

**West Allegheny Baseball League
Instructional League (8U) Rules
2014**

1. Visiting team has third base bench, and home team has first base bench.
2. Field should be dragged (if necessary) and lined. Bases will be 60 feet apart. A pitchers circle 10 feet in diameter will be put around the pitcher's mound. The center of the circle will be 40 feet from home plate.
3. Visiting team should take the field for warm-ups from 5:30 to 5:45. Home team from 5:45 to 6:00.
4. Home team will supply two (2) NEW balls for the game. We will use a RIF 5 ball when players pitch and the Wilson 1074 baseball when the coaches pitch.
5. Selecting Umpires: Each team is responsible for providing a volunteer umpire for each game, both home and away. Please make an effort to determine your umpire before coming to the game. Both managers must agree upon selection of the umpires.
6. Five minutes before game time, managers, coaches, and both umpires should meet to:
 - a. Go over the rules that are tailored to our league.
 - b. Be sure they know the rules on base running, i.e. leaving the base early, halfway marks etc.
 - c. Check outfield conditions and decide whether the ground rule double will apply.
 - d. Decide responsibilities of each umpire.
7. Home and Visitors must have a scorekeeper. They will confirm with each other at the end of each inning.
8. Must use official little league sanctioned bats. No composite barrel bats or big barrel bats allowed.

Batting/Baserunning

1. Continuous batting order. Line-up will include all players dressed for the game whether or not players are scheduled to play in the field (defense) in that inning.
2. During coach-pitch, batters receive only seven total pitches. (Exceptions apply only on interference calls or a fouled seventh pitch.) The batter must swing at the seventh pitch or be called out. Umpires will not call balls or strikes. There are no walks.
3. During kid-pitch, normal baseball rules apply regarding balls and strikes. Umpires will call balls and strikes. Walks and strikeouts are possible.
4. Sliding is allowed but not mandatory. For player safety, feet-first base sliding is permitted and HIGHLY ENCOURAGED.
5. Runners must stay on base until the ball is hit. Penalty: 1st offense –umpire issues a team warning. 2nd offense – the player is out (dead ball, no pitch).
6. Batter may not throw the bat. 1st offense –umpire issues a team warning. 2nd offense – the batter is out (dead ball- no pitch).
7. Coaches may not physically assist or restrain base runners. If interference occurs, base runner is out and play is dead.
8. Put outs are permitted at home plate at all times. Runners must attempt to avoid contact during plays at home plate or the player will be called out.
9. Bunting is not allowed.
10. Runners may not deliberately or recklessly collide with a fielder. If a fielder is blocking the runner's path (without having the ball), the runner is entitled to the base rather than pushing the defender away. However, if the fielder has the ball or is awaiting a thrown ball, the runner must avoid the fielder. If the runner interferes with the fielder while making a play, the interfering runner is out.
11. If a team scores six runs in an inning, the inning is over and the teams switch. Additional runs scoring on the last play of the inning will count. This rule does not apply in the 6th inning or extra innings.
12. In case of an injured or ill batter, remove the batter from the line-up without penalty until such time that the player is fit to return.
13. Runners may tag up at their own risk (one base) on balls caught in the outfield grass.

Defense

1. Each player must play in the field (defense) for at least four (4) innings. Exceptions only apply if player is injured or ill. Rotating players through different positions is highly encouraged.
2. Ball is dead and play stops when any of the following occur:
 - a. There is an overthrow to 1st base by an infielder.
 - b. On a ball not leaving the infield, when all runners stop actively trying to advance.
 - c. On a ball hit to the outfield grass, the ball is returned to an infielder who possesses the ball with at least one foot on the infield dirt. Once possession is established, any runners not to the $\frac{3}{4}$ hash mark will be returned to previous base at the conclusion of the play. Infielders may however make plays on one such runner. Umpire will raise his hand but will not call "time" until runners have reached the next base safely or been thrown out. At that time runners who did not reach the $\frac{3}{4}$ hash mark will be granted safe return to the previous base.
 - d. After the infielders have made a play (by catching a fly ball or throwing to a base) on balls hit within the infield. (Note: infielders are allowed to attempt to make a double play on balls hit in the infield.) Runners may attempt to advance one base on overthrows from an infielder to 2nd base, 3rd base or home plate.
 - e. The ball is thrown, batted or kicked out of the field of play.
 - f. The ball is interfered with in any way. Umpire may award bases depending on circumstances.
3. Infield fly rule does not apply.
4. The defensive team may position one coach each in left field and one in right field.
5. Defensive team is to field ten (10) players. The positions are: pitcher, catcher, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd bases, shortstop, left fielder, left-center, right-center, and right fielder. Outfielders must be positioned in the grass.
6. 1st, 2nd, 3rd basemen and shortstop may not be positioned any closer to the batter than 4 feet in front of an imaginary line strung between bases.
7. There will be free substitutions for defensive positions between innings. No substitutions will be made during an inning except in case of an injury.

