under protest.

**(2)** Following such notice the umpire shall consult with the other umpire(s). If the umpire is convinced that the decision is in conflict with the rules, the umpire shall reverse that decision. If, however, after consultation, the umpire is convinced that the decision is not in conflict with the rules, said umpire

shall announce that the game is being played under protest. Failure of the umpire to make such announcement shall not affect the validity of the protest.

**(d)** Protest made due to the use of an ineligible pitcher or an ineligible player may be considered only if made to the umpire before the umpire(s) leave the field at the end of the game. Whenever it is found that an ineligible pitcher or ineligible player is being used, said pitcher shall be removed from the mound, or said player shall be removed from the game, and the game shall be continued under protest or not as the protesting manager decides.

**(e)** Any protest for any reason whatsoever must be submitted by the manager first to the umpire on the field of play and then in writing to the local league president within 24 hours. The Umpire-in-Chief shall also submit a report immediately.

**(f)** A committee composed of the president, player agent, league's Umpire-in-Chief, and one or more other officers or directors who are not managers or umpires shall hear and resolve any such protest as above, including playing rules. If the protest is allowed, resume the game from the exact point when the infraction occurred.

**NOTE 1:** This rule does not pertain to charges of infractions of regulations such as field decorum or actions of the league personnel or spectators which must be considered and resolved by the Board of Directors.

**NOTE 2:** All Little League officials are urged to take precautions to prevent protests. When a protest situation is imminent, the potential offenders should be notified immediately. **Example:** Should a manager, official scorer, league official, or umpire discover that a pitcher is ineligible at the beginning of the game, or will become ineligible during the game or at the start of the next inning of play, the fact should be brought to the attention of the manager of the team involved. Such action should not be delayed until the infraction has occurred. However, failure of personnel to notify the manager of the infraction does not affect the validity of the protest.

A.R. – A substitute pitcher who is ineligible DOES NOT have to pitch to a batter. It is not a violation until the ineligible pitcher has delivered a “Pitch”

as defined in Rule 2.00.

**(g) Minor League:** A local league may adopt a rule that protests must be resolved before the next pitch or play.

**(h)** There are no protests in Tee Ball.

# Rule 5.00 – Putting the Ball in Play

## – Live Ball

**5.01** At the time set for beginning the game, the Umpire-in-Chief shall order the home team to take its defensive positions and the first batter of the visiting team to take a position in the batter's box. As soon as all players are in position, the Umpire-in-Chief shall call "Play."

**5.02** After the umpire calls "Play," the ball is alive and in play and remains alive and in play until, for legal cause, or at the umpire's call of "Time" suspending play, the ball becomes dead. While the ball is dead, no player may be put out, no bases may be run, and no runs may be scored, except that runners may advance one or more bases as the result of acts which occurred while the ball was alive (such as, but not limited to an illegal pitch and/or a balk in **Intermediate (50-70) Division/ Junior/Senior League**, an overthrow, interference, or a home run or other fair ball hit out of the playing field).

**5.03** The pitcher shall deliver the pitch to the batter who may elect to strike the ball, or who may not offer at it, as such batter chooses.

**5.04** The offensive team's objective is to have its batter become a runner, and its runners advance.

**5.05** The defensive team's objective is to prevent offensive players from becoming runners, and to prevent their advance around the bases.

**5.06** When a batter becomes a runner and touches all bases legally, one run shall be scored for the offensive team.

**5.07** When three offensive players are legally put out, that team takes the field and the opposing team becomes the offensive team (side retired).

**Minor League:** The side is retired when three offensive players are legally put out, called out by an umpire, or when all players on the roster have batted one time in the half-inning, or when the offensive team scores five (5) runs. (**OPTION:** The local league Board of Directors may suspend the five-run rule in the last halfinning for either team.)

**Tee Ball:** The side is retired when three offensive players are legally put out, called out by an umpire, or when all players on the roster have batted one time in the half-inning.

**5.08** If a thrown ball accidentally touches a base coach, or a pitched or thrown ball touches an umpire, the ball is alive and in play. However, if the base coach interferes with a thrown ball, the runner is out. **5.09** The ball becomes dead and runners advance one base, or return to their bases, without liability to be put out, when –

**(a)** a pitched ball touches a batter, or the batter's clothing, while in a legal batting position; runners, if forced, advance (see 6.08);

**(b)** the plate umpire interferes with the catcher's act of throwing (when the throw is in an attempt to retire a runner); runners return. If the catcher's throw gets the runner out, the out stands. No umpire interference;

**(c)** an illegal pitch [a balk in **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League**] is committed (see Penalty 8.05);

**(d)** a ball is illegally batted either fair or foul; runners return;

**(e)** a foul ball not caught, runners return. The umpire shall not put the ball in play until all runners have retouched their bases;

**(f)** a fair ball touches a runner or an umpire on fair territory before it touches an infielder including the pitcher, or touches an umpire before it has passed an infielder other than the pitcher. Runner hit by a fair batted ball is out;

**NOTE:** If a fair ball goes through, or by an infielder and touches a runner immediately back of said infielder, or touches a runner after being deflected by an infielder, the ball is in play and the umpire shall not declare the runner out. In making such decision, the umpire must be convinced that the ball passed through, or by, the infielder and that no other infielder had the chance to make a play on the ball; runners advance, if forced;

**(g)** A pitched ball lodges in the catcher's or umpire's mask or paraphernalia; runners advance;

A.R. – If a pitched ball lodges in the umpire's or catcher's mask or paraphernalia, and remains a dead ball, on the third strike [Majors/

Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League] or fourth ball, then the batter is entitled to first base and all runners advance one base. If the count on the batter is less than three balls, runners advance one base.

**(h) Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League:** Any legal pitch touches a runner trying to score; runners advance.

**5.10** The ball becomes dead when an umpire calls “Time.” The Umpire-in-Chief shall call “Time” –

**(a)** when in said umpire’s judgment, weather, darkness, or similar conditions make immediate further play impossible;

**(b)** when light failure makes it difficult or impossible for the umpires to follow the play;

**NOTE:** A league may adopt its own regulations governing games interrupted by light failure.

**(c)** when an accident incapacitates a player or an umpire;

**(1)** If an accident to a runner is such as to prevent said runner from proceeding to an entitled base, as on a home run hit out of the playing field or an award of one or more bases, a substitute runner shall be permitted to complete the play.

**(d)** when a manager requests “Time” for a substitution, or for a conference with one of the players;

**(NOTE:** Only one offensive time-out, for the purpose of a visit or conference, will be permitted each inning.)

**(e)** when the umpire wishes to examine the ball, to consult with either manager, or for any similar cause;

**(f)** when a fielder, after catching a fly ball, falls into a stand, or falls across ropes into a crowd when spectators are on the field, or any other dead-ball area. As pertains to runners, the provisions of 7.04(b) shall prevail. If a fielder after making a catch steps into a dead ball area, the ball is dead;

**(g)** when an umpire orders a player or any other person removed from the playing field;

**(h)** except in the cases stated in paragraphs (b) and (c)(1) of this rule, no umpire shall call “Time” while a play is in progress.

**5.11** After the ball is dead, play shall be resumed when the pitcher takes a position on the pitcher's plate with a new ball or the same ball in said pitcher's possession and the plate umpire calls "Play." The plate umpire shall call "Play" as soon as the pitcher takes a position on the plate with possession of the ball.

# Rule 6.00 – The Batter

**6.01 (a)** Each player of the offensive team shall bat in the order that their name appears in the team's batting order.

**(b)** The first batter in each inning after the first inning shall be the player whose name follows that of the last player who legally completed a time at bat in the preceding inning.

**NOTE:** In the event that while a batter is in the batter's box, the third out of an inning is made on a base runner, the batter then at bat shall be the first batter of the next inning and the count of balls and strikes shall start over.

**6.02 (a)** The batter shall take a position in the batter's box promptly when it is said batter's time at bat.

**(b)** The batter shall not leave that position in the batter's box after the pitcher comes to Set Position, or starts a windup.

**PENALTY:** If the pitcher pitches, the umpire shall call "Ball" or "Strike" as the case may be.

**(c) Local League Option:** After entering the batter's box, the batter must remain in the box with at least one foot throughout the at bat.

**Exceptions:**

**(1)** On a swing, slap, or check swing.

**(2)** When forced out of the box by a pitch.

**(3)** When the batter attempts a "drag bunt."

**(4)** When the catcher does not catch the pitched ball.

**(5)** When a play has been attempted.

**(6)** When time has been called.

**(7)** When the pitcher leaves the dirt area of the pitching mound or takes a position more than five feet from the pitcher's plate after receiving the ball or the catcher leaves the catcher's box.

