

Del Mar Little League

MACHINE PITCH / ROOKIE DIVISION RULES OF PLAY

OVERVIEW of DIVISION

The Rookie Division is the final instructional division before “player pitch” and it is guided by the philosophy that this is to be a fun and positive learning experience for players, as well as for parents and fans. Participants should remember to never criticize but to encourage players on both teams.

DEL MAR LITTLE LEAGUE RULES

As a general rule, the Rookie Division plays according to the ‘Official Regulations and Playing Rules for All Divisions of Little League Baseball’ also referred to as the ‘Green Book’ unless specified within this Rules handout. The following is a summary of the significant rules and procedures for the Del Mar Little League Rookie Division. For safety reasons and to encourage more opportunities for all players to participate, our Board has adopted additional rules of play and clarification to rules within the Green Book.

In addition to knowing the rules with the Green Book please be aware of our league rules before stepping on the field. Please also keep these rules with you during each game so as to avoid any confusion.

GAME PRELIMINARIES

- **Players and Positions:** Ten defensive players are on the field at one time. The positions are pitcher, catcher, first, second, third base and shortstop, left field, left-center field, right-center field and right field. All other players on team must remain in the dugout.
- **Game Length:** Game consists of up to six innings or 90 minutes. Managers may agree to play the next inning provided they can complete the game within the 90 minutes or they are in agreement to extend the game and running it longer will not compete with a later game or darkness. No new inning may start after 70 minutes of play.
- **Start Time:** All games must start on time. The times listed on the schedule are the scheduled field times. Games must start within 15 minutes of this time listed unless coordinated previously through the Division Coordinator. Teams should plan their arrival and warm-ups accordingly. If there not enough players after 15 minutes, the teams may elect to divide up the available players and begin play.
- **Baseballs:** Official Machine Pitch baseballs are used.

FIELD SETUP

- **Pitching Machines:** Both Managers from the day’s first game are responsible for setting up the pitching machine and lining the field. This will require extra time so please arrive early. A pitching machine should be available at each field. If no pitching machines are available, the Manager for each team will pitch to the their team from the front of the mound.
- Managers are responsible for “walking the field” to ensure it is free of debris and that there are no unsafe areas. If needed, place a cone or marker over hazardous areas.
- Home team is responsible for dragging the field prior to the game and setting up/returning the bases + pitching machine. Visiting team is responsible for dragging the field after the game and returning the bases + pitching machine.
- Home team responsible for testing pitching machine with visiting coach before game.
- Home team will occupy first base dugout. Away team will occupy third base side.



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- Please let parents know that they need to stay alert on these fields for foul balls and overthrows.

RULES of PLAY

Substitutions & Rotation of Players:

- Managers must rotate players, so no player plays more than one inning at any one position. (e.g. do not have the same player playing first base more than one inning.)
- Every player shall play in the infield a minimum of two-innings during a four-inning game, or a minimum of three-innings during a six-inning game.
- Substitutes will rotate each defensive inning so that no player sits out more than one inning in a row. All players must sit out one inning before any player sits out a second.

Batting:

- The coach or manager of the hitting team will feed the baseballs to the machine.
Important Note: No players or children can be allowed to feed balls or be near the machine. It is critical that the defensive player who is in the “pitcher” position stands well away from the machine and not attempt to field balls hit in the machine’s vicinity.
- A batting order consists of all players, regardless of whether or not the player is in a defensive position prior to batting in a particular inning. No batter may repeat their position in the batting order from game to game. Managers must rotate players in the batting order between games.
- End of Inning: The side is retired when 1) three outs are made by the defensive team or 2) when every offensive player has batted in the half-inning.
- There is no on deck batter. Players must come from the bench to the plate after play has stopped. Only the player at the plate can be holding a bat during games.
- There are no strikeouts or walks. Each batter must hit a fair ball during his/her at bat.
- If a batter has not hit a fair ball after 6 pitches, a batting tee or coach pitch should be used to allow a player a successful completion at bat.
 - The (6) machine pitch count should be strictly enforced, unless they hit a foul ball on their final pitch in which the batter will get an additional machine pitch.
 - If the batter does not hit the ball in play within the (6) machine pitch count, the Manager should bring out a batting tee.
 - Remember that there are 20+ other players waiting for action
- There is no bunting allowed.
- The infield fly rule will not be enforced.
- Bat or helmet throwing will not be tolerated. First offenses should result in a one on one talk between coach and player. A second offense results in the player missing his next at bat.

