



SLL Major League Rules 2019

Although the Major League baseball division is set up as a “competitive” league, the intent of Southborough Little League (SLL) is to ensure that participants play the game in an atmosphere that enhances their self-esteem and confidence. To that end, the teams should be composed of players of similar age and skill level.

At all times, please remember that the term “competitive” is intended to imply fair competition for the kids – not competition between the coaches and/or parents. Parents or coaches who observe behavior contrary to this guideline are encouraged to report the incident to the League management.

The SLL Major League Division follows the Official Little League Rulebook with the following local additions and/or exceptions.

Game Play

1. Games are 6 innings pending sufficient daylight and time.
2. No new inning shall be started after 2 hours unless there is no conflict with another game on that field and the umpire deems there is sufficient light to continue safely.
3. The half-inning ends when 3 outs are recorded **or 6 runs have scored**, whichever occurs first.
 - a. In the final inning, if the visiting team is losing by more than 6 runs, they may score as many runs as necessary to tie the game only. The home team can then win the game by scoring a run in the bottom half of the final inning.
 - b. In the final inning, if the home team is losing by more than 6 runs, they may score as many runs as necessary to tie the game only.
 - c. Games may go into extra innings so long as they do not violate Rules 1 and 2.
4. The mercy rule is waived. However, teams shall play with courtesy and be considerate of the opposing team in all games. To that end, when one team is ahead by 10 or more runs base runners for the leading team:
 - a. Are “frozen” and may only advance on a batted ball or when forced by a walk
 - b. May not steal or bunt
 - c. Are not permitted to advance to the next base on an overthrow
5. There will be no arguing with the umpires allowed under any circumstances by any player, coach, or fan. If any such incidents occur, the coach of the respective team will be warned (or, if appropriate in the discretion of the umpire, removed from the game and the field) to maintain control of the situation. Any further occurrences will result in forfeit of the team causing the problem.
6. Unsportsmanlike conduct and bullying will NOT be tolerated by any player, coach, parent, or fan under any circumstances. Please refer to the Southborough Public Schools Bullying



Prevention and Intervention Plan found on the SLL website:

(<https://s3.amazonaws.com/files.leagueathletics.com/Text/Documents/17246/94689.pdf>)

7. A team must have at least 8 players to start a game.
8. If a team has less than 10 players available to play a game, the team's head coach will have the right to request AAA "replacement" players to fill his/her roster to a maximum of 10 players. Managers are NOT allowed to select "replacement" players at their discretion but must contact the Player Agent who will obtain the replacement player/s based on the then-current "Majors Call Up" list first (which the Player Agent will maintain throughout the season) and if not successful, then another Majors Division player may be used. All replacement players must fulfill the fielding requirements of a Major League player. Under no circumstances shall a replacement player pitch any amount or catch for more than 2 inning. Also, the replacement player must be the same age or younger than the player being replaced, i.e. if replacing an 11 year old, the replacement player must be 11 or 10 and not 12.
9. HOME team uses the First Base dugout; VISITING team uses the Third Base dugout.
10. The HOME team has primary responsibility for readying the field for play. Pre-game preparation should include dragging/raking the infield and repairing any significant holes.
11. The VISITING team has primary responsibility for re-dragging the field after the game as well as covering the mound (with tarp depending on field) and locking the equipment sheds.
12. BOTH teams have the responsibility to clean their dugout areas after each game. All trash should be discarded appropriately, and hats, coats, water bottles, etc., should be removed.

A few field maintenance tips:

- * Do not rake standing water into the outfield or infield grass areas. This will only make it worse.
- * Be sure all deep holes (batter's box, pitcher's mound) are filled to where they are level with the ground around them.

Pitching

(Note: While the SLL Local Rules are generally additions or exceptions to the Official LL Rules, Pitching Rules 1-4 below are the Official LL Pitching Rules and are NOT exceptions. They are to be followed and are included here to insure all Coaches are aware of and adhere to them)

1. The manager must remove the pitcher when said pitcher reaches the pitch count limit for his/her age group as noted below:
 - a. 11-12 years-old: 85 pitches per day
 - b. 9-10 years-old: 75 pitches per day

EXCEPTION: If a pitcher reaches his/her pitch count limit while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until that batter's at-bat is complete.
2. All pitchers must comply with the following rest requirements:
 - a. If a player pitches 66 or more pitches in a day, four (4) calendar days of rest must be observed. (Monday pitcher cannot pitch again until Saturday)
 - b. If a player pitches 51-65 pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest must be observed. (Monday pitcher cannot pitch again until Friday)



- c. If a player pitches 36-50 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest must be observed. (Monday pitcher cannot pitch again until Thursday)
- d. If a player pitches 21-35 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar day of rest must be observed. (Monday pitcher cannot pitch again until Wednesday)
- e. If a player pitches 1-20 pitches in a day, no (0) calendar day of rest is required. (Monday pitcher can pitch again on Tuesday)

Note: Under no circumstances shall a player pitch in more than one (1) game in a day or on three (3) consecutive days

EXCEPTION: If a pitcher reaches his/her pitch count limit while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until that batter's at-bat is complete and only be required to observe the calendar days of rest for the threshold he/she reached during that at-bat, provided the pitcher is removed or the game is completed before delivering a pitch to another batter.