**(8)** On a three ball count pitch that is a strike that the batter thinks is a ball.



**PENALTY:** If the batter leaves the batter's box or delays play and none of the exceptions apply, the umpire shall warn the batter. After one warning on a batter, the umpire shall call a strike. Any number of strikes can be called on each batter. **Minor/Major Division:** No pitch has to be thrown, the ball is dead, and no runners may advance. **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior:** No pitch has to be thrown and ball is live.

**NOTE:** The batter may return their position in the batter's box and assume the new count at any time during the at-bat, unless such enforced penalty is the third strike.

**6.03** The batter's legal position shall be with both feet within the batter's box.

A.R. – The lines defining the box are within the batter's box.

**6.04** A batter has legally completed a time at bat when he/she is retired or becomes a runner.

**6.05** A batter is out when –

**(a)** a fair or foul fly ball (other than a foul tip) is legally caught by a fielder;

A.R. – A fielder may reach into, but not step into, a dugout to make a catch, and if he/she holds the ball, the catch shall be allowed. A fielder, in order to make a catch on a foul ball nearing a dugout or other dead ball area (such as the stands), must have one or both feet on or over the playing surface (including the dugout) and neither foot on the ground inside the dugout or in any other dead ball area. Ball is in play, unless the fielder, after making a legal catch, falls into a dugout or other dead ball area, in which case the ball is dead.

**(b) Majors/Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League –**

**(1)** a third strike is legally caught by the catcher;

**(2)** a third strike is not caught by the catcher when first base is occupied before two are out; **Minor League and Tee Ball:** A third strike is caught or not caught by the catcher. **Option:** A local league may elect to apply the Minor League and Tee Ball rule for the Little League (Major) Division for the regular season.

A.R. – (Majors/Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League) When a batter becomes a runner on a third strike that is not caught, and starts for the

bench or his/her position, that batter may advance to first base at any time before entering the dugout or any other dead ball area. To put the batter out, the defense must tag the batter or first base before the batter touches first base.

(c) bunting foul on a third strike;

(d) an Infield Fly is declared;

(e) that batter attempts to hit a third strike and is touched by the ball;

(f) a fair ball touches said batter before touching a fielder;

(g) after hitting or bunting a fair ball, the bat hits the ball a second time in fair territory. The ball is dead and no runners may advance. If the batter-runner drops the bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory and, in the umpire's judgment there was no intention to interfere with the course of the ball, the ball is alive and in play;

A.R. – If a bat is thrown into fair or foul territory and interferes with a defensive player attempting to make a play, interference shall be called, whether intentional or not.

(h) after hitting or bunting a foul ball, the batter-runner intentionally deflects the course of the ball in any manner while running to first base. The ball is dead and no runners may advance;

(i) after hitting a fair ball, the batter-runner or first base is tagged before said batter-runner touches first base; or **Majors/Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League:** after a third strike as defined in Rule 6.09(b), the batter-runner or first base is tagged before said batter-runner touches first base;

(j) in running the last half of the distance from home base to first base, while the ball is being fielded to first base, the batter-runner runs outside (to the right of) the runner's lane, or inside (to the left of) the foul line, and in the umpire's judgment in so doing interferes with the fielder taking the throw at first base; except that the batter-runner may run outside (to the right of) the runner's lane or inside (to the left of) the foul line to avoid a fielder attempting to field a batted ball;

A.R. – The lines marking the three-foot lane are a part of that lane and a batter-runner is required to have both feet within the runner's lane or on the lines marking the lane.

**(k)** an infielder intentionally drops a fair fly ball or line drive, with first; first and second; first and third; or first, second, and third bases occupied before two are out. The ball is dead and runner or runners shall return to their original base or bases;

A.R. – In this situation, the batter is not out if the infielder permits the ball to drop untouched to the ground, except when the Infield Fly rule applies.

**(l)** a preceding runner shall, in the umpire's judgment, intentionally interfere with a fielder who is attempting to catch a thrown ball or to throw a ball in an attempt to complete a play.

**(m) Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League:** with two out, a runner on third base, and two strikes on the batter, the runner attempts to steal home base on a legal pitch and the ball touches the runner in the batter's strike zone. The umpire shall call "Strike Three," the batter is out and the run shall not count; before two are out, the umpire shall call "Strike Three," the ball is dead, and the run counts.

**(n) Local League Option:** When a league permits teams to start and play games with eight (8) players, an out is called for the ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) position in the batting line-up each turn at bat. **NOTE:** The Board of Directors may determine if teams may skip over the ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) position without penalty;

**6.06** A batter is out for illegal action when –

**(a)** hitting the ball with one or both feet on the ground entirely outside the batter's box.

A.R. – If a batter hits a ball fair or foul while out of the batter's box, he/she shall be called out.

**(b)** stepping from one batter's box to the other while the pitcher is in position ready to pitch;

**(c)** interfering with the catcher's fielding or throwing by:

**(1)** stepping out of the batter's box, or;

**(2)** making any other movement that hinders the catcher's actions at home

plate or the catcher's attempt to play on a runner, or;

**(3)** failing to make a reasonable effort to vacate a congested area when there is a throw to home plate and there is time for the batter to move away.

**EXCEPTION:** Batter is not out if any runner attempting to advance is retired, or if runner trying to score is called out for batter's interference.

**(d)** the batter enters the batter's box with one or both feet entirely on the ground with an illegal bat (see bat specifications rule 1.10) or is discovered having used an illegal bat prior to the next player entering the batter's box. The ball is dead. Runners must return if they advanced on the play.

**NOTE:** If the infraction is discovered before the next player enters the batter's box following the turn at bat of the player who used an illegal bat:

**(1)** The manager of the defense may advise the plate umpire of a decision to decline the penalty and accept the play. Such election shall be made immediately at the end of the play.

**(2)** For the first violation, the offensive team will lose one eligible adult base coach for the duration of the game.

A.R. – Any of the three adults in the dugout may be used as the one adult base coach at any time during the duration of the game.

**(3)** For the second violation, the manager of the team will be ejected from the game. Any subsequent violation will result in the newly designated manager being ejected.

A.R. – When an illegal bat is discovered, it **MUST** be removed from the game at that point.

## **6.07 BATTING OUT OF TURN**

**(a)** A batter shall be called out, on appeal, when failing to bat in his/her proper turn, and another batter completes a time at bat in place of the proper batter. **(1)** The proper batter may take a position in the batter's box at any time before the improper batter becomes a runner or is retired, and any balls and strikes shall be counted in the proper batter's time at bat.

**(b)** When an improper batter becomes a runner or is retired, and the defensive team appeals to the umpire before the first pitch to the next batter

of either team, or before any play or attempted play, the umpire shall (1) declare the proper batter out; and (2) nullify any advance or score made because of a ball batted by the improper batter or because of the improper batter's advance to first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter, or otherwise.

**NOTE:** If a runner advances, while the improper batter is at bat, on a stolen base, illegal pitch [**Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League:** balk], wild pitch, or passed ball, such advance is legal.

(c) When an improper batter becomes a runner or is retired, and a pitch is made to the next batter of either team before an appeal is made, the improper batter thereby becomes the proper batter, and the results of such time at bat become legal.

(d) (1) When the proper batter is called out for failing to bat in turn, the next batter shall be the batter whose name follows that of the proper batter thus called out;

(2) When an improper batter becomes a proper batter because no appeal is made before the next pitch, the next batter shall be the batter whose name follows that of such legalized improper batter. The instant an improper batter's actions are legalized, the batting order picks up with the name following that of the legalized improper batter.

#### BATTING OUT OF TURN – APPROVED RULINGS

To illustrate various situations arising from batting out of turn, assume a first-inning batting order as follows:

Abel – Baker – Charles – Daniel – Edward – Frank – George – Henry – Irwin.

PLAY (1) Baker bats. With the count 2 balls and 1 strike, (a) the offensive team discovers the error or (b) the defensive team appeals.

RULING: In either case, Abel replaces Baker, with the count 2 balls and 1 strike.

PLAY (2) Baker bats and doubles. The defensive team appeals (a) immediately or (b) after a pitch to Charles.

RULING: (a) Abel is called out and Baker is the proper batter; (b) Baker stays on second and Charles is the proper batter.

PLAY (3) Abel walks. Baker walks. Charles forces Baker. Edward bats in Daniel's turn. While Edward is at bat, Abel scores and Charles goes to second on a wild pitch. Edward grounds out, sending Charles to third. The defensive team appeals (a) immediately or (b) after a pitch to Daniel.