Base Running:

- Base runners must stay in contact with the base until the ball is hit. No leading off or stealing is allowed.
- Players may run until the ball is controlled by an infielder. Once it is controlled by an infielder, the runners must return to the closest base, even if it is behind them.
- Base runners may only take one base on an overthrow even if the ball remains in play (e.g. an overthrow to second base that goes into the outfield still allows the runner to only advance to third base).
- Infield hits advance runners one base unless there is an overthrow.
- Head-first sliding is NOT allowed.



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Defensive Positions:

- There are ten defensive players on the field at one time. The positions are pitcher, catcher, first, second, third base and shortstop, left field, left center field, right center field and right field. There is NO Rover position allowed.
- If more than ten players from a team are present, there must be players sitting on the bench each inning. Bench players must remain in the dugout.
- If there less than 9 players from one team, the teams may elect to divide up the available players or lend an offensive player to a team on defense.
- No player sits on the bench more than one inning in a row. All players shall sit out one inning before a player sits out a second inning.
- The pitcher must be positioned on either side of the pitching machine and in no event closer to the batter than the rear of the machine.
- All outfielders are to play on the outfield grass and NEVER make plays in the infield.
- A catcher must wear full protective gear including a cup.
- Prior to a batted ball the catcher must stand out of play, against the backstop where there is no danger of being hit by a pitched ball or thrown bat. The catcher may then come into position to be involved in the play once the ball is hit.
- A Manager may substitute freely. A defensive player must complete an inning to qualify as having played that position during a game.

Scoring:

- Scorebooks are not to be maintained. Informal scoring is not encouraged.
- There are no league standings and no playoffs.

GENERAL and ADMINISTRATIVE RULES

Team Rosters:

- A team shall consist of 11 or 12 players.
- A team reduced to less than 10 players will add player if there is one available. Players to be added to the team will be from the waitlist first and then from the Coach Pitch division if they are at least 7 years old and are willing to move up to the Rookie Division.
- All players must be at least 7 years old.

Equipment:

- The league will provide batting helmets, bats and balls for each game. Report damaged or missing equipment to the Division Coordinator as soon as possible.
- Each player should be in team jersey, cap and long pants (no shorts) for games.
- Jerseys must be tucked in and caps are required in the field.
- Cleats are recommended; however no metal cleats are allowed.
- All players are encouraged to wear an athletic cup. Cups are mandatory for those playing catcher.



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Safety:

- First Aid kits are stored in the large field box. Prior to start of a game, it is the responsibility of the home team Manager to confirm the First Aid Kit is present and accessible. If additional items are needed, please contact the league Safety Officer.
- Only Little League approved bats are allowed. No big barreled bats, only bats 2 5/8" inch in diameter that display a USA baseball mark may be used. No composite bats are allowed unless approved by Little League International.
A list of approved bats can be found at: <https://www.littleleague.org/playing-rules/bat-rules/>. Any player bringing his/her own bat must have documentation showing it is approved. No exceptions.
- No player is allowed to pick up a bat without wearing a helmet.
- All offensive players on the field of play must wear a helmet. The helmet must be worn until the player is behind the fence and back in the dugout.
- All equipment must be confined to the dugout area and cannot be stored along the fences within the field of play.
- Players must be taught to throw to another player only if that player is paying attention and looking for the throw.
- Managers must carry medical releases for all players at all times.
- An adult must be in the dugout at all times. His/her function is to keep players in batting order, maintain order, and most importantly ensure safety.
- Managers and coaches must strictly enforce all additional safety rules as define by Little League International and Del Mar Little League. Contact league Safety Officer for full information.
- Players may not leave the dugout or the field of play during the game. The only exception is to use the restroom or in the event of an injury.
- Except for coaches, parents, siblings or visitors are not allowed in the dugout or on the field/foul territory.

Rules Enforcement:

- Managers/coaches will be responsible for all on field rule enforcement as well as dugout rule enforcement.
- Register all formal complaints and problems to the Division Coordinator in writing (rookie@dml.org) with a copy to Del Mar Little League Board.

Umpires:

- Umpires are not used in this division. Rulings on the field are made by the managers/coaches.
- It is suggested that the manager/coach running the pitching machine make all the calls. Refer to base coach when needed. (Always show good sportsmanship.)

Behavior:

- The league will not tolerate any unsportsmanlike behavior by managers, coaches, players, or parents. This includes hitting, grabbing, pushing, swearing or any other behavior that disrupts the games. Disciplinary actions will be taken at the discretion of the Board of Directors.
- Under no circumstances shall managers, coaches, or other adults criticize any calls made during the game.
- Adults shall act as positive role models for players.

