

# GCAA Baseball

## Minor Division Rules

Spring 2026 edition

Little League® Minor Division:

- Pacific League (2nd Grade)
- Tropicana League (3rd Grade)
- Central League (4th Grade)



LL Rulebook  
Download

GCAA has run baseball in Garden City since 1955 and is a chartered Local League under Little League International. We follow the rules and regulations of Little League which are available on its mobile app via the above QR code or this link:

<https://www.littleleague.org/playing-rules/little-league-rulebook-app/>

### GCAA Minor Leagues Objectives

The objectives at this level are to prepare young players for competitive baseball (evolving from coach-pitch to player-pitch), reinforce sportsmanship, and have fun (not necessarily in that order). It's nice to have a drink, snack, ice pops, etc. for the kids after the game and a good idea to assign each family the date or dates that they are responsible to bring something.

### GCAA Ground Rules

- The visiting team has use of the infield, if available, 30 minutes before game time to 15 minutes before game time. From 15 minutes until game time, the home team can use it.
- Only the Garden City Maintenance Department can maintain the fields. No one else should try to make repairs, fill holes, or remove water by adding dirt, sand, sawdust or any other material to the playing fields. Please alert GCAA of any repairs needed.
- In the event of inclement weather, GCAA will endeavor to cancel games ahead of time by alerting the league coordinator, who will notify the managers. If no cancellation is made ahead of time, managers will make a gametime decision per 3.10(a).
- Once the game has been completed, both teams should immediately pack up their gear and clear out the dugout area and field of play so the next game can start on time. Any post-game discussions should be held away from the dugout or field.
- Managers are responsible for ensuring that all garbage and items are cleaned up.
- Both managers should keep their own scorebook and report final scores to GCAA immediately following the game.
- All batting helmets must be equipped with either a full-face mask, or a jaw guard.
- Managers are responsible for ensuring that players know not to throw their bats, and for coaching kids after a bat is thrown to prevent recurrence.
- Managers are responsible for ensuring that only positive cheering occurs, and only while the pitcher is NOT on the pitcher's plate.

FAQs for Little League Rules  
plus GCAA Local League Options

Ref #	Question	Answer	LL Rule Reference
1	This isn't the majors, do we really need to follow the rules?	<p>Now is the chance for kids (and parents) to learn the rules of the game the right way. The rules aren't to be so strictly enforced at the expense of fair play, but they can help everyone learn the game the right way and avoid frustration at the next level.</p> <p>Notable <b>2026 Little League Rule Changes</b> Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pine tar is now allowed</li> <li>• GCAA made edits to this document for clarity</li> </ul>	LL Rulebook App
2	Should we keep score?	Yes, we begin to introduce players to competitive baseball at this level. In the <b>Pacific</b> league, there are no standings or playoffs. In the <b>Tropicana</b> league there are playoffs, but with random seedings instead of standings. In the <b>Central</b> league, there are normal standings and playoffs.	Reg VII(h) Local Options
3	Do we play real games?	Yes, we play full six-inning games. There is a 1 hr 45min time limit, after which no new inning will be started (current inning should be completed). A game is considered a "regulation game" (complete) if at least four innings have been completed or if the game has been played for at least 1 hr 45min (regardless of how many innings).	Rule 4.10(a) Rule 4.10(c)(1) Rule 4.10(c)(2) Rule 4.11(d) Local Options
4	Do we play extra innings?	Yes, if the time limit hasn't been reached, the teams can continue to play if tied after six innings. Extra innings are played as normal (no tiebreaker for regular season) until one team wins or time expires.	Rule 4.10(b)
5	How do we keep the games from getting lopsided?	At this level, a half-inning is over after 3 outs or if 5 runs score or if everyone completes an at-bat (bat through the order).	Rule 2.00 "Inning" Rule 5.07 Local Options
6	Is there a run/mercy rule?	Yes. If one team is ahead by 15 runs after 3 <u>full</u> innings (both team have completed their at-bats), or 10 runs after 4 innings, or 8 runs after 3 innings, the game is over and is a regulation game.	Rule 4.10(e)
7	What is my kid's "League Age"	Little League's "League Age" for baseball is based on what a child's age will be on August 31 in the year of the current season. Minor League ball is restricted to League Ages 6 to 10 (GCAA limits to 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> , and 4 <sup>th</sup> grades).	Reg I(a)(3)
8	Does everyone need to play?	Yes, Little League uses a continuous batting order to make sure everyone gets their turns at bat. GCAA encourages teams to use a different batting order each game, so everyone gets a chance to leadoff, bat cleanup, and have around the same number of at bats over the course of the season.	Rule 2.00 "Batting Order" Local Options