Pitching Rules

1. Players will pitch the third and fourth innings.
2. The pitching distance for players classified as 8-years-old is 40 feet. Seven-year-olds and younger pitch from 36 feet.
3. After four (4) consecutive walks or six total walks, a new pitcher must be brought in. If a pitcher is having problems throwing strikes, switch pitchers.
4. Only two (2) hit batters per pitcher and then the pitcher must be removed. This rule can be waived if both managers agree.
5. Any player on a team can pitch. A player is allowed a maximum of four innings pitched per week. There is a maximum of one inning per game per pitcher. One thrown pitch constitutes an inning pitched.
6. The youth pitcher must wear a heart guard at all times, even during coach pitch.
7. Manager (or coach) of the offensive team pitches to his batters, except 3rd and 4th innings. The coach pitcher must keep one foot inside the circle while pitching. The pitcher of the defensive team must also have at least one foot inside the circle until the ball is batted. The youth pitcher is not permitted to stand in front of the coach pitcher. The coach pitcher must make every effort to avoid touching a batted ball or affecting fielders' abilities to make plays. Interference will result in a dead ball and no pitch. (Playoffs only: The umpire may rule the batter out (dead ball) if the coach pitcher does not actively try to avoid interference.)
8. Strike zone for kid-pitch is from the batter's chin to the bottom of his knees and a ball's width on either side of home plate.

Managers Responsibilities

1. Home team is responsible to prep and line field and place bases. (Managers will get a key or combo # to equipment shed and concession stand)
2. Home team is responsible to man concession stand.
3. Home team is responsible for cleaning up field and concession stand.

Each association must split their rosters as evenly as possible regarding ages and abilities. Each association will setup their own rules for drafting. WABL has the right to make Associations even out teams, if the rest of the league feels that a team does not comply with this rule.

Umpire's Duties

Umpires have the right to eject any player, coach, manager, spectator or team for using profane or abusive language, unsportsmanlike conduct, or deliberate badgering. Offenders must leave the field and spectator area prior to play resuming.

Note: The procedure for ejection will be as follows:

1. First, warn the offenders that you have the right to eject them if they continue the offense.
2. If they continue ask them to leave the park or face forfeiture.
3. If they refuse to leave the park, the police will be summoned.

Coaches may calmly request explanations of umpire rulings but may NOT argue judgment calls. Please remember that our families are all watching!

Judgment calls by the umpire are final.

Postponements

1. If a team is unable to field at least eight (8) players for a scheduled game, that team's manager must notify the other manager at least three (3) days before the game and reschedule ASAP.
2. If a team manager wishes to reschedule for any other reason, he must still notify within three (3) days but it will be up to the other manager to grant or reject his request.
3. Rainouts and darkness:
 - a. At first sign of visible lightening or fast approaching storm, umpires will suspend play.
 - b. If four (4) complete innings have been played (or home team is ahead after 3 ½ innings) and poor weather is persistent, the game will end and not be rescheduled or completed at a later date.
 - c. Managers or umpires may temporarily suspend play due to inclement weather if it appears that play may be resumed within 30 minutes maximum.
4. If one team shows up with only eight (8) players, they may play 8 against 10. The team with eight players will play without a catcher and only 3 outfielders. If one team shows up with only seven (7) or less players and no prior notice was given to the other team, the team with fewer players loses by forfeiture but game should still be played by borrowing players until teams are even.
 - a) With 9 player active roster, teams must use a catcher.
 - b) An un-rostered player (i.e. coach, older player) not called up from a lower age level may not participate in making an out.

These rules are as complete and accurate as possible. However, when situations arise that are not specifically covered by the Little League rules or our special rules, settle them within the spirit of these rules. If a dispute arises and a mutual agreement cannot be made, take the play over rather than argue. The whole intention of this league is to teach fundamental baseball, teamwork, and above all, good sportsmanship. The youngsters learn a great deal by watching our behavior. With these goals in mind, this will be an enjoyable and rewarding season.