

## Capitol City Little League Baseball Local Rules Modified Spring 2024

As a constituent league of Little League, Capitol City Little League (CCLL or Cap City) follows the up-to-date version of Little League's Official Regulations and Playing Rules. These are available for free on the [Little League Rulebook Mobile App](#). CCLL also has in place a league [Safety Manual](#) and the following local rules that make limited modifications across our different baseball divisions.

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### **DIVISIONS OF PLAY and TEAMS**

Ages refer to League Age Determination. CCLL operates on an academic calendar in determining League Ages. i.e., the 2024 Baseball Age Chart is in effect for Cap City's Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 seasons.

**Tee Ball** also known as the **National Division** is for players 4-6 years old with an option for 7-year-olds. Players hit a ball off a batting tee. Rules of the game are varied to accommodate the need for teaching. A roster size of 8-10 players is recommended.

**Minor League Baseball** for Cap City includes three divisions.

- A Division a "Machine Pitch" Division for players aged 7-8. Players aged 5 and 6 with one season of Tee Ball experience may register for the A Division.
- AA Division is a "Modified Player Pitch" Division for players aged 8-10.
- AAA Division is a "Player Pitch" Division for players aged 9-11.

A roster of between 10 and 12 players per team is recommended.

**Little League Baseball** (also known as the **Majors Division**) is for players aged 10-12. A roster of between 10 and 12 players is recommended.

**Junior League Baseball** is for players aged 13-14. There may be opportunity for 15-year-olds to play in some circumstances. Rosters and division structure may be formatted at a size to accommodate the needs of the league and participants.

Every player league age 9 and higher who has played one spring season in the AAA or AA Division will be required to participate in tryouts held at the beginning of the fall season. Players eligible by age are subject to selection by draft to any Major team. Any player not drafted onto a Majors team will be eligible for the AAA draft. In limited circumstances, waivers may be granted for players to play down a division.

### **SCHEDULES, GAME LENGTHS, and RUN RULES**

The Majors and AAA Division for the regular spring season shall include no less than twelve games for each team. The regular spring season schedule for other divisions

and for all divisions in the fall season may include less than twelve games for each team.

**Tee Ball:** Games will last four innings or 70 minutes, whichever comes first.

**Minor and above:** Games will consist of six innings [**Junior:** seven innings], or meet a 1 hour and 45-minute time limit [**Junior:** 1 hour and 45-minute or 2 hour time limit based on field availability]. Any inning which has been started prior to the time limit expiring will be completed. A new inning will be considered to have started at the immediate completion of the previous inning. No new inning will begin once the time limit has expired.

All games other than tournament single-elimination games may end in a tie whether after six innings or upon reaching the applicable time limit .

No per-game run rule shall be used; if both teams wish to continue a game then it should continue. Modifications may be made to allow teams to continue playing such as refraining from stealing bases, batting from an alternate side of the plate, agreeing to declare a final score and moving on from a half inning while continuing to play.

As per Little League rules, there are no per inning run rules in the Juniors or Majors Division. There is an eight run limit per half inning run rule in the AAA division for all regular season games. There is no run limit for AAA playoff games. As per Little League rules, there is a 5 run per half inning run rule in Cap City's AA and A Division which will include all regular season and playoff games. There are no different run limit rules for the final or any inning in any division such as "unlimited runs," "trailing runs" or "grand slam rule." In Tee Ball, runs and outs are not tracked and every inning proceeds by each batter batting one time.

### **CONTINUOUS BATTING ORDER AND MANDATORY PLAY**

A continuous batting order shall always be used with all players batting and unlimited defensive substitutions. Players that arrive late are inserted at the end of the lineup. In the case of a player needing to depart the game early or miss their spot in the lineup for injury, their spot in the lineup may be skipped without penalty and they may return to the game, occupying their original spot in the batting order [**Tee Ball:** as each player will bat in every inning, the batting order should vary between innings to provide chances to occupy different places in the lineup].