RULING: (a) Abel's run counts and Charles is entitled to second base since these advances were not made because of the improper batter batting a ball or advancing to first base. Charles must return to second base because the advance to third resulted from the improper batter batting a ball. Daniel is called out and Edward is the proper batter; (b) Abel's run counts and Charles stays on third. The proper batter is Frank.

PLAY (4) With the bases full and two out, Henry bats in Frank's turn, and triples, scoring three runs. The defensive team appeals (a) immediately or (b) after a pitch to George.

RULING: (a) Frank is called out and no runs score. George is the proper batter to lead off the second inning; (b) Henry stays on third and three runs score. Irwin is the proper batter.

PLAY (5) After Play (4) (b) above, George continues to bat. (a) Henry is picked off third base for the third out, or (b) George flies out, and no appeal is made. Who is the proper leadoff batter in the second inning?

RULING: (a) Irwin became the proper batter as soon as the first pitch to George legalized Henry's triple; (b) Henry. When no appeal was made, the first pitch to the leadoff batter of the opposing team legalized George's time at bat.

PLAY (6) Daniel walks and Abel comes to bat. Daniel was an improper batter and if an appeal is made before the first pitch to Abel, Abel is out, Daniel is removed from base, and Baker is proper batter. There is no appeal and a pitch is made to Abel. Daniel's walk is now legalized, and Edward thereby becomes the proper batter. Edward can replace Abel at any time before Abel is put out, or becomes a runner. Edward does not do so. Abel flies out, and Baker comes to bat. Abel was an improper batter, and if an appeal is made before the first pitch to Baker, Edward is out, and the proper batter is Frank. There is no appeal, and a pitch is made to Baker. Abel's out

is now legalized, and the proper batter is Baker. Baker walks. Charles is the proper batter. Charles flies out. Now Daniel is the proper batter, but Daniel is on second base. Who is the proper batter?

**RULING:** The proper batter is Edward. When the proper batter is on base, that batter is passed over, and the following batter becomes the proper batter.

(NOTE: The umpire and scorekeeper shall not direct the attention of any person to the presence in the batter's box of an improper batter. This rule is designed to require constant vigilance by the players and managers of both teams. There are two fundamentals to keep in mind:

- (1) When a player bats out of turn, the proper batter is the player called out.
- (2) If an improper batter bats and reaches base or is out and no appeal is made before a pitch to the next batter, or before any play or attempted play, that improper batter is considered to have batted in proper turn and establishes the order that is to follow.)

**Tee Ball:** The scorekeeper shall inform the manager that a player has batted out of order. There shall be no penalty and that player shall not have another turn at bat, but shall resume the normal position next time up.

**6.08** The batter becomes a runner and is entitled to first base without liability to be put out (provided said runner advances to and touches first base) when

—  
**(a) (1)** four “balls” have been called by the umpire; ball is live and base runners may advance; or,

**(2) All Divisions:** The defense elects to “Intentionally Walk” the batter by announcing such decision to the plate umpire. The request may be made prior to or during the at-bat. A player may only be intentionally walked by announcing such decision to the home plate umpire one time during the course of the game. This would not restrict a team from throwing four balls outside of the strike zone to this batter at another time during the game.

**NOTE 1:** Such notification must be made by the defensive manager. The manager must request and be granted “time” by the umpire and then inform the umpire of the defense's intent to walk the batter.

**NOTE 2:** The ball is dead and no other runners may advance unless forced by the batter's award. The appropriate number of "balls" needed based on the count on the batter at the time of the manager's request to complete the Intentional Walk will be added to the pitch count.

**(b)** the batter is touched by a pitched ball which the batter is not attempting to hit unless (1) The ball is in the strike zone when it touches the batter, or (2) The batter makes no attempt to avoid being touched by the ball;

**NOTE:** If the ball is in the strike zone when it touches the batter, it shall be called a strike, whether or not the batter tries to avoid the ball. If the ball is outside the strike zone when it touches the batter, it shall be called a ball if that batter makes no attempt to avoid being touched.

A.R. – When the batter is touched by a pitched ball which does not entitle that batter to first base, the ball is dead and no runner may advance.

**(c)** the catcher or any fielder interferes with the batter. If a play follows the interference, the manager of the offense may advise the plate umpire of a decision to decline the interference penalty and accept the play. Such election shall be made immediately at the end of the play. However, if the batter reaches first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter, or otherwise, and all other runners advance at least one base, the play proceeds without reference to the interference;

A.R. 1 – Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League: If a runner is trying to score by a steal or squeeze from third base, note the additional penalty set forth in Rule 7.07.

A.R. 2 – If the catcher interferes with the batter before the pitcher delivers the ball, it shall not be considered interference on the batter under Rule 6.08(c). In such cases, the umpire shall call "Time" and the pitcher and batter resume the count.

**(d)** a fair ball touches an umpire or a runner on fair territory before touching a

fielder.

A.R. – Ball is dead. Runner(s) who are forced advance and any runners not



forced will return to their bases at the time of the pitch.

**NOTE:** If a fair ball touches an umpire after having passed a fielder other than the pitcher, or having touched a fielder, including the pitcher, the ball is in play.

**6.09** The batter becomes a runner when –

**(a)** a fair ball is hit;

**(b) Majors/Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League:** the third strike is not caught, providing (1) first base is unoccupied or (2) first base is occupied with two out;

**(NOTE:** A batter forfeits his/her opportunity to advance to first base when he/ she enters the dugout or other dead ball area);

**(c)** a fair ball, after having passed a fielder other than the pitcher, or after having been touched by a fielder, including the pitcher, shall touch an umpire or runner in fair territory;

**(d)** a fair fly ball passes over a fence or into the stands at a distance from home base of 165 feet [**Intermediate (50-70) Division:** 200 feet; and **Junior/ Senior League:** 250 feet] or more. Such hit entitles the batter to a home run when all bases have been legally touched. A fair fly ball that passes out of the playing field at a point less than 165 feet [**Intermediate (50-70) Division:** 200 feet; and **Junior/Senior League:** 250 feet] from home base shall entitle the batter to advance to second base only;

**(e)** a fair ball, after touching the ground, bounds into the stands; passes through, over, or under a fence; through or under a scoreboard; or through or under shrubbery or vines on the fence, in which case the batter and runners shall be entitled to advance two bases;

**(f)** any fair ball which, either before or after touching the ground, passes through or under a fence, through or under a scoreboard, through any opening in the fence or scoreboard, through or under shrubbery or vines on the fence, or which sticks in a fence or scoreboard, in which case the batter and the runners shall be entitled to two bases;

**(g)** any bounding fair ball is deflected by the fielder into the stands, or over or under a fence on fair or foul territory, in which case the batter and all runners shall be entitled to advance two bases;

**(h)** any fair fly ball is deflected by the fielder into the stands, or over the fence into foul territory, in which case the batter shall be entitled to advance to second base; but if deflected into the stands or over the fence in fair territory, the batter shall be entitled to a home run. However, should such a fair fly be deflected at a point less than 165 feet [**Intermediate (50-70) Division:** 200 feet; and **Junior/Senior League:** 250 feet] from home plate, the batter shall be entitled to two bases only.

# Rule 7.00 – The Runner

**7.01** A runner acquires the right to an unoccupied base when that runner touches it before being retired. The runner is then entitled to it until retired or forced to vacate it for another runner legally entitled to that base. If a runner legally acquires title to a base, and the pitcher assumes his/her position on the pitcher's plate, the runner may not return to a previously occupied base.

**7.02** In advancing, a runner shall touch first, second, third, and home base in order. If forced to return, the runner shall retouch all bases in reverse order, unless the ball is dead under any provision of Rule 5.09. In such cases, the runner may go directly to the original base.

**7.03** Two runners may not occupy a base, but if, while the ball is alive, two runners are touching the base, the following runner shall be out when tagged. The preceding runner is entitled to the base.

**(a)** If two runners are on a base and both are tagged, then the lead runner is out if forced.

**7.04** Each runner, other than the batter, may, without liability to be put out, advance one base when –

**(a)** the batter's advance without liability to be put out forces the runner to vacate a base, or when the batter hits a fair ball that touches another runner or the umpire before such ball has been touched by, or has passed a fielder, if the runner is forced to advance, or in **Intermediate (50-70)**

**Division/Junior/ Senior League**, there is a balk;

**(b)** a fielder, after catching a fly ball, falls into a stand, falls across ropes into a crowd when spectators are on the field, or falls into any other dead-ball areas;

**(c) Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League:** while the runner is attempting to steal a base, the batter is interfered with by the catcher or any other fielder.

**NOTE:** When a runner is entitled to a base without liability to be put out, while the ball is in play, or under any rule in which the ball is in play after the runner reaches an entitled base, and the runner fails to touch the base to which that runner is entitled before attempting to advance to the next base, the runner shall forfeit the exemption from liability to be put out and may be put out by tagging the base or by tagging the runner before that runner returns to the missed base.

