TPLL 2027
MINORS RULES

Home Team and Field Set-Up

The home team is responsible for setting up the field (pitching machine, dragging the field, etc.) before the game as necessary, and dragging the field after the game. It is suggested that the home team coaching staff arrive an hour before the game in order to set up the pitching machine and prep the field. This takes about 15 minutes and leaves plenty of time to warm-up your team.

Cleanup

Both teams are responsible for cleanup of the field, dugouts and respective fan stands. Our continued access and use of all fields is contingent on our collective ability to maintain them in nice order.

Dugouts

The home team gets the 1st base dugout. The home team also supplies the game balls.

9 Fielders

Minors is an instructional league, and we believe the first level to learn 'real baseball'. As a result, in Minors this year, we will use 9 true field positions. This will result in playing with three outfielders, playing left field, center field and right field. They must be positioned in the outfield grass – no "short-fielders" or infielders disguised as outfielders are allowed.

Please station all outfielders at least 10-feet behind the infield dirt – this league is for kids, and it is humiliating for our younger or inexperienced hitters to see the outfielders with their toes on the infield dirt.

2 Hour Game Time Limit and How it Works

Minors games have a limit of six innings or two hours (explained below), whichever occurs first. No new inning shall be started once 2 hours have passed since the beginning of a game. The coaches and the umpire should decide on the exact start time for the game, and if the end of an inning is reached and 1 hour and 59 minutes have passed, then the next inning shall be played in full even if more than two hours elapses during the inning. If 2 hours has been reached at the end of an inning, then the game would be over. We do have ties in minors regular season, so that has no bearing on whether you continue to play the game.

Once we reach our playoffs, all games shall be played to completion without regard to time, and extra innings shall be played if needed to determine a winner. Please note: we do not want the 2 hour rule to be used as a managerial strategy. If an umpire decides that a team is specifically stalling to use the 2 hour rule to its benefit, then they can give the coaches a warning that if it

continues the game will be extended. Also, the time when we check to see if the 2 hours is up is directly when the last out of the previous inning occurs (taking the field slowly will therefore not help you).

Batting the Full Line-up and Last Batter Rule and 5 Run Rule

All teams must allow their entire roster to bat, rather than limiting the eligible batters to the nine position players. Your team may bat entirely through the order to the last batter of the inning in the event that three outs do not occur sooner. Regarding the last batter, please keep in mind:

- Each team is entitled to bat through the order, regardless of whether one team has more or fewer players than the other team. In other words, a team which has 11 players present can send 11 batters to the plate in any one inning, while a team with only 10 players can only send 10
- With the last batter, the play ends when (a) a third out is made, (b) when no further play is possible, or (c) when a defensive player has secure possession of the ball and is standing on home plate. When any of these occur, play is dead
- The manager of the team at bat must notify the opponent that the current batter is the last batter of the inning
- If the team at bat fails to notify the opponent of "last batter" status, one of two things will occur. If the batter strikes out or is put out, the play stands and the inning is over. In that case, no runs may score. If the batter gets a hit of any kind, he is credited only with a single. No runs may score unless the last batter was at bat with the bases loaded, in which case only one run will score. (In other words, even if the undeclared last batter hits a grand slam, only one run will count.)
- The defensive team may not walk the last batter intentionally; doing so is considered unsportsmanlike conduct. If, in the judgment of the umpire, the last batter has been walked intentionally, the pitcher or manager may be disqualified from further play, with or without warning. The umpire will call "no pitch" on any ball to the last batter which, in the umpire's judgment, was an intentionally thrown ball

5-Run Rule

Under National Little League rules applicable to minors, no team may score more than 5 runs in an inning. For example, if the first five batters up all score, that team's at-bat ends. There is only one exception to this rule: in the 6th inning, more than five runs may be scored and the offensive team may bat around (last batter rule is removed for the 6th inning). Please note that this is a 6th inning rule, not a "last" inning rule. If, by virtue of the 2-hour time limit, the last inning is the 5th (or earlier) inning, the five run limit continues to apply.

