

Jimmy Fund Little League Program (West)

Farm Division

2014 Rules

Game Format and Coaching

1. Teams will keep score during games but will not report scores. We will not maintain standings.
2. Maximum of six innings per game, daylight permitting.
3. Half-inning ends after 3 outs or 5 runs, whichever comes first.
4. Home team may hire an umpire (typically a teen ump). Otherwise, a coach or parent from hitting team will stand behind catcher, acting as umpire. Please use umpires with confidence and vocal strength. [Note: if coaches and parents are uncomfortable standing behind the catcher, the coach on the mound (see item 5. below) may serve as umpire.]
5. Coach from fielding team will stand on the mound behind pitcher, pitching in relief as described below.
6. No other coaches are allowed on the field of play.
7. No new inning may start after 1 hour and 45 minutes from the first pitch of the game.
8. A parent or coach may stand at the back stop, field pitches that get by the catcher, and return them to the pitcher in order to maintain the pace of play.
9. Coaches from both teams should meet before the game to discuss basic rules and any unique circumstances. In all Rules matters, coaches should keep in mind that the Farm Division is an instructional league designed to provide a fun, learning experience for the players.
10. All teams must wear hats provided by the Jimmy Fund Little League Program.

Pitching

1. 6 balls to walk, 3 strikes to strike out.
2. The strike zone will be from the top of the shoulders to the top of the knees, and expanded by the width of one baseball off the outside (but not inside) edge of home plate. Any part of the pitched ball crossing any part of the strike zone shall be a strike.

3. When players pitch, they should be in contact with the pitching rubber, although those who need it may start from no closer than the landing hole on the mound. It is expected that the pitcher's manager will use good judgment in the spirit of safety and fair play.
4. Coaches should pitch overhand, from a reasonable location, and at a reasonable speed (try to throw pitches at the same speed as the kids), allowing the batter a fair chance to make contact.
5. When a player is pitching, he or she will pitch until reaching a count of 4 balls. At that point, the coach takes over as pitcher. If there are no strikes or one strike, then the coach will inherit the count. If there are two strikes, the coach will inherit the four balls but the number of strikes will be reduced to one. Coach pitches until the batter puts the ball in play, walks (6 balls), or strikes out (3 strikes, swinging or called). Player fields pitcher position.
6. To maintain the pace of play, it is recommended that a pitching change be made if the coach takes over for the same pitcher four (4) times during the same inning. Managers should use their best judgment in this regard. If replaced during an inning, the pitcher shall exchange positions with a player in the field or on the bench for the remainder of the inning.
7. All players should be qualified before pitching a game:
 - Ability to throw strikes (5 strikes out of 10 pitches is suggested)
 - Good pitching mechanics and pace.
 - Awareness and skill to play position safely.
8. A pitcher will pitch to no fewer than 3 batters, for no more than 6 outs in any game, and for no more than 9 outs in any calendar week (Monday through Friday), at the manager's discretion.

Batting

1. Every player present at the game will be placed in the batting order and will bat in turn. A player who arrives after the start of the game must be placed at the end of the batting order. The batting order can be revised for each game.
2. Batters may walk (6 balls) or strike out (3 strikes, called or swinging). The strike zone is as defined above.
3. If a batter is hit by a pitch, he or she has the choice of taking first or continuing at bat.
4. No bunting allowed.
5. A maximum of 5 runs per team per inning is enforced, including the last inning.

Base Running

1. No leading or stealing, even after ball reaches the batter.
2. Runner may not advance on a wild pitch or passed ball.
3. Runner may only leave base when the ball is hit.
4. An “avoid collision” rule will be in effect to protect players from potentially injurious collisions on the base path. The basic rules are that fielders should not be in the runner’s way unless the fielder is in the act of fielding a batted ball, or the fielder could not catch a thrown ball unless he or she was in the base path. On tag plays, runners must avoid collision contact and interference by sliding or veering-off. If they need to veer-off more than 3 feet from their base path, they are out. A runner may be awarded a base if a fielder obstructs him. A runner may be declared “out” for causing an unnecessary collision – and benched for intent to injure. Refer such intentional incidents to the Commissioners.
5. Sliding is allowed, but headfirst sliding is not allowed.
6. On an overthrow to any base, the runner may advance one base at his or her own risk. During the same play, runner may not advance more than one base total (even if there is another overthrow on the play).
7. If ball is hit to the outfield (even on the ground), players can continue running the bases (no artificial restrictions).
8. Once the ball reaches the infield from the outfield, the runner is limited to going to the base to which he/she is running, and is not allowed to advance further.
9. No infield fly rule.

Fielding

1. 10 defensive players maximum are allowed on the field, but a normal infield must be used along with 4 outfielders.
2. Coaches must rotate players through the various defensive positions with consideration of a player’s safety (that is, taking care when assigning first base and catcher). No player should play the same position for more than 2 innings in any game. Every player should play in the infield for at least half the game.
3. No player will be allowed to sit out a consecutive defensive inning, unless injured. Unless absolutely necessary, no player should sit out more than one inning in a game.
4. Players should be qualified to play first base for safety and to keep the game moving.

5. Catchers must wear all provided equipment. As with pitchers and first base, catchers should be qualified. The key requirement is an ability to block most pitches and quickly return the ball to the pitcher, so as to keep the pace of the game moving.
6. Fielders should be taught to stay off the base if a runner is coming to the base and there is no play at the base. This avoids kids standing on the base while the ball is being chased in the outfield, thereby forcing the base runner to maneuver around them.