A.R. – A runner forced to advance without liability to be put out, may advance past the base to which he/she is entitled at his/her own risk.

**7.05** Each runner including the batter-runner may, without liability to be put out, advance –

**(a)** to home base scoring a run, if a fair ball goes out of the playing field in flight and the runner touches all bases legally; or if a fair ball which, in the umpire's judgment, would have gone out of the playing field in flight [165 feet from home plate; **Intermediate (50-70) Division:** 200 feet; and **Junior/Senior League:** 250 feet], is deflected by the act of a fielder in throwing a glove, cap, or any article of apparel;

**(b)** three bases, if a fielder deliberately touches a fair ball with a cap, mask, or any part of that fielder's uniform detached from its proper place on the person of said fielder. The ball is in play and the batter may advance to home plate at the batter's peril;

**(c)** three bases, if a fielder deliberately throws a glove and touches a fair ball. The ball is in play and the batter may advance to home base at that batter's peril;

**(d)** two bases, if a fielder deliberately touches a thrown ball with a cap, mask, or any part of the uniform detached from its proper place on the person of said fielder. The ball is in play;

**(e)** two bases, if a fielder deliberately throws a glove at and touches a thrown ball. The ball is in play;

**(f)** two bases, if a fair ball bounces or is deflected into the stands outside the first or third base foul line; if it goes through or under a field fence; through

or under a scoreboard; through or under shrubbery or vines on the fence; or if it sticks in such fence, scoreboard, shrubbery, or vines;

**(g)** two bases when, with no spectators on the playing field, a thrown ball goes into the stands; into a bench (whether or not the ball rebounds into the field); over, under, or through a field fence; on a slanting part of the screen above the backstop; or remains in the meshes of a wire screen protecting spectators. The ball is dead. When such wild throw is the first play by an infielder, the umpire, in awarding such bases, shall be governed by the position of the runners at the time the ball was pitched; in all other cases the umpire shall be governed by the position of the runners at the time the wild throw was made;

A.R. – If all runners, including the batter-runner, have advanced at least one base when an infielder makes a wild throw on the first play after the pitch, the award shall be governed by the position of the runners when the wild throw was made.

**(h)** one base, if a ball, pitched to the batter, or thrown by the pitcher from the position on the pitcher's plate to a base to catch a runner, goes into a stand or a bench; or over, through, or lodges in a field fence or backstop. The ball is dead;

**(i)** one base, if the batter becomes a runner on a ball four when the pitch passes the catcher and lodges in the umpire's mask or paraphernalia;  
**Majors/Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League:** one base, if the batter becomes a runner on a ball four or strike three when the pitch passes the catcher and lodges in the umpire's mask or paraphernalia.

**NOTE 1:** If the batter becomes a runner on a wild pitch which entitles the runners to advance one base, the batter-runner shall be entitled to first base only but can advance beyond first base at their own risk if the ball stays in play.

**NOTE 2:** In Tee Ball, the runner or runners will be permitted to advance at their own risk on an overthrow that remains in play, but not more than one base.

**(j)** one base, if a fielder deliberately touches a pitched ball with his/her cap, mask, or any part of his/her uniform detached from its proper place on his/her person. The ball is in play, and the award is made based on the position of the runner at the time the ball was touched.

**7.06** When the obstruction occurs, the umpire shall call or signal “Obstruction.”

**(a)** If a play is being made on the obstructed runner, or if the batter-runner is obstructed before touching first base, the ball is dead and all runners shall advance without liability to be put out, to the bases they would have reached, in the umpire’s judgment, if there had been no obstruction. The obstructed runner shall be awarded at least one base beyond the base last legally touched by such runner, before the obstruction. Any preceding runners forced to advance by the award of bases as the penalty for obstruction shall advance without liability to be put out;

**(b)** If no play is being made on the obstructed runner, the play shall proceed until no further action is possible. The umpire shall then call “Time” and impose such penalties, if any, as in that umpire’s judgment will nullify the act of obstruction.

**NOTE 1:** When the ball is not dead on obstruction and an obstructed runner advances beyond the base which, in the umpire’s judgment, the runner would have been awarded because of being obstructed, the runner does so at his/her own risk and may be tagged out. This is a judgment call.

**NOTE 2:** If the defensive player blocks the base (plate) or base line clearly without possession of the ball, obstruction shall be called. The runner is safe and a delayed dead ball shall be called.

**7.07 Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League:** If, with a runner on third base and trying to score by means of a squeeze play or a steal, the catcher or any other fielder steps on, or in front of home base without possession of the ball, or touches the batter or the bat, the pitcher shall be charged with a balk, the batter shall be awarded first base on the interference and the ball is dead.

**7.08** Any runner is out when –

**(a) (1)** running more than three feet away from his/her base path to avoid being tagged, unless such action is to avoid interference with a fielder fielding a batted ball. A runner's base path is established when the tag attempt occurs and is a straight line from the runner to the base to which he/she is attempting to reach; or

**(2)** after touching first base, the runner leaves the baseline, obviously abandoning all effort to touch the next base; or

**(3)** the runner does not slide or attempt to get around a fielder who has the ball and is waiting to make the tag; or

A.R. – There is no “must slide rule.”

**(4) Little League (Major) and below only:** the runner slides head first while advancing.

**(b)** intentionally interferes with a thrown ball; or hinders a fielder attempting to make a play on a batted ball

**(NOTE:** A runner who is adjudged to have hindered a fielder who is attempting to make a play on a batted ball is out whether it was intentional or not);

**(c)** that runner is tagged, when the ball is alive, while off a base;

**EXCEPTION:** A batter-runner cannot be tagged out after overrunning or over sliding first base if said batter-runner returns immediately to the base.

A.R. 1 – This includes a batter-runner who overruns first after being awarded a base on balls.

A.R. 2 – If the impact of a runner breaks a base loose from its position, no play can be made on that runner at that base if the runner had reached the base safely.

A.R. 3 – If a base is dislodged from its position during a play, any following runner on the same play shall be considered as touching or occupying the base if, in the umpire's judgment, that runner touches or occupies the dislodged bag, or the point marked by the original location of the dislodged bag.

**(d)** failing to retouch the base after a fair or foul ball is legally caught before that runner, or the base, is tagged by a fielder. The runner shall not be called out for failure to retouch the base after the first following pitch, or any play or attempted play. This is an appeal play.

**NOTE:** Base runners can legally retouch their base once a fair ball is touched in flight and advance at their own risk if a fair or foul ball is caught.

**(e)** failing to reach the next base before a fielder tags said runner or the base after that runner has been forced to advance by reason of the batter becoming a runner. However, if a following runner is retired on a force play, the force is removed and the runner must be tagged to be put out. The force is removed as soon as the runner touches the base to which that runner is forced to advance, and if oversliding or overrunning the base, the runner must be tagged to be put out. However, if the forced runner, after touching the next base, retreats for any reason towards the base last occupied, the force play is reinstated and the runner can again be put out if the defense tags the base to which the runner is forced;

**(f)** touched by a fair ball in fair territory before the ball has touched or passed an infielder. The ball is dead and no runner may score, no runners may advance, except runners forced to advance;

**EXCEPTION:** If a runner is touching a base when touched by an Infield Fly, that runner is not out, although the batter is out.

**NOTE 1:** If a runner is touched by an Infield Fly when not touching a base, both runner and batter are out.

**NOTE 2:** If two runners are touched by the same fair ball, only the first one is out because the ball is instantly dead.

**(g)** attempting to score on a play in which the batter interferes with the play at home base before two are out. With two out, the interference puts the batter out and no score counts;

**(h)** passes a preceding runner before such runner is out;

**(i)** after acquiring legal possession of a base, the runner runs the bases in reverse order for the purpose of confusing the defense or making a travesty



of the game. The umpire shall immediately call “Time” and declare the runner out;

**(j)** failing to return at once to first base after overrunning or oversliding that base. If attempting to run to second the runner is out when tagged. If, after overrunning or oversliding first base the runner starts toward the dugout, or toward a position, and fails to return to first base at once, that runner is out, on appeal, when said runner or the base is tagged;

**(k)** in running or sliding for home base, the runner fails to touch home base and makes no attempt to return to the base, when a fielder holds the ball in hand, while touching home base, and appeals to the umpire for the decision.

( **NOTE:** This rule applies only where the runner is on the way to the bench and a fielder would be required to chase the runner to tag him/her. It does not apply to the ordinary play where the runner misses the plate and then immediately makes an effort to touch the plate before being tagged. In that case, the runner must be tagged.)