Playing Time

We want all players to get significant playing time. No player should be on the bench for two consecutive innings. In a full six-inning game, every player must play in the field for at least four innings. In addition, one of the innings in the field must be at one of the 6 infield positions. If a coach does not comply, they will be subject to suspension by the league.

Progressive Stealing Rules

There are two special stealing rules that will not be in effect for all games yet will be implemented as the season progresses. The primary purpose of these rules is to encourage the development of more and better skilled catchers without impacting the outcome of the game unduly (i.e. we want you to give more kids a chance to play behind the plate and encourage catchers to throw to bases to try and get people stealing rather than hold the ball). Accordingly:

Stealing Home Rule

For the first half of season players may steal home once per inning. After the first half of season the stealing home rule is removed and players may steal home at will.

One Stolen Base At A Time Rule

During the first half of the season, no player stealing a base may advance past the one being stolen. All steals will be one base at a time. For example, if a player is stealing second or third and the catcher makes a wild throw into the outfield, the runner must stay at second base and may not advance further. In the event there are runners on first and third, and the player on first attempts to steal second, the runner on third may advance home on the catcher's throw to second base as this action would be completed in line with the one stolen base rule.

Pitcher's Mound Proximity to Stop Play

The pitcher is considered on the mound to stop play when the pitcher is within a two-foot radius of the rubber. If the pitcher is within the two-foot radius and decides to throw to a defensive player, thus continuing play, that action would be considered a continuation of the play by the pitcher and is allowed. The continuation of the play by the pitcher is a live ball and can result in:

- An out on the play
- A runner safely advancing or returning to base
- An error on the play allowing the runner(s) to advance multiple bases

Players opportunity to pitch

This is a developmental division, and players should have an opportunity to pitch during the season. An opportunity to pitch means facing at least two batters in an inning. This is a good faith rule with the responsibility being on the coaches doing what is best for the player(s). This does not mean coaches should encourage less skilled players not to try pitching; rather, the opposite is true. I expect there may be one or two players per team that may not be able to pitch. I have seen in the past where coaches discuss before the game, and choose an inning, when both teams will work in a new pitcher for at least two batters. This method keeps the games more competitive. Coaches are also welcome to use their own strategy on when they would like to work their players on the mound.

Pitching – Catching Restrictions

No pitcher may pitch more than three innings per game. No intentional walks are allowed. It is up to the umpire's discretion whether or not the pitcher is intentionally throwing strikes. You need to be intimately familiar with Regulation VI in the Rule Book regarding pitchers and catchers. There are limits on the number of pitches a player can throw, and mandatory days of rest needed depending on the pitch count. Here is the maximum number that can be thrown based on a player's league age:

League Age	Max Pitches Per Day
11 - 12	85
9-10	75
8	50

If a pitcher reaches these maximums while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until

the batter 1) reaches base 2) is put out, 3) the third out is made to complete the half inning, then the pitcher would be removed. The days of rest guidelines are as follows:

Number of Pitches in a Day	Mandatory Days of Rest
≥66	4
51-65	3
36-50	2
1-20	0

If a pitcher reaches these rest thresholds while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until the batter 1) reaches base 2) is put out, 3) the third out is made to complete the half inning, then the pitcher would be removed and is only required to observe calendar days of rest for the threshold he reached during the at bat.

By way of example, if player A throws 36 pitches on Thursday, he will not be able to pitch on Saturday, since he needs two days of rest before pitching again (rest days of Friday and Saturday).

In addition, there are restrictions applicable to pitcher-catchers. A pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day. Likewise, if a player catches more than three innings (he appears as a catcher in a fourth inning), he cannot pitch that day.

Both teams should keep track of the number of pitches thrown. Please make sure to count the pitch that is hit by the batter as it is often the one that teams forget to chart and leads to discrepancies. We would like the coaches to confer after each inning as to the pitch count, and in a discrepancy that can't be solved we would defer to the team of the pitcher.