3. If a player delivers 41 or more pitches, that player may not play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day.

EXCEPTION: If a pitcher reaches 40 pitches while facing a batter, that pitcher may continue to pitch until that batter's at-bat is complete and still maintain their eligibility to play the position of catcher.

4. Any player that plays the position of catcher in four (4) or more innings is not eligible to pitch on that calendar day. A catcher receiving one pitch in their fourth inning of catching constitutes having caught four (4) innings. Warm-up pitches do not count.

Note: If a player who played the position of catcher for three (3) innings or less moves to the pitcher position and delivers 21 pitches or more, he/she may not return to the catcher position on that calendar day.

EXCEPTION: If the pitcher reaches the 20-pitch limit while facing a batter, that pitcher may continue to pitch until that batter's at-bat is complete and still maintain their eligibility to play the position of catcher.

5. Pitchers are not allowed to throw curveballs. Curveballs, as determined solely by the Homeplate umpire, are considered illegal pitches.
 - a. Upon the first occurrence by a pitcher, the player will receive a warning and the pitch will be called a Ball.
 - b. Upon the second occurrence by the same pitcher in the same game, the player must be removed from the pitcher position for the remainder of the game and the pitch will be called a Ball.
 - c. If the illegal pitch is put in play, the manager of the offensive team has the option of accepting the result of the play. Such decision shall be made immediately at the end of the play.

Batting

1. Roster batting of all players present will be used in all games. Once the batting order has been established, the order cannot be altered during the game, except as required when a player is injured and cannot continue playing or when leaving the ballpark prior to the game's completion. Such players cannot be reinserted into the game.



- a) Late arriving players must be inserted in the last spot in the batting order for that game.
2. The only exception to Batting Rule 1 is when disciplining a player (e.g., for missing practices, misbehaving, especially poor sportsmanship, etc).
 - a) Players may not be disciplined by being allowed to play defensively, but not being allowed to bat.
 - b) A player removed from a game for disciplinary reasons may not be reinserted into the game.
 - c) If a player is kept out of a game for disciplinary reasons, the umpire and opposing Manager must be notified immediately.
 - d) If a player is kept out of a game for disciplinary reasons, the League Coordinator and child's parents must be notified after the game.
3. A hit batsman may elect to either stay up to bat or take first base. The pitch that hit the batter will be counted as a ball and will result in a walk if it is fourth ball in the at bat.
4. A batter that accidentally throws his bat while swinging will receive a warning; additional occurrences by the same batter will be called automatic outs.
5. A batter that intentionally throws a bat will be called out and there will be no runner advancement.
6. Players may advance on a dropped third strike that is not caught in flight by the catcher UNLESS first base is occupied before two are out.
7. A batter is out for illegal action when the batter enters the batter's box with one or both feet on the ground with an illegal bat or is discovered having used an illegal bat prior to the next player entering the batter's box.

Note: If the infraction is discovered before the next player enters the batter's box following the turn at bat of the player who used an illegal bat:

- 1) The manager of the defense may advise the plate umpire of a decision to decline the penalty and accept the play. Such election shall be made immediately at the end of the play.
- 2) For the first violation, the offensive team will lose one eligible adult base coach for the duration of the game.
- 3) For the second violation, the manager of the team will be ejected from the game. Any subsequent violation will result in the newly designated manager being ejected.

Base Running

1. Stealing:
 - a. There are unlimited steals in major league.
 - b. There is no stealing of home plate on a throw-back to the pitcher.

Fielding

1. Defensive players may be substituted freely throughout the game (between half-innings). Mid-inning defensive replacements are strongly discouraged! Unless it is part of a pitching change (where one or more players may rotate positions), a child should NEVER be subject



to the embarrassment of being taken off the field in the middle of an inning – particularly if this is because of a recent or potential fielding error. However, coaches are requested to use their judgment – if a player is injured or will otherwise benefit from being replaced, a mid-inning change may be appropriate.

2. All players must play at least 12 defensive outs (4 innings) when the game lasts 6 or more innings. Players that do not get their minimum number of innings in a game must start the next game.
 - a. Players must play a minimum of 2 innings in the infield.
 - b. The only exception for rule 2 is when disciplining a player (e.g., for missing practices or misbehaving). Players may not be disciplined by being allowed to play defensively, but not being allowed to bat. A player removed from a game for disciplinary reasons may not be reinserted into the game.
 - c. If a player is kept out of a game for disciplinary reasons, the umpire and opposing Manager must be notified immediately. If a player is kept out of a game for disciplinary reasons, the parent and League Coordinator must be notified after the game.
3. Unless the game goes into extra innings, a player may not play more than 4 innings at any one position in a game. This rule does NOT apply to pitchers as the pitch count governs pitching time. Catchers may be an exception if a team lacks qualified backup catchers for a particular game.
4. No player shall sit out two (2) consecutive innings (defensively) unless injured.
5. It is required that all catchers wear a protective cup and strongly encouraged for all players when playing other positions as well.