**7.09** It is interference by a batter or runner when –

**(a)** the batter hinders the catcher in an attempt to field the ball; **(b)** the batter intentionally deflects the course of a foul ball in any manner;

**(c)** before two are out and a runner on third base, the batter hinders a fielder in making a play at home base; the runner is out;

**(d)** any member or members of the offensive team stand or gather around any base to which a runner is advancing, to confuse, hinder, or add to the difficulty of the fielders. Such runner shall be declared out for the interference of a teammate or teammates;

**(e)** any batter or runner who has just been retired hinders or impedes any following play being made on a runner. Such runner shall be declared out for the interference of a teammate;

**(f)** if, in the judgment of the umpire, a base runner willfully and deliberately interferes with a batted ball or a fielder in the act of fielding a batted ball with the obvious intent to break up a double play, the ball is dead. The umpire shall call the runner out for interference and also call out the batter-

runner because of the action of the runner. In no event may bases be run or runs scored because of such action by a runner;

**(g)** if, in the judgment of the umpire, a batter-runner willfully and deliberately interferes with a batted ball or a fielder in the act of fielding a batted ball, with the obvious intent to break up a double play, the ball is dead; the umpire shall call the batter-runner out for interference and shall also call out the runner who advanced closest to the home plate regardless where the double play might have been possible. In no event shall bases be run because of such interference;

**(h)** in the judgment of the umpire, the base coach at third base or first base, by touching or holding the runner, physically assists that runner in returning to or leaving third base or first base;

A.R. – When a play is being made on the assisted runner, the runner is out and all runners return to the bases occupied at the time of the interference (dead ball). If no play is being made on the assisted runner, the runner is out and play continues (delayed dead ball).

**(i)** with a runner on third base, the base coach leaves the box and acts in any manner to draw a throw by a fielder;

**(j)** the runner fails to avoid a fielder who is attempting to field a batted ball, or intentionally interferes with a thrown ball, provided that if two or more fielders attempt to field a batted ball, and the runner comes in contact with one or more of them, the umpire shall determine which fielder is entitled to the benefit of this rule, and shall not declare the runner out for coming in contact with a fielder other than the one the umpire determines to be entitled to field such a ball;

**(k)** a fair ball touches the batter or runner in fair territory before touching a fielder. If a fair ball goes through or by an infielder and touches a runner immediately back of said infielder or touches the runner after having been deflected by a fielder, the umpire shall not declare the runner out for being touched by a batted ball. In making such decision, the umpire must be convinced that the ball passed through or by the infielder and that no other infielder had the chance to make a play on the ball. If in the judgment of the

umpire, the runner deliberately and intentionally kicks such a batted ball on which the infielder had missed a play, then the runner shall be called out for interference.

**PENALTY FOR INTERFERENCE:** The runner is out and the ball is dead.

**7.10** Any runner shall be called out, on appeal, when –

**(a)** after a fly ball is caught, the runner fails to retouch the base before said runner or the base is tagged

( **NOTE:** “Retouch” in this rule, means to tag up and start from a contact with the base after the ball is caught. A runner is not permitted to take a flying start from a position in back of, and not touching, the base);

**(b)** with the ball in play, while advancing or returning to a base, the runner fails to touch each base in order before said runner, or a missed base, is tagged;

A.R. – (1) No runner may return to touch a missed base after a following runner has scored. (2) When the ball is dead, no runner may return to touch a missed base or one abandoned after said runner has advanced to and touched a base beyond the missed base.

**Play A** – Batter hits the ball out of the park, or hits a ground rule double, and misses first base (ball is dead). The runner may return to first base to correct the mistake before touching second. But if the runner touches second, he/she may not return to first and if the defensive team appeals, the runner is declared out at first. (**Appeal play.**)

**Play B** – Batter hits a ground ball to shortstop, who throws wild into the stands (ball is dead). Batter-runner misses first base but is awarded second base on the overthrow. Even though the umpire has awarded the runner second base on the overthrow, the runner must touch first base before proceeding to second base. (**Appeal play.**)

**(c)** the runner overruns or overslides first base and fails to return to the base immediately, and said runner or the base is tagged;

**(d)** the runner fails to touch home base and makes no attempt to return to

that base, and home base is tagged.

**NOTE:** A runner forfeits his/her opportunity to return to home base when he/ she enters the dugout or other dead ball area.

Any appeal under this rule must be made before the next pitch, or any play or attempted play. No appeal can be made if the ball is dead. If the violation occurs during a play which ends a half-inning, the appeal must be made before all the defensive players have left fair territory on their way to the bench or dugout. **EXCEPTION:** If an otherwise proper appeal is being made by a player who has to go into foul territory to retrieve the ball in order to make an appeal or if the appeal is being made by the catcher (who may never have been in fair territory at all), the appeal will be adjudged to have been properly executed.

An appeal is not to be interpreted as a play or an attempted play.

Successive appeals may not be made on a runner at the same base. If the defensive team on its first appeal errs, a request for a second appeal on the same runner at the same base shall not be allowed by the umpire. (Intended meaning of the word “err” is that the defensive team in making an appeal threw the ball into a dead ball area. For example, if the pitcher threw to first base to appeal and threw the ball into the stands, no second appeal would be allowed.)

**NOTE 1:** Appeal plays may require an umpire to recognize an apparent “fourth out.” If the third out is made during a play in which an appeal play is sustained on another runner, the appeal play decision takes precedence in determining the out. If there is more than one appeal during a play that ends a half-inning, the defense may elect to take the out that gives it the advantage. For the purposes of this rule, the defensive team has “left the field” when all players have left fair territory on their way to the bench or dugout.

**NOTE 2:** If a pitcher makes an illegal pitch [a balk in **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League**] when making an appeal, such act shall be a play. An appeal should be clearly intended as an appeal, either by a verbal request by the player or an act that unmistakably indicates an appeal to the

umpire. A player, inadvertently stepping on the base with a ball in hand, would not constitute an appeal. The ball must be live and in play.

**7.11** The players, coaches, or any member of an offensive team shall vacate any space (including both dugouts) needed by a fielder who is attempting to field a batted or thrown ball.

**PENALTY:** Interference shall be called and the batter or runner on whom the play is being made shall be declared out.

**7.12** Unless two are out, the status of a following runner is not affected by a preceding runner's failure to touch or retouch a base. If, upon appeal, the preceding runner is the third out, no runners following the preceding runner shall score. If such third out is the result of a force play, neither preceding nor following runners shall score.

**7.13 Little League (Major) and Minor League:** When a pitcher is in contact with the pitcher's plate and in possession of the ball and the catcher is in the catcher's box ready to receive delivery of the ball, base runners shall not leave their bases until the ball has been delivered and has reached the batter. **NOTE: Tee Ball:** Base runners must stay in contact with the base until the ball is hit. When players have advanced as far as possible without being put out or having been retired, the umpire shall call "time" and place the ball on the tee.

The violation by one base runner shall affect other base runners –

**(a)** when a base runner leaves the base before the pitched ball has reached the batter and the batter does not hit the ball, the runner is permitted to continue. If a play is made on the runner and the runner is out, the out stands. If said runner reaches safely the base to which the runner is advancing, that runner must be returned to the base occupied before the pitch was made, and no out results;

**(b)** when a base runner leaves the base before the pitched ball has reached the batter and the batter hits the ball, the base runner or runners are permitted to continue. If a play is made and the runner or runners are put out, the out or outs will stand. If not put out, the runner or runners must return to the

original base or bases or to the unoccupied base nearest the one that was left; In no event shall the batter advance beyond first base on a single or error, second base on a double or third base on a triple. The Umpire-in-Chief shall determine the base value of the hit ball.

(c) when any base runner leaves the base before the pitched ball has reached the batter and the batter bunts, hits a ball within the infield or advances on an uncaught third strike, no run shall be allowed to score. If three runners were on the bases and the batter reaches first base safely, each runner shall advance to the base beyond the one they occupied at the start of the play except the runner who occupied third base, that runner shall be removed from the base without a run being scored.