Ref #	Question	Answer	LL Rule Reference
		GCAA also requires all players in the lineup to participate defensively in each game. No player may sit on the bench for more than one consecutive inning. Each player must play at least one inning at infield and one inning in the outfield.	
9	What if players arrive late or leave early?	Players who arrive late may be added to the bottom of the batting order without penalty. Players who leave early (or are sick or injured) can be removed from the batting order and may return later and take their original spot in the order, all without penalty.	Rule 4.01 Rule 4.04
10	What should we do if we have more or less than 9 players on defense?	Little League rules allow teams to play with 8 or 9 players in the field. No outs will be called on the offensive team for any slots "missing" in the lineup if playing with fewer than 9. GCAA allows teams to play with only 7 players and up to 10 in the field. Only six players may be in the infield (P, C, 1B, 2B, 3B, SS) and there may not be a short fielder in the outfield. If a team plays with 10 fielders, then no out shall be made at first base from the outfield.	Rule 4.16(a) Rule 6.05(n) Local Options
11	If the other team doesn't have enough to play, do they forfeit?	If a team has fewer than 7 players at the field ready to play within 15 minutes of the scheduled start time, then the umpire will declare the game to be forfeited by a score of 6-0. Regardless, both teams should cooperate and attempt to play a practice game with umpires during the time allotted (including by loaning players).	Rule 2.00 "Forfeit" Rule 4.16 Local Options
12	What should players wear?	All players should wear the team uniform shirt, baseball pants, and hat while playing. Managers are encouraged to keep spare uniforms and hats in case players forget theirs.  Metal cleats/spikes are not allowed.  Catchers must wear a catcher's mask and full-ear helmet with a throat guard whenever catching (even if only warming up). The catcher must also use a catcher's mitt (not a regular glove) and metal, fiber, or plastic style cup.	Rule 1.11(a)(1) Rule 1.11(h) Rule 1.12
13	What bats can we use?	All non-wood (or laminated wood) bats must be marked with the "USA Baseball" logo and have a diameter not exceeded 2-5/8" nor a length exceeding 33". All BPF - 1.15 bats are prohibited. BBCOR, USSSA, or any other non-USA certification bats are prohibited. Solid one-piece wooden bats do not require a "USA Baseball" logo.	Rule 1.10
14	Can we use batting donuts or pine tar?	Batting donuts are specifically prohibited and can render a bat "illegal." Pine tar is allowed.	Rule 1.10 Notes 1 & 2

