

2023 NBLL Majors Rules

General Rules

- 1) A **regulation game** consists of 6 innings unless shortened by 1) an umpire decision due to light or weather or 2) mercy rule (15 run lead after 3 innings and 10 run lead after 4 innings).
 - a) See Rulebook Section 4.10-4.12 for shortened games.
- 2) There is no “run rule.” An inning must end with the defensive team getting 3 outs.
 - a) This will be reassessed over the first few weeks of the season and adjusted by the board if felt to be helpful for the players.
- 3) **Minimum playing time** for players is defined by the Little League Rulebook as at least 6 defensive outs and 1 at-bat, but NBLL requires that all players play a minimum of 3 full defensive innings.
 - a) No player shall sit out more than two consecutive innings in any regulation game, and no more than three total innings except for cases of illness, injury, or disciplinary action by the manager or umpire. An inning is defined as 3 outs by any team or the conclusion of the game by the winning run scored or the time limit being reached.
 - b) When a violation of the minimum play rule occurs, the offended player shall start the next scheduled game on defense, play any previous requirement not completed as well as the requirement for the current game prior to being removed.
 - c) For a 1st offense, a manager shall receive a written warning.
 - d) For a 2nd offense the manager shall be suspended for the next scheduled game.
 - e) For a 3rd offense a manager shall be suspended for the remainder of the season.
 - f) If the violation was deemed to be intentional, the NBLL Board of Directors may assess a more severe penalty, but forfeiture of a game may not be invoked.
- 4) A **continuous batting order** shall be used, which includes all players on the roster present for the game.
 - a) Players arriving after submission of the lineups shall be placed in the order after the last player named in the batting order.
 - b) If a player becomes injured, ill, or must leave the game site after the start of the game, the team will skip over his/her spot in the order without penalty.
 - c) If the injured, ill, or absent player returns they are reinserted into their original spot in the batting order.
 - d) A player may be entered and/or re-entered into the game defensively at any time with the exception of the pitcher.
- 5) NBLL recommends **heart guards** for all players during practices and games.
- 6) NBLL recommends **protective cups** for all boys during practices and games, and all male catchers must wear a protective cup.

Batting Rules

1. An **on-deck batter** is not permitted.
2. As of 1/1/18, **USABat Standard Bats** must be used.
 - a. <https://www.littleleague.org/playing-rules/bat-information/usa-baseball-bat-standard-faq/>

3. If the catcher **misses the 3rd strike**, the batter can attempt to advance to first unless it is occupied with less than 2 outs.

Base Running Rules

- 7) **Headfirst sliding** is not permitted into a base but is permissible for returning to a base. The runner shall be called out if he/she slides headfirst into a bag.
- 8) Runners may not **leave the base** until the pitched ball has “reached the batter.”
 - a) If the runner leaves the base early, and the ball is not hit, the play continues. If the runner is put out, then the runner is out. If not, the runner returns to the base previously occupied.
 - b) If the runner leaves the base early, and the ball is put into play, the play continues. If the runner is put out, then the runner is out. If not, the runner must return to the original base OR the nearest unoccupied base. When a runner leaves early, the batter may not advance beyond the “value of a hit ball.” The umpire determines whether the hit ball was a single, double, or triple (the batter may not advance on errors when a runner leaves early).
 - c) See Section 7.13 for examples.

Pitching Rules

- 9) Managers and coaches may warm up a pitcher on the mound (new in 2023). Players must wear a mask when catching behind the plate.
- 10) A pitcher is allowed up to 1 minute of warm-up time at the beginning of an inning. LL recommends up to 8 pitches in the first inning they’re throwing and 4-5 pitches in subsequent innings.
- 11) There is no **balk** at the Majors level.
 - a) If the ball slips out of the pitcher’s hand when there are no runners on base, it is considered “**no pitch**.”
 - b) If there are runners on base, it is an “**illegal pitch**” and is called a ball. Runners do not advance.
 - c) An illegal pitch counts as a pitch in the pitch count log.
 - d) See Rulebook Section 8.05 for examples of illegal pitches.
- 12) The **maximum number of pitches** is determined by league age (age as of August 31, 2023). Ages 11-12 can pitch a maximum of 85 pitches per day, and ages 9-10 can pitch a maximum of 75 pitches per day.
 - a) If the pitcher reaches the limit while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until 1) that batter reaches base, 2) that batter is retired, or 3) the third out is made to complete the half inning.
- 13) A player can not pitch in 2 games on the same day regardless of pitch counts.
- 14) Pitchers must adhere to the following **rest requirements**:
 - a) 66+ pitches = 4 calendar days of rest
 - b) 51-65 pitches = 3 calendar days
 - c) 36-50 pitches = 2 calendar days
 - d) 21-35 pitches = 1 calendar day
 - e) If a pitcher reaches the threshold during an at-bat, the pitcher may continue to pitch until 1) that batter reaches base, 2) that batter is retired, or 3) the third out is made to complete the half inning. The appropriate days of rest will be based upon the pitch count prior to that final at-bat.
- 15) A manager may ask for a time-out to **visit the pitcher** (or any defensive player). The pitcher must be removed for a 2nd visit in an inning and a 3rd visit in the game (assuming the same pitcher was in during all manager visits).

- 16) Any player who has played the position of **catcher** for 4 innings or more may not pitch. Any player who played catcher for 3 innings in a game may not pitch more than 20 pitches and later return to the catcher position.
- 17) Any player who pitches more than 40 pitches may not play catcher the remainder of the game.
- 18) Once a pitcher is removed he/she will not be able to return to the pitching position.