**NOTE:** See exceptions following this rule.

**EXCEPTION:** If at the conclusion of the play there is an open base, paragraphs (a) and (b) will apply

**EXAMPLES:**

- (1) Runner on first leaves too soon, batter reaches first safely, runner goes to second.
- (2) Runner on second leaves too soon, batter reaches first safely, runner returns to second.
- (3) Runner on third leaves too soon, batter reaches first safely, runner returns to third.
- (4) Runner on first leaves too soon, batter hits clean double, runner goes to third only.
- (5) Runner on second leaves too soon, batter hits clean double, runner goes to third only.
- (6) Runner on third leaves too soon, batter hits clean double, runner returns to third.
- (7) All runners on base will be allowed to score when the batter hits a clean triple or home run, regardless of whether any runner left too soon.
- (8) Runners on first and second, either leaves too soon, batter reaches first safely, runners go to second and third.
- (9) Runners on first and second, either leaves too soon, batter hits clean double, runner on first goes to third, runner on second scores.
- (10) Runners on first and third, either leaves too soon, batter reaches first safely, runner on first goes to second, runner on third remains there.
- (11) Runners on first and third, either leaves too soon, batter hits a clean

double, runner on first goes to third, runner on third scores.

**(12)** Runners on second and third, either leaves too soon, batter reaches first safely, neither runner can advance.

**(13)** Runners on second and third, either leaves too soon, batter hits a clean double, runner on third scores, runner on second goes to third.

**(14)** Runners on first, second, and third, any runner leaves too soon, batter hits clean double, runners on second, third score, runner on first goes to third.

**(15)** Bases full, any runner leaves too soon, batter reaches first safely on any ball bunted or hit within the infield, all runners advance one base except runner advancing from third. Runner advancing from third is removed, no run is scored and no out charged. If on the play, a putout at any base results in an open base, runner who occupied third base returns to third base.

**(16)** Bases full, any runner leaves too soon, batter received a base on balls or is hit by a pitch, each runner will advance one base and a run will score.

**NOTE 1:** When an umpire detects a base runner leaving the base too soon, that umpire shall drop a signal flag or handkerchief immediately to indicate the violation.

**NOTE 2:** For purpose of these examples, it is assumed that the batter runner remains at the base last acquired safely.

**NOTE 3: Tee Ball:** Base runners must stay in contact with the base until the ball is hit. When players have advanced as far as possible without being put out or having been retired the umpire shall call “time” and place the ball on the tee.

**7.14 (a)** Once each inning a team may utilize a player who is not in the batting order as a special pinch-runner for any offensive player. A player may only be removed for a special pinch-runner one time during a game. The player for whom the pinch-runner runs is not subject to removal from the lineup. If the pinchrunner remains in the game as a substitute defensive or offensive player, the player may not be used again as a pinch-runner while in the batting order. However, if removed for another substitute that player or any player not in the line-up, is again eligible to be used as a pinch-

runner. A local league may adopt Tournament Rule 3(d) for 7.14. **NOTE: Does not apply if the local league adopts the continuous batting order. See Rule 4.04.**

**(b) Courtesy Runner:** A local league may permit a “courtesy runner” for the catcher and/or pitcher of record when there are two (2) outs. A player whose name is on the team’s batting order may not become a substitute runner for another member of the team. Neither the pitcher or the catcher is subject to removal from the line-up. The same courtesy runner may not run for both the pitcher and the catcher at any time during the game. A courtesy runner must be reported to the plate umpire. **Exception:** If the continuous batting order is used, the “courtesy runner” may be in the team’s batting order and must be the player in the batting order who made the last out.

**7.15 Procedures for Use of a Double First Base:** The double base may be used for first base only. The base must be rectangular, with two sides not less than 14 inches and not more than 15 inches, and the other two sides not less than 29 inches and not more than 30 inches. The longer sides shall face toward home plate and the right field corner. The outer edges shall not be more than two and one-fourth (2¼) inches thick, filled with soft material, and covered with canvas or rubber. Half the base shall be white (entirely over fair territory) and half shall be orange or green (entirely over foul territory). When using the double first base, the following rules must be observed:

**(a)** A batted ball that hits the white section of the double base shall be declared fair. A batted ball that hits the colored (orange or green) section without first touching or bounding over the white section shall be declared foul.

**(b)** Whenever a play is being made on the batter-runner, the defense must use the white section of the double first base.

**NOTE 1:** A play is being made on the batter-runner when he/she is attempting to reach first base while the defense is attempting to retire him/her at that base.



**NOTE 2:** If there is a play on the batter-runner, and the batter-runner touches only the white portion and the defense appeals prior to the batter-runner returning to first base, it is treated the same as missing the base.

**PENALTY:** Batter-runner is out.

**(c)** Whenever a play is being made on the batter-runner, the batter-runner must use the colored (orange or green) section on his/her first attempt to tag first base.

**NOTE:** On extra-base hits or other balls hit to the outfield when there is no chance for a play to be made at the double first base, the batter-runner may touch either the white or colored (orange or green) section of the base. Should, however, the batter-runner reach and go beyond first base, he/she may only return to the white section of the base.

**PENALTY:** If there is a play on the batter-runner, and the batter-runner touches only the white portion and the defense appeals prior to the batter-runner returning to first base, it is treated the same as missing the base. If properly appealed, the batter-runner is out.

**(d)** When tagging up on a fly ball, the white section of the base must be used by the runner. One foot is permitted to extend behind or on the base into foul territory, as long as the front foot is touching the white section of the base.

**PENALTY:** If properly appealed, runner is out.

**(e)** When leaving base on a pitched ball in **Little League (Major) and below**, the runner must maintain contact with the white section of the base until the ball has reached the batter. Runners may extend a foot behind the white portion of the base, but must maintain contact with the white section until the ball has reached the batter.

**PENALTY:** See Rule 7.13.

**(f)** On an attempted pick-off play, the runner must return to the white section of the base only. This includes a throw from the pitcher, catcher, or any other player, in an attempt to retire the runner at the double first base.

**(g)** In **Majors, Intermediate (50-70) Division, Junior, and Senior League** divisions, when the batter becomes a runner on a third strike not caught by the catcher, the batter-runner and the defensive player may use either the colored (orange or green) or the white section.

**(h)** Use of the double first base does not change any other rule concerning interference or obstruction at first base. (An errant throw into the three-foot running lane could still result in an obstruction call. Also, the batter-runner must still avoid interference with the fielder attempting to field a batted ball.)

# Rule 8.00 – The Pitcher

**8.01** Legal pitching delivery. There are two legal pitching positions, the Windup Position and the Set Position, and either position may be used at any time. Pitchers shall take signs from the catcher while standing on the pitcher's plate.

Pitchers may disengage the pitcher's plate after taking their signs but may not step quickly onto the pitcher's plate and pitch. This may be judged a quick pitch by the umpire. When the pitcher disengages the pitcher's plate, he/she must drop the hands to the sides.

**(a)** The Windup Position. The pitcher shall stand facing the batter, the pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate, and the other foot free. From this position any natural movement associated with the delivery of the ball to the batter commits the pitcher to pitch without interruption or alteration. The pitcher shall not raise either foot from the ground, except that in the actual delivery of the ball to the batter, said pitcher may take one step backward, and one step forward with the free foot. From this position the pitcher may:

**(1)** deliver the ball to the batter, or

**(2)** step and throw to a base in an attempt to pick-off a runner, or

**(3)** disengage the pitcher's plate. In disengaging the pitcher's plate, the pitcher must step off with the pivot foot and not the free foot first. The pitcher may not go into a set or stretch position. If the pitcher does, it is an illegal pitch [a balk in **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League**].

**NOTE:** When a pitcher holds the ball with both hands in front of the body, with the pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate, and the other foot free, that pitcher will be considered in a Windup Position.

**(b)** The Set Position. Set Position shall be indicated by the pitcher when that pitcher stands facing the batter with the pivot foot in contact with, and the other foot in front of, the pitcher's plate, holding the ball in both hands in

front of the body and coming to a complete stop. From such Set Position the pitcher may deliver the ball to the batter, throw to a base, or step backward off the pitcher's plate with the pivot foot. Before assuming the Set Position, the pitcher may elect to make any natural preliminary motion such as that known as "the stretch." But if the pitcher so elects, that pitcher shall come to the Set Position before delivering the ball to that batter.

**NOTE:** In Little League (Major) and below the pitcher need not come to a complete stop. **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League:** the pitcher must come to a complete and discernible stop.

**(c)** At any time during the pitcher's preliminary movements and until the natural pitching motion commits that pitcher to the pitch, said pitcher may throw to any base provided the pitcher steps directly toward such base before making the throw. The pitcher shall step "ahead of the throw." A snap throw followed by the step toward the base is an illegal pitch [a balk in **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League**]. (See Penalty for illegal pitch/balk under Rule 8.05.)

**(d)** If the pitcher makes an illegal pitch with the bases unoccupied, it shall be called a ball unless the batter reaches first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter, or otherwise. A ball which slips out of the pitcher's hand and crosses the foul line shall be called a ball; otherwise it will be called "no pitch" without runners on base, and an illegal pitch [a balk in **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League**] with runners on base. (See Penalty for illegal pitch under Rule 8.05.)