Ref #	Question	Answer	LL Rule Reference
15	Can kids take practice swings?	For safety reasons, <b>PRACTICE SWINGS ARE NOT ALLOWED</b> unless at bat. Little League prohibits an on-deck circle (at all levels up to 12U Majors) even if there is an enclosed fenced-in area. Players <b>must not even pick up a bat</b> until they are at bat.	Appendix B – Safety Code
16	What batting helmets can we use?	All batters and baserunners must wear a protective NOCSAE helmet during practice and games. GCAA requires that batting helmets at the Minor League and Major League levels have a full face mask or jaw guard.	Appendix B – Safety Code Local Options
17	Do we use a pitcher and catcher?	Yes, in Minor League Baseball players are introduced to live pitching and catching. In the <b>Pacific &amp; Tropicana</b> leagues, pitchers throw until they pitch four balls, and then an adult coach pitches. In the <b>Central</b> league it is full player-pitch (no more coach-pitch).	Reg VIII(d)
18	Are there strikeouts or walks?	There are strikeouts whenever players are pitching. In the <b>Central</b> league there are walks.  In the <b>Pacific &amp; Tropicana</b> leagues there are no walks, and an adult coach takes over if the player throws four balls as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Pacific</b>: the batter starts with a fresh count when the coach comes in and the batter is out after three strikes (but coaches should avoid a called third strike, if at all possible)</li> <li>• <b>Tropicana</b>: the batter keeps the strike count when the coach comes in and the batter is out if the strike count reaches three (umpires will call strikes normally, including 3<sup>rd</sup> strike)</li> <li>• If a pitcher throws four balls to 3+ batters in one inning and doesn't seem to have control, the defensive manager may decide to have an adult coach pitch to the remaining batters that inning to speed up play.</li> </ul>	Rule 6.05(b)(2) Rule 6.08(a)(2) Local Options
19	If a pitcher can't reach, can they pitch from closer?	No. Under no circumstances should a pitcher move closer to the batter to deliver a pitch. This would be a safety hazard.	Rule 8.01
20	If the coach is pitching, where should the pitcher stand?	The pitcher should stand immediately to the left or right of the mound to still play the fielding position of pitcher (i.e. one foot on the dirt). Teams should not use the pitcher to shift defensively.	Local Options
21	Is there a dropped 3rd strike rule?	No, not at this level.	Rule 6.05(b)(2)
22	How long can a pitcher pitch?	Little League restricts pitches per day based on League Age (see LL Pitching table) and sets a minimum "rest days" based on how many pitches were thrown in a day. Pitchers are also not allowed to pitch in two games in one day.	Reg VI Local Options

Ref #	Question	Answer	LL Rule Reference
		<p><b>In addition</b>, to encourage all players to try pitching and further limit arm strain, GCAA limits pitchers in the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Pacific</b> league to no more than 30 pitches per game, only two innings per game, only four innings per calendar week, and must have at least one full rest day between games (1 pitch = 1 inning).</li> <li>• <b>Tropicana</b> league to no more than 40 pitches per game, only two innings per game, and only four innings per calendar week (one pitch = 1 inning).</li> <li>• <b>Central</b> league to no more than six innings per calendar week, Sunday - Saturday (1 pitch = 1 inning).</li> </ul>	
23	How many players can a pitcher hit?	GCAA requires managers at this level to remove a pitcher who hits two batters in one inning or three batters in one game. In the <b>Pacific &amp; Tropicana</b> leagues, a hit batter will have the choice of taking their base or continuing their at-bat with an adult coach pitcher.	Local Options
24	Do we call balks or illegal pitches?	Since there is no leading in Little League (12U Majors and below) there are no balks in the traditional sense. That said, in the <b>Central</b> League, the umpire may call an illegal pitch and award the batter a ball if the pitcher DELIBERATELY and repeatedly (after a warning) attempts a quick pitch, delivers a pitch while not touching the rubber, pretends to have the ball while on/stride the rubber (with runners on base), or any of the other illegal pitches defined in the rules. The penalty for an illegal pitch is a called ball.	Rule 8.05 Local Options
25	Can we use pinch runners or courtesy runners?	<p>With the continuous batting order, there are no traditional pinch runners.</p> <p>Courtesy runners may be used to replace the pitcher and catcher of record with the player(s) in the batting order who made the last out (not necessarily the last "batted out"). If both the pitcher and catcher are on base, they can both be replaced, one by the player who made the second out and one by the player who made the first out. The player who made the first out should be placed ahead (on the base path) of the player who made the second out.</p>	Rule 7.14 (b) Local Options
26	Is bunting allowed?	In the <b>Pacific &amp; Tropicana</b> league, bunting is NOT allowed (to encourage players to learn fundamentals of hitting and to let teams use less-experienced catchers). In the <b>Central</b> league, bunting is allowed.	Rule 2.00 "Bunt" Local Options
27	Does the infield fly rule apply?	In the <b>Pacific &amp; Tropicana</b> league, the infield fly rule does not apply. In the <b>Central</b> league, Infield Fly does apply (to discourage more advanced players from getting an easy double or triple play by intentionally letting the ball drop) but should be taught with leniency and flexibility, as it is a difficult concept for young players.	Rule 2.00 "Infield Fly" Local Options