No player will be asked to sit out from playing defense for a second inning until every other player on the team has sat out at least one inning.

All players should have the opportunity to play infield and outfield positions in each game. The younger the division, the greater the effort should be made to rotate players between several infield and outfield positions including pitcher and catcher.

## **NUMBER OF PLAYERS REQUIRED**

The game shall be played with nine players on defense [**A Division**: 10 players including one catcher and four outfielders, **Tee Ball**—see dedicated section].

A team may play with eight players. The opposing team may loan the shorthanded team an outfielder but is not required to do so. If a team has fewer than 8 players for a regular season game, the game should continue with loaned outfielder(s) and an out called at the end of the lineup – after the seventh and if necessary after the sixth spot in the lineup. If a team [not **A**, not **Tee Ball**] expects to have less than eight or nine players for their game, they should request fill-in players from the league’s pool of players as designated in Little League Regulation V(c). Pool players may be assigned from the requesting team’s division below or same division, with preference for the division below to allow younger players a chance to play up and to not unduly advantage the team that is short on players. The Player Agent must approve all substitute players.

## **POSTSEASON PLAYOFF FORMAT**

Division commissioners shall work with division coaches to determine spring playoff formats using the guidelines and rules below. Playoff games should utilize experienced umpires including an adult umpire where practicable with older divisions given priority. The fall season shall not include a postseason playoff.

**Tee Ball:** No playoff.

**AA Division and A Division:** It is recommended that a single-elimination format with optional consolation games be used with the aggregate rankings from a coaches poll (not standings) used to determine seeds. A 1 hour and 45 minute time limit may be imposed. The regular season 5-per-half-inning run rule will remain in effect.

**Majors and AAA Division:** It is recommended that a two-segment pool play format be used. In Segment 1, teams are divided into two or more pools with aggregate rankings from a coaches poll (not standings) used to determine seeds and create equitably distributed pools. No game time limit may be imposed. For pool play games, no more than six innings will be played (no extra innings). Each team in each of the pools should play the other teams in that pool once. One or more teams with the best record(s) in each pool will advance to a standard single-elimination format such that four semi-finalists are determined. If records within a pool are not decisive, tiebreaker procedures as outlined in Little League Rules Tournament Play Format: Section III and Section IV shall be used.

Playoff games postponed or suspended for weather, darkness, or another reason will commence at the exact point where the game was stopped. Roster rules and pitch limits as designated by Little League rules will apply.

Where practical, the division commissioner will impose pitcher day of rest restrictions so that one team does not benefit over others by circumstances of scheduling. For example, if one team is scheduled for a second game with zero days rest and one of their opponents is scheduled for a second game with one day rest, the commissioner may compel both teams to treat their second game as being played with zero days rest for purposes of pitcher availability.

During the playoffs, teams may only field players from their original roster and pool players from the division below in coordination with the Player Agent and division commissioner.

### **WEATHER DETERMINATIONS**

In the event of inclement weather, the managers for a given game in consultation with the Board and division commissioner, will decide whether their game is to be played or canceled. Efforts should be made to decide no less than two hours before game-time, recognizing that sometimes this is not possible and we do not want to cancel games prematurely. Once at the field advance of or during a game in progress, the managers in consultation with the umpire present will decide whether a game can be played or continued. If a game is postponed or canceled, the managers must immediately notify the Umpire-In-Chief.

### **ADDITIONAL RULES OF PLAY BY DIVISION**

All pitch count and catcher limit rules by age and days' rest thresholds as [prescribed by Little League](#) must be followed. The one CCLL local addendum to this is that pitchers in AAA and AA shall not pitch in more than three innings in one game.

#### ***JUNIORS***

- No modifications

#### ***MAJORS and below***

- No intentional walks
- It is the responsibility of the home team to set up the field including by dragging and lining the field if equipment is available
- Everyone should be familiar with the safety rules as outlined in the Little League Rules Appendix B - Safety Code for Little League "catcher's must wear catcher's helmet with face mask and throat guard, chest protector and shin guards. Male catchers must wear a protective supporter and cup at all times," (including in games and in warming up pitchers, and "except when runner is returning to a base, head first slides are not permitted."