**(e)** If the pitcher removes the pivot foot from contact with the pitcher's plate by stepping backward with that foot, that pitcher thereby becomes an infielder and in the case of a wild throw from that position, it shall be considered the same as a wild throw by any other infielder.

**(f)** A pitcher must indicate visually to the Umpire-in-Chief, the batter, and any runners the hand with which he/she intends to pitch, which may be done by wearing his/her glove on the other hand while touching the pitcher's plate. The pitcher is not permitted to pitch with the other hand until the batter is retired, the batter becomes a runner, the inning ends, the batter is substituted for by a pinch-hitter, or the pitcher incurs an injury. In the event a pitcher switches pitching hands during an at-bat because he/she has suffered

an injury, the pitcher may not, for the remainder of the game, pitch with the hand from which he/she has switched. The pitcher shall not be given the opportunity to throw any preparatory pitches after switching pitching hands. Any change of pitching hands must be indicated clearly to the Umpire-in-Chief.

**(g) Tee Ball:** The pitcher shall keep both feet on the pitcher's plate until the ball is hit.

**8.02** The pitcher shall not –

**(a) (1)** bring the pitching hand in contact with the mouth or lips while in contact with the pitcher's plate. **EXCEPTION:** The pitcher may bring the hand in contact with the mouth or lips while in the 10-foot circle **(Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior:** 18-foot circle) surrounding the pitcher's plate provided he/she distinctly wipes off the pitching hand before contacting the ball.

**PENALTY:** For violation of this part of the rule the umpires shall immediately call a ball and warn the pitcher that repeated violation of any part of this rule can cause the pitcher to be removed from the game. However, if the pitch is made and a batter reaches first base on a hit, an error, a hit batter, or otherwise, and no other runner is put out before advancing at least one base, the play shall proceed without reference to the violation.

**(2)** apply a foreign substance of any kind to the ball;

**(3)** expectorate on the ball, either hand or the glove;

**(4)** rub the ball on the glove, person, or clothing;

**(5)** deface the ball in any manner; or

**(6)** deliver what is called the "shine" ball, "spit" ball, "mud" ball, or "emery" ball. The pitcher is allowed to rub off the ball between the bare hands;

**PENALTY:** For violation of any part of Rules 8.02(a)(2) through (6) the umpire shall: Call the pitch a ball and warn the pitcher. If a play occurs on the violation, the manager of the offense may advise the plate umpire of acceptance of the play. (Such election must be made immediately at the end of play.)

**NOTE:** A pitcher may use a rosin bag for the purpose of applying rosin to the bare hand or hands. Neither the pitcher nor any other player shall dust the ball with the rosin bag; neither shall the pitcher nor any other player be permitted to apply rosin from the bag to their glove or dust any part of the uniform with the rosin bag.

**(b)** Intentionally delay the game by throwing the ball to players other than the catcher, when the batter is in position, except in an attempt to retire a runner, or commit an illegal pitch for the purpose of not pitching to the batter (i.e. intentional walk, etc.)

**PENALTY:** If, after warning by the umpire, such delaying action is repeated, the pitcher can be removed from the game.

**(c)** Intentionally pitch at the batter. If in the umpire's judgment, such violation occurs, the umpire shall warn the pitcher and the manager of the defense that another such pitch will mean immediate expulsion of the pitcher. If such pitch is repeated during the game, the umpire shall eject the pitcher from the game.

**8.03** When a pitcher takes a position at the beginning of each inning, that pitcher shall be permitted to pitch not to exceed eight preparatory pitches to the catcher, or other teammate acting in the capacity of catcher, during which play shall be suspended. Such preparatory pitches shall not consume more than one minute of time. If a sudden emergency causes a pitcher to be summoned into the game without any opportunity to warm up, the Umpire-in-Chief shall allow the pitcher as many pitches as the umpire deems necessary.

**8.04** When the bases are unoccupied, the pitcher shall deliver the ball to the batter within 20 seconds after the pitcher receives the ball. Each time the pitcher delays the game by violating this rule, the umpire shall call "Ball."

**NOTE:** The intent of this rule is to avoid unnecessary delays. The umpire shall insist that the catcher return the ball promptly to the pitcher, and that the pitcher take a position on the pitcher's plate promptly.

**8.05** With a runner or runners on base, it is an illegal pitch – Major/Minor League [a balk in **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League**] when –

- (a) the pitcher, while touching the plate, makes any motion naturally associated with the pitch and fails to make such delivery;
- (b) the pitcher, while touching the plate, feints a throw to first base and fails to complete the throw;
- (c) the pitcher, while touching the plate, fails to step directly toward a base before throwing to that base;
- (d) the pitcher, while touching the plate, throws, or feints a throw to an unoccupied base, except for the purpose of making a play;

(e) the pitcher makes a quick pitch; Umpires will judge a quick pitch as one delivered before the batter is reasonably set in the batter's box. **NOTE:** Rule 8.05(e) is an illegal pitch (Rule 2.00). **Little League (Major)/Minor League:** The penalty for Rule 8.05(e), regardless of whether there are runners present or not, is a ball. This is an instance in which an illegal pitch, by Little League (Major)/Minor League definition, can occur without runners on base. **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League:** With runners on base, Rule 8.05(e) is penalized with a balk; with no runners on base, Rule 8.05(e) is penalized with a ball. (See exceptions in "PENALTY.")

- (f) the pitcher delivers the ball to the batter while not facing the batter;
- (g) the pitcher makes any motion naturally associated with the pitch while not touching the pitcher's plate;

**NOTE:** Rule 8.05(g) is an illegal pitch (Rule 2.00). **Little League (Major)/Minor League:** The penalty for Rule 8.05(g), regardless of whether there are runners present or not, is a ball. This is an instance in which an illegal pitch, by Little League (Major)/Minor League definition, can occur without runners on base. **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League:** With runners on base, Rule 8.05(g) is penalized with a balk; with no runners on base, Rule 8.05(g) is penalized with a ball. (See exceptions in "PENALTY.")

- (h) the pitcher unnecessarily delays the game;
- (i) the pitcher, without having the ball, stands on or astride the pitcher's plate

or while off the plate feints a pitch;

**(j)** the pitcher, while touching the plate, accidentally or intentionally drops the ball;

**(k)** the pitcher, while giving an intentional base on balls, pitches when the catcher is not in the catcher's box;

**(l) Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League only:** The pitcher, after coming to a legal position, removes one hand from the ball other than in an actual pitch, or in throwing to a base;

**(m) Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League only:** The pitcher delivers the pitch from the set position without coming to a stop.

**NOTE 1: Little League (Major) and Minor League – 8.05(l) and 8.05(m)** shall not be enforced at any time.

**NOTE 2:** A batter hit by a pitch shall be awarded first base without reference to the illegal pitch.

**PENALTY FOR AN ILLEGAL PITCH: Little League (Major)/Minor League:** The ball is dead and no runners will advance. The pitch shall be called a ball even if the pitch is not actually thrown. **EXCEPTION:** If the delivered and a play follows the illegal pitch, the play shall be allowed to continue as a delayed dead ball. Upon completion of the play, the manager of the offense may advise the plate umpire of a decision to decline the illegal pitch penalty and accept the play. Such election shall be made immediately at the end of the play. However, if the batter hits the ball and reaches first base safely, and if all base-runners advance at least one base on the action resulting from the batted ball, the play proceeds without reference to the illegal pitch.

When an illegal pitch is called, regardless of whether the pitch is completed or not by the pitcher, a pitch will always be charged to the pitcher's pitch count. (Rule 2.00 Definitions: Pitch)

**NOTE:** Under no circumstances shall a balk be called in Little League (Major) or Minor League.



**PENALTY FOR A BALK:** The balk applies only to **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League**. The ball is dead, and each runner shall advance one base without liability to be put out unless the batter reaches first on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter, or otherwise, and all other runners advance at least one base in which case the play proceeds without reference to the balk. When a balk is called and the pitch is delivered it will be considered neither a ball nor strike unless the pitch is ball four (4) awarding the batter first base and forcing all runners on base to advance.

When a balk is called, if the pitch is delivered, a pitch shall be charged against the pitch count regardless of whether the batter put the pitch into play. However, on a balk that is called on a pickoff attempt or in an instance that the pitcher does not deliver the pitch, no pitch shall be charged to the pitch count.

**NOTE:** Umpires should bear in mind that the purpose of the balk rule is to prevent the pitcher from deliberately deceiving the base runner. If there is doubt in the umpire's mind, the "intent" of the pitcher should govern. However, certain specifics should be borne in mind:

(1) Straddling the pitcher's plate without the ball is to be interpreted as intent to deceive and ruled a balk.