Ref #	Question	Answer	LL Rule Reference
28	Can runners tag up after a caught fly ball?	In the <b>Pacific &amp; Tropicana</b> league, tagging up is NOT allowed (to encourage players to learn fundamentals of fielding and baserunning). In the <b>Central</b> league, tagging up is allowed.	7.10(a) Local Options
29	Can runners advance on a passed ball?	In the <b>Pacific</b> league, runners must not advance on an overthrow, whether the ball stays in play or not (coaches should teach proper base running without exploiting defensive mistakes).  In the <b>Tropicana</b> league, runners may advance at most <b>one base</b> (including to home base) at their own risk on each overthrow/error (even if the ball remains in fair territory). If the runner advances one base on an overthrow/error and then the defense again throws the ball resulting in another overthrow/error, the runner can advance another base. Once a defensive player has possession of the ball in fair territory in the infield (or behind Homeplate) and is not attempting to make a play, the umpire shall call time and the ball will be dead. The umpire will then award bases to any runner who was at least halfway to their base when time was called.  In the <b>Central</b> league, runners advance according to the rules without restriction.	Rule 7.05 Local Options
30	Do runners need to slide?	Sliding is a skill that should be developed at this level, but injuries can result if not done properly. Baserunners should avoid collisions by sliding, running clear of fielders after a force play, or simply giving up to be tagged. Runners must <b>never slide headfirst</b> .	Rule 7.08(a)(3) Rule 7.08(a)(4)
31	Is stealing allowed?	In the <b>Pacific &amp; Tropicana</b> league, runners must stay on the base until the batter hits the ball. In the <b>Central</b> league, runners can steal one base per batter, but not home base. Runners must stay on the base until the pitch reaches the batter (no leading).	Rule 7.13 Local Options
32	How many coaches can we have?	Each team can have one adult manager and up to 3 adult coaches. At least one adult coach <b>MUST</b> always be in the dugout. Only authorized managers, coaches, and players are allowed in the dugout (e.g. a non-coach scorekeeper is not allowed in the dugout). Batboys and/or batgirls are not permitted.	Rule 1.01 Rule 3.17 Reg XIV(d) Reg III(b)
33	Can players sit in the stands?	No. Players must remain on the bench while not playing defense, batting, coaching, warming up in the bullpen or running the bases.	Reg XIV(b)
34	Are players eligible for a District Team?	The <b>Central</b> League (10U) is the first year that players are eligible for an "All Star" Tournament (District) Team, provided they meet the league age requirements and participate in <b>at least 8 regular season games</b> .	Tournament Organization "Player Eligibility"

Ref #	Question	Answer	LL Rule Reference
35	What if I disagree with the umpire on a rule?	Protests are discouraged and must be resolved before the next pitch (no "playing under protest"). Adult coaches and teenage GCAA alumni serve as umpires for the <b>Pacific &amp; Tropicana</b> leagues and should stand behind the pitcher (not behind the catcher). Hired plate umpires are used for the <b>Central</b> league.	Rule 4.19(g) Rule 9.04(a) Local Options

### GCAA Code of Conduct (all sports):

GCAA has adopted a Code of Conduct for coaches and parents of all sports based on work by the Garden City Sports Cooperative (GCSC). You can find the full Code of Conduct here:

<https://www.leaguelineup.com/topnews.asp?url=gcaabasketball&itemid=2114825>

Little League also publishes a recommended Parent Code of Conduct that we include here:

### Little League Parent Code of Conduct

As a parent/family member, **I WILL:**

- Remember that children participate to have fun
- Be a positive role model for my child and encourage sportsmanship
- Teach my child to play by the rules and resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence
- Demand that my child treats coaches, officials, and other players with respect regardless of race, creed, color, sex, or ability
- Teach my child that doing one's best is more important than winning
- Praise my child for competing fairly and trying hard
- Promote the emotional and physical well being of athletes ahead of my personal desire to win
- Respect the officials and their authority during games

As a parent/family member, **I WILL NOT:**

- Force my child to participate
- Engage in any kind of unsportsmanlike conduct with any official, coach, player, or parent
- Boo, taunt, refuse to shake hands, or use profane language

- Encourage any behaviors or practices that would endanger the health and well being of athletes
- Ridicule or yell at my child or other participants for making a mistake or losing a game
- Use drugs, tobacco, or alcohol at any league event
- Coach my child or other players during games and practices, unless I am a coach.