Umpires

We use youth umpires for most games. Coaches should introduce themselves at a pre-game meeting at home plate and get to know the Umpires by first name. (Umpires are instructed to do the same, but some kids may be a bit intimidated). At all times, it is essential that coaches, assistant coaches and parents refrain from any and all criticism. These kids are learning as well. They will make bad calls or mistakes occasionally, though overall they do an excellent job. If you believe there has been an error in enforcing a rule, you may approach the umpire, and have an appropriately toned discussion. Have familiarity with these rules (or have a rule book in hand). At no times, may you challenge a judgment call. Instant replay is not in our budget (!). Please help police your parents as well. Our youth umpires deserve our very best behavior and respect.

Other Rules You Should Know

a. Warm up pitches should be kept to a maximum of 5
b. Play ends when a defensive player secures the ball and is standing on the mound. This is to ensure we don't have a player on third base dancing around trying to lure a throw from the mound to third so they can steel home
c. Unless and until they are granted a time-out by the umpire, coaches should stay in or immediately adjacent to the dugout. Coaches have routinely violated this rule in the past, and we ask for compliance this year

d. Per the national rule, a manager is allowed 3 visits to the same pitcher in an inning (he/she gets pulled on the third visit) or 4 in a game to that pitcher (pulled on 4)
e. You may have a maximum of three adults in the dugout with your team (typically the manager, the assistant and another). No fans or interested parents should be on or near the playing field. Coaches are responsible for enforcing this rule
f. You may use two adults as the base coaches, provided that a third coach is in the dugout with the players. Otherwise, a player wearing a helmet should serve as a base coach
g. Little League rules state that coaches may not warm up pitchers. During our regular season, however, we allow coaches to do so to keep the game moving along
h. There is no "on-deck" circle allowed; the next hitter must remain in the dugout (not swinging a bat) until his/her turn at bat
i. Teams are allowed one bunt per inning. The bunting player may attempt to bunt as many times during their at-bat as possible until the player reaches base or is deemed out, in the course of normal baseball play
j. No slash bunting allowed. Slash bunting is described as a batter squaring up to bunt, thus drawing the third basement in, then pulling back and taking a swing. This puts the defense player in danger
k. There will be no walkup music allowed at the Strawberry Rec. Minors' field. TPLL is under strict decibel limits at this facility, and with houses so close, walkup music will not be allowed by TPLL

Pool Player Rules

a. Teams can request pool players only if they have 8 or less players for the game
b. Pool player requests should be made 24 hours in advance to the Player Agent
c. Pool players are not allowed to pitch, catch or play first base or shortstop
d. Pool player must bat last
e. Pool player are not permitted in the playoffs
    - If a Minors team can only field 8 or less players for a playoff game due to injury, the Player Agent can look to bring up a AA player to play for the Minors team. This is only available if the team is short players due to injury.

Scorekeeping

Each team needs to designate a scorekeeper to keep track of the runs scored for each team. The scorekeepers should confer at the end of every half inning or sooner if one believes the 5-run rule has been met.

Playoff Games

All playoff games will go to six innings or until a winner is determined, whichever is longer, (extra innings if needed). If a playoff game cannot be completed, (e.g. because of darkness or the start of the minor league game), then the game will be completed at a subsequent date from the point that the game was stopped, (i.e. top of the 5th inning, two outs, runner on 2nd), and will NOT revert back to the last complete inning.

Game Results

Both coaches should email game results and pitch counts by player to the Commissioner as soon as you are able following the games.

10 Run Mercy Rule

If a team is winning by 10 or more runs after 4 official innings (or after 3 and a half innings if the home team is up 10 or more runs), then the game is over and the score is final. The coaches may opt to continue the game to let the boys continue to play but the umpires may leave the field, statistics will no longer be kept and the final score will reflect the score at the time the Mercy Rule was implemented.