(2) With a runner on first base and the runner attempting to steal second, the pitcher may make a complete turn, without hesitating toward first, and throw to second. This is not to be interpreted as throwing to an unoccupied base.

A.R. 1 – If the pitcher violates (a) through (m) in this rule and throws wild to a base, the runner or runners may advance at their own risk. (Delayed dead ball.)

A.R. 2 – A runner who misses the first base to which that runner is advancing and who is called out on appeal shall be considered as having advanced one base for the purpose of this rule.

**8.06** This rule, which applies to each pitcher who enters a game, governs the visits of the manager or coach to the pitcher **at the mound**.

**(a)** A manager or coach may come out once (**Minor Division:** twice) in one inning to visit with the pitcher, but the second time (**Minor Division:** third time) out, the player must be removed as a pitcher.

**Example:** If a manager visits Pitcher A once in the first inning, then makes a pitching change in the same inning, Pitcher B would be allowed one visit in that inning before being removed on the second visit.

**(b)** A manager or coach may come out twice (**Minor Division:** three times) in one game to visit with the pitcher, but the third time (**Minor Division:** fourth time) out, the player must be removed as a pitcher.

**Example:** If a manager visits Pitcher A twice in the first three innings, then makes a pitching change in the fourth inning, Pitcher B would be allowed two visits in that game before being removed on the third visit, subject to the limits in (a) above.

**NOTE:** A pitcher moving to a different position and returning as the pitcher of record shall retain the number of visits from their previous appearance as pitcher. To calculate the number of visits for a pitcher, all visits, regardless of the pitcher being removed and returned to the pitcher's position, shall be applied.

**(c)** A manager or coach may confer with any other player(s), including the catcher, during the visit with the pitcher. A manager or coach who is granted a time out to talk to any defensive player will be charged with a visit to the pitcher.

A.R. 1 – When a manager requests timeout to make a pitching change, it shall not be considered a visit to the pitcher provided the manager makes the pitching substitution prior to speaking to any defensive player. Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior: This applies when a pitcher moves to another position and returns as a pitcher later in the same game.

A.R. 2 – A conference with the pitcher or any other fielder to evaluate the player's condition after an injury shall not be considered a visit for the purposes of this rule. The manager or coach should advise the umpire of such a conference, and the umpire should monitor the conference.

# Rule 9.00 – The Umpire

**9.01 (a)** The league president shall appoint one or more adult umpires to officiate at each league game. The umpire shall be responsible for the conduct of the game in accordance with these official rules and for maintaining discipline and order on the playing field during the game.

**NOTE 1:** Plate umpire must wear mask, shin guards, and chest protector. Male umpire must wear protective cup.

**NOTE 2:** It is highly recommended all umpires attach a “dangling” type throat protector to their mask.

**(b)** Each umpire is the representative of the league and of Little League International, and is authorized and required to enforce all of these rules. Each umpire has authority to order a player, coach, manager, or league officer to do or refrain from doing anything which affects the administering of these rules and to enforce the prescribed penalties.

**(c)** Each umpire has authority to rule on any point not specifically covered in these rules.

**(d)** Each umpire has authority to disqualify any player, coach, manager, or substitute for objecting to decisions or for unsportsmanlike conduct or language, and to eject such disqualified person from the playing field. If an umpire disqualifies a player while a play is in progress, the disqualification shall not take effect until no further action is possible in that play.

**NOTE:** The local league has the option to adopt this rule application. The stealing and relaying of signs to alert the batter of pitch selection and/or location is unsportsmanlike behavior. If, in the judgment of the umpire, this behavior is occurring, the team manager and those responsible including any player(s) and/or coach(es) shall be warned after the first offense. Those responsible including any player(s), coach(es), and/or manager shall be ejected from the game for a team’s subsequent offense.

**(e)** A manager, coach, or player shall not leave their position in the field or bench area during a fight or physical confrontation; a manager or coach who attempts to prevent a fight or restore order, in the umpire's judgment, is not in violation of this rule.

**PENALTY:** The umpire shall eject the offender(s) from the game immediately. Failure to comply with the ejection may result in the umpire suspending the game and referring it to the Board of Directors for further action.

**(f)** All umpires have authority at their discretion to eject from the playing field (1) any person whose duties permit that person's presence on the field, such as ground crew members, photographers, newsmen, broadcasting crew members, etc., and (2) any spectator or other person not authorized to be on the playing field.

**(g)** Umpires may order both teams into their dugouts and suspend play until such time as league officials deal with unruly spectators. Failure of league officials to adequately handle an unruly spectator can result in the game remaining suspended until a later date.

**9.02 (a)** Any umpire's decision which involves judgment, such as, but not limited to, whether a batted ball is fair or foul, whether a pitch is a strike or a ball, or whether a runner is safe or out, is final. No player, manager, coach, or substitute shall object to any such judgment decisions.

**(b)** If there is reasonable doubt that any umpire's decision may be in conflict with the rules, the manager may appeal the decision and ask that a correct ruling be made. Such appeal shall be made only to the umpire who made the protested decision.

**(c)** If a decision is appealed, the umpire making the decision may ask another umpire for information before making a final decision. No umpire shall criticize, seek to reverse, or interfere with another umpire's decision unless asked to do so by the umpire making it.

**(d)** No umpire may be replaced during a game unless injured or ill.

**9.03 (a)** If there is only one umpire, that umpire must be an adult and shall have complete jurisdiction in administering the rules. This umpire may take any position on the playing field which will enable said umpire to discharge all duties (usually behind the catcher, but sometimes behind the pitcher if there are runners.)

**(b)** If there are two or more umpires, one shall be designated Umpire-in-Chief and the others field umpires or a plate umpire.

**(c)** The Umpire-in-Chief may be a plate umpire or a field umpire. The Umpire-in-Chief's duties, in addition to any field or plate duties, shall be to:

**(1)** take full charge of, and be responsible for, the proper conduct of the game;

**(2)** make all decisions except those commonly reserved for the other field umpires or plate umpire; and

**(3)** announce any special ground rules.

**(d)** 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 pregame 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.)

A.R. – The Game Coordinator should not interrupt or stop a game until all play and action ends. At that time, the Game Coordinator can alert the plate umpire to stop the game, and at that time enforce any part of 9.03(d).

**9.04 (a)** The plate umpire shall stand behind the catcher. **Exception: Local League Option:** The plate umpire may stand behind the pitcher. This umpire usually is designated as the Umpire-in-Chief. The plate umpire's duties shall be to:

- (1) call and count balls and strikes;
  - (2) call and declare fair balls and fouls except those commonly called by field umpires;
  - (3) make all decision on the batter except those specifically reserved to the Umpire-in-Chief, or field umpire;
  - (4) inform the official scorer of the official batting order, and any changes in the lineups and batting order, on request.
- (b) A field umpire may take any position on the playing field best suited to make impending decisions on the bases. A field umpire's duties shall be to:
- (1) make all decisions on the bases except those specifically reserved to the Umpire-in-Chief, or the plate umpire;
  - (2) take concurrent jurisdiction with the Umpire-in-Chief in calling "Time," illegal pitches, **Intermediate (50-70) Division/Junior/Senior League:**

balks, or defacement or discoloration of the ball by any player;

**(3)** aid the Umpire-in-Chief in every manner in enforcing the rules, excepting the power to forfeit the game, shall have equal authority with the Umpire-in-Chief in administering and enforcing the rules and maintaining discipline.

**(c)** If different decisions should be made on one play by different umpires, the Umpire-in-Chief shall call all the umpires into consultation, with no manager or player present. After consultation, the Umpire-in-Chief shall determine which decision shall prevail, based on which umpire was in the best position and which decision was most likely correct. Play shall proceed as if only the final decision had been made.

**9.05 (a)** The umpire shall report to the league president within 24 hours after the end of a game all violations of rules and other incidents worthy of comment, including the disqualification of any manager, coach, or player, and the reasons therefore.

**(b)** When any manager, coach, or player is disqualified for a flagrant offense such as the use of obscene or indecent language, or an assault upon an umpire, manager, coach, or player, the umpire shall forward full particulars to the league president within 24 hours after the end of the game.

**(c)** After receiving the umpire's report that a manager, coach, or player has been disqualified, the league president shall require such manager, coach, or player to appear before at least three members of the Board of Directors to explain their conduct. In the case of a player, the manager shall appear with the player in the capacity of an advisor. The members of the Board present at the meeting shall impose such penalty as they feel is justified.

**NOTE:** The Board may impose such penalties that it feels are warranted, but may not lessen the requirements of Rule 4.07.

**9.06** Umpires shall not wear shoes with metal spikes or cleats.