**Little League Pitching Rule Summary (see Regulation VI for full rules)**

(a) Any player on a regular season team may pitch. (Exception: Any player who has played the position of catcher in four (4) or more innings in a game is not eligible to pitch on that calendar day.)

(b) A pitcher once removed from the mound cannot return as a pitcher.

(c) The manager must remove the pitcher when said pitcher reaches the limit for his/her age group as noted below, but the pitcher may remain in the game at another position:

**LEAGUE AGE**

**AGE PITCHES PER DAY**

**6-8** 50 Pitches

**9-10** 75 Pitches

**11-12** 85 Pitches

**13-16** 95 Pitches

Exception: If a pitcher reaches the limit imposed in Regulation VI(c) for his/her league age while facing a batter, the pitcher may finish pitching to that batter that inning.

(d) Pitchers league age 14 and under must adhere to the following **rest requirements**:

If a player pitches **66 or more** pitches in a day, four (4) calendar days of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches **51-65** pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches **36-50** pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches **21-35** pitches in a day, one (1) calendar day of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches **1-20** pitches in a day, no (0) calendar day of rest is required.

NOTE 1: Under no circumstance shall a player pitch in three (3) consecutive days.

NOTE 2: A pitcher’s pitch count for the purposes of day(s) rest threshold is determined by the first pitch thrown to a batter. The pitcher may not start a new batter once the limit imposed in Regulation VI(c) has been met.

(e) Each league must designate the scorekeeper or another game official as the official pitch count recorder (**GCAA requires the manager to appoint a scorekeeper for each game**).

(f) The pitch count recorder must provide the current pitch count for any pitcher when requested by either manager or any umpire. However, the manager is responsible for knowing when his/her pitcher must be removed.

(g) The official pitch count recorder should inform the Umpire-in-Chief when a pitcher has delivered his/her maximum limit of pitches for the game, as noted in Regulation VI(c).

(j) Minor League: A player who has attained the league age of twelve (12) is not eligible to pitch. (See Regulation V – Selection of Players)

(k) Minor League pitchers may not pitch in more than one game in a day:

## Safety Code For Little League (from Appendix B of the Rulebook)

- Responsibility for safety procedures should be that of an adult member of the local league.
- Arrangements should be made in advance of all games and practices for emergency medical services.
- Managers, coaches, and umpires should have some training in first-aid. First-Aid Kit should be available at the field.
- No games or practice should be held when weather or field conditions are not good, particularly when lighting is inadequate.
- Play area should be inspected frequently for holes, damage, glass, and other foreign objects.
- Dugouts and bat racks should be positioned behind screens.
- Only players, managers, coaches, and umpires are permitted on the playing field during play and practice sessions.
- Responsibility for keeping bats and loose equipment off the field of play should be that of a regular player assigned for this purpose.
- Procedure should be established for retrieving foul balls batted out of the playing area.
- During practice sessions and games, all players should be alert and watching the batter on each pitch.
- During warm up drills, players should be spaced so that no one is endangered by errant balls.
- Equipment should be inspected regularly. Make sure it fits properly.
- Pitching machines, if used, must be in good working order (including extension cords, outlets, etc.) and must be operated only by adult managers and coaches.
- Batters must wear protective NOCSAE helmets during practice, as well as during games.
- Catchers 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.
- Except when runner is returning to a base, head first slides are not permitted. This applies only to Little League (Majors), Minor League, and Tee Ball.
- During sliding practice bases should not be strapped down.
- At no time should "horse play" be permitted on the playing field.
- Parents of players who wear glasses should be encouraged to provide "Safety Glasses."
- Any jewelry worn that poses harm to injury will be subject to removal.
- Catchers must wear catcher's helmet, face mask, and throat guard in warming up pitchers. This applies between innings and in bullpen practice. Skull caps are not permitted.
- Batting/catcher's helmets should not be painted unless approved by the manufacturer.
- Regulations prohibit on-deck batters. This means no player should handle a bat, even while in an enclosure, until it is his/her time at bat. This applies only to Little League (Majors), Minor League, and Tee Ball.
- Players who are ejected, ill, or injured should remain under supervision until released to the parent or guardian.