#### ***AAA and below***

- No bunting. The batter must take a reasonably full swing at the ball

- No uncaught third strike rule
- Pitchers may not pitch more than three innings in one game
- The pitcher's plate may be affixed to flat ground if a suitable natural or manufactured pitcher's mound is not available

### ***AA Division***

- No infield fly rule
- Tee Ball bats and Softball bats may not be used
- Runners may only attempt to steal 2<sup>nd</sup> base and home. Stealing of 3<sup>rd</sup> base is not permitted.
- Runners may not advance on a throw or overthrow from the catcher to the pitcher on a pitched ball not put into play.
- The AA Division will use a Modified Kid Pitch Format in the regular season and playoff games. Once a four-ball count is reached, instead of a base on balls occurring, an offensive team coach will deliver hittable pitches to the batter. The intent of this format is to develop pitching skills and confidence while also increasing hitting and fielding opportunities rather than plodding games of "infinite walks."
  - If the count reaches four balls, play will be called dead and no runners nor the batter runner may advance. Runners also may not steal or advance on unhit coach pitches.
  - A coach from the hitting team will deliver up to four total overhand pitches to the batter from a spot of no more than ten feet in front of the pitcher's plate.
  - The umpire will not call balls and strikes on coach pitches.
  - If the batter fails to put a coach pitch into play before the limit of 4 is reached, they have struck out. If the last pitch results in a foul, the batter will continue the at bat. There is no limit on the number of foul balls.
  - The kid pitcher shall take up a defensive position to either side of the coach pitcher.
  - The coach pitcher must wear a fielder's glove to protect themselves while making every effort to avoid batted or thrown balls. A batted ball that hits the coach pitcher shall be declared dead and the pitch repeated.
  - The coach pitcher must make every effort to immediately exit the field of play once the ball is hit. If they are hit with a thrown ball, the umpire shall determine the fair outcome of the play.

### ***A Division***

- No infield fly rule
- No stealing of bases
- Tee Ball bats and Softball bats may not be used
- Only low compression "Level 5" baseballs should be used (balls stamped with "Minor League" under the Little League stamp).
- The player occupying the pitcher's position defensively should be positioned to the left or right of the pitching machine or coach pitcher. A player occupying the

catcher's position must wear full protective gear and can be accompanied by a coach to retrieve dead balls.

- The pitching machine will be set up with its rear leg just in front of the pitcher's plate. A ball bag should be kept behind—not to the side of—the machine.
- For each at bat, players are pitched up to 7 strikes or near strikes. A pitch will not count if it is not hit and not close to being a strike.
- In the regular season, the coach pitcher must deliver at least the first 4 strikes/near strikes via the machine.
- The final three strikes/near-strikes may be delivered by the machine or by coach pitch. Coach-delivered pitches must be delivered overhand from approximately 10 feet in front of the machine. Underhand pitches are not allowed. Kneeling or crouching is permitted.
- The goal of the division is to move towards 100% machine pitch as the season progresses.
- Pitches in playoff games may only be made from the machine.
- The coach pitcher must attempt to avoid any hit balls and must not play any role in fielding or catching. After a hit they should maintain their position or move off the field if in the line of play.
- A batted ball that hits the coach pitcher is a do-over. A batted ball that hits the pitching machine or the ball bag is considered a dead ball that results in one base for the batter and all runners.
- After a hit, the play is over once the ball has been returned or to the coach pitcher or player occupying the pitcher's position. If the intent of a fielder is to return the ball to these individuals or the pitching area but it is misplayed or misplayed, the play shall be over the same as if the pitcher caught the ball. A runner who is not at least halfway to a base when the play has ended must return to the previous base.
- On a batted ball that does not leave the infield dirt, the runners and batter runner may not attempt to advance more than one base from the base occupied at the time of the pitch.
- A ball that reaches the running track at Lafayette is an automatic home run.
- Official umpires are not used in the A Division regular season but may be used in the playoffs. Thus, coaches should take responsibility to make umpiring calls at the games.
- The coach pitcher should make decisions on whether pitches are strikes/near strikes, plays at home plate, whether batted balls around home plate are fair or foul, and whether a runner is safe or out if a base coach requests their assistance. The third base coach should make safe/out calls at 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base and on foul calls down the 3<sup>rd</sup> base line. The first base coach should make safe/out calls at 1<sup>st</sup> base and foul calls down the 1<sup>st</sup> base line.
- With the absence of a third-party umpire, any call can be deferred to another coach of either team that had a better view with the objective of coming to the right call in an agreeable manner.

**National Division (Tee Ball)**

- Cap City encourages the use of the Little League's official, free 10-week [Tee Ball Curriculum](#) in facilitating practices and games.
- Teams are encouraged to have one weekly practice. Some teams choose to practice only before their games. A weekday practice is encouraged to be able to follow the Curriculum and afford enough time for practice and scheduled games with enough time to focus on each separately.
- Teams/fields will be furnished with a bat and official tee balls that have soft sponge rubber cores.
- As bases at Cap City's fields used for tee ball are not affixed to the ground, they may be set up in a 50-foot square position (bases placed 50 feet apart instead of 60 feet).
- There are no outs and no keeping score. Every runner should cross the plate each at bat. Baseball plays should be attempted with defensive players recognized for achieving an "out" but with the offensive player remaining on base if they want.
- All batters will hit off a league-provided tee. The policy is Tee Ball=Use the Tee. This allows for games to move much more efficiently than using coach pitch, allowing for more innings and at bats per player.
- As the season progresses, a coach may deliver a limited number of pitches (approximately four) to advanced players that are ready to try to hit coach pitches before employing the tee.
- A batted ball shall be declared foul if it lands in foul territory or does not travel beyond a 10-foot arc in fair territory. This is approximately the dirt area from home plate to the start of the infield grass.
- The ball is declared dead if the tee is hit.
- A player shall bat until they have successfully hit the ball into play (no strikeouts).
- All players present will play the field during their team's defensive half innings. Five shall occupy the infield at P, 1B, 2B, 3B, and SS. All other players shall play outfield positions taken up behind the baselines. It is a good practice to invite players to make extra throws after the play is over and rotate positions part way through an inning to keep players engaged.
- There is no minimum number of players needed to play a game (i.e. it is okay and perhaps ideal to play a game with 4 or 5 players per side).
- The defense shall attempt to make a baseball play at a level appropriate to the players.
- There shall be no tagging of a batter runner advancing to first base; instead a put out should be attempted by throwing to first base.
- On a batted ball that stays in the infield, players may only advance one base. There is no advancing on an overthrow.
- On a batted ball to the outfield grass, runners may advance until the ball is returned to the infield dirt.
- On the final at bat of each half inning, the runner and batter runner shall cycle all remaining bases to score.

- An offensive coach should place the ball on the tee, assist the batter, remove the tee for runners advancing home, and coach 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base. Defensive coaches can take positions in the field to instruct players but may not wear a glove or make plays on the ball.
- Coaches from both teams are responsible for working together to maintain the flow and goodwill spirit of the game.

### **Little League Sportsmanship and Decorum**

Little League International and all of its local leagues including Cap City promote and expect good sportsmanship by its players, coaches, volunteers, league officials, parents/guardians/family members, and spectators. Support in a positive manner of and among participants and officials is vital. The actions of all must be above reproach. Any player, manager, coach, umpire or league representative who is involved in a verbal or physical altercation, or an incident of unsportsmanlike conduct, at the game site or any other Little League activity, is subject to disciplinary action by the CCLL Board of Directors. All league participants are bound by Cap City's [Code of Conduct](#).