

LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL



Baseball New Zealand is moving towards full compliance with Little League Baseball (LLB) rules throughout the nation, for all ages that are governed by LLB (league age 4-16).

It is recommended that each administrator and coach involved with Little League aged teams, familiarises themselves with the current Little League rules and regulations.

This document aims to point out a few of the important rules and regulations. However, this is just a quick resource and not an exhaustive list. The official LLB rulebook should always be referred to if matters arise.

Note – the page reference numbers in this document refer to the 2020 hard copy version of the [Little League Baseball Rulebook](#). The 2021 National Little League Tournaments will run off the 2021 version, which will be disseminated once released by Little League International (*few rules change year to year*).

LEAGUE ELIGIBILITY

Charter - To be eligible to run a sanctioned Little League competition, you must hold a current charter. Any regions who are looking to set up a new charter, please contact Dan Tan – dan.tan@baseballnewzealand.com

Maximum Teams - Each division shall be composed of no more than 10 teams. If more than 10 teams are requested, application for a divisional format must be made to the Charter Committee through the District Administrator.

Minimum Games - The league must have scheduled and played, at a minimum, a 12-game [Senior League: 10 game] (per team) regular season, exclusive of playoffs and tournament games

Game length – Little League prefers no time limits on games. However, if field availability is low - a league can establish a 1 hour and 45-minute time limit for Regular Season games (time limits longer than 1 hour and 45 minutes may be established). Regardless of number innings played, the games will still qualify towards Regular Season games played and a player's Tournament eligibility.

The league may choose to use the tournament tie breaker rule (*page 202*), if tied after regulation time or innings.

AGE GROUPS

<https://www.littleleague.org/downloads/2021-baseball-age-chart/>

Baseball New Zealand will run an annual National Little League Tournament in the following age groups:

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|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Little League (Major) Division | league age 10-12 |
| 2. Intermediate (50-70) Division | league age 11-13 |
| 3. Junior League | league age 12-14 |
| 4. Senior League | league age 13-16 |

Refer to page 178-180 for age and mandatory play eligibility for each league.

The charter that wins each age group will go on to represent New Zealand at the Asia Pacific Qualifiers. The winner of the Asia Pacific Qualifiers will represent Asia Pacific at the respective World Series event: <https://www.littleleague.org/news/dates-announced-for-next-three-years-of-little-league-world-series-events/>

TOURNAMENT PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for tournament play a player must be:

A player of correct league age, who has participated as an eligible player in at least 60% of the regular season games (*page 178-180*)

<https://www.littleleague.org/play-little-league/baseball/divisions/>

As referenced in the link above, players can achieve their tournament eligibility the following ways:

Majors – The local league has an option to choose a Tournament Team (or “All Stars”) of 10-12-year-olds from within this division, and the team may enter the International Tournament.

Regular season players in the Little League Baseball Major Division have the opportunity to dual roster, meaning he/she can play in the Little League Major Baseball Division and Intermediate 50/70 Division during the same season. Achieving tournament eligibility is possible in either division, but a player must choose one division of play to participate in during the tournament season.

Intermediate – The division, which was new division of Little League Baseball in 2013 for players league-age 11-13 with postseason tournament opportunities, including a World Series, offers a transition for players between the standard Little League field size (46-foot pitching distance and 60-foot base paths) and the Junior/Senior field size (60-foot, 6-inch pitching distance and 90-foot base paths).

Regular season players in the Little League Intermediate 50/70 Baseball Division have the opportunity to dual roster, meaning he/she can play in the Little League Major Baseball Division during the same season. Achieving tournament eligibility is possible in either division, but a player must choose one division of play to participate in during the tournament season.

Junior - The local league has an option to choose a Tournament Team (or “All Stars”) of 12-14-year-olds from within this division (and/or from within the Senior League Division), and the team may enter the International Tournament.

Senior - The local league has an option to choose a Tournament Team (or “All Stars”) of 13-16-year-olds from within this division (and/or from within the Junior League division), and the team may enter the International Tournament.

Multiple team eligibility – Players league age 11, 12, 13, or 14 may be eligible for selection to multiple tournament teams. These players may only be selected to ONE tournament team. Under no circumstances may these players be chosen for, practice with, or participate with more than one tournament team. (*page 180*)

TOURNAMENT COACH ELIGIBILITY

(*Page 174-175*)

Little League (Major) Division – the manager and coach(es) shall be regular season team managers and/or coaches from the Little League (Major) Division, or Intermediate (50-70) Division

Intermediate (50-70) Division – the manager and coach(es) shall be regular season team managers and/or coaches from the Intermediate (50-70) Division

Junior League – the manager and coach(es) shall be regular season team managers and/or coaches from the Junior division or the Senior division

Senior League - the manager and coach(es) shall be regular season team managers and/or coaches from the Junior division or the Senior division

Coaches in the dugout – at least one adult manager or coach must be in the dugout at all times. (*page 80*)

PLAYING RULES

Pitch counts

Little League is completely compliant with MLB Pitch Smart pitch count rules:

<https://www.mlb.com/pitch-smart/pitching-guidelines>

Age	Daily Max (Pitches in Game)	0 Days Rest	1 Days Rest	2 Days Rest	3 Days Rest	4 Days Rest	5 Days Rest
7-8	50	1-20	21-35	36-50	N/A	N/A	N/A
9-10	75	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+	N/A
11-12	85	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+	N/A
13-14	95	1-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+	N/A
15-16	95	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-75	76+	N/A
17-18	105	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-80	81+	N/A
19-22	120	1-30	31-45	46-60	61-80	81-105	106+

If a pitcher reaches a day(s) of rest threshold while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any one of the following conditions occurs: (1) that batter reaches base; (2) that batter is retired; or (3) the third out is made to complete the half-inning or the game. The pitcher will only be required to observe the calendar day(s) of rest for the threshold he/she reached during that at-bat, provided that pitcher is removed or the game is completed before delivering a pitch to another batter.

If a pitcher reaches the Daily Max for his/her league age while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any one of the following conditions occurs: 1. That batter reaches base; 2. That batter is put out; 3. The third out is made to complete the half-inning.

Other Pitching rules to note:

Majors: A pitcher once removed from the mound cannot return as a pitcher. **Intermediate (50-70), Junior, and Senior League Divisions:** A pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position, can return as a pitcher anytime in the remainder of the game, but only once per game.

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 (**15- and 16-year-olds:** 31 pitches or more) in the same day, may not return to the catcher position on that calendar day. **EXCEPTION:** If the pitcher reaches the 20-pitch limit (**15- and 16-year-olds:** 30-pitch limit) while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch, and maintain their eligibility to return to the catcher position, until any one of the following conditions occur: (1) that batter reaches base; (2) that batter is retired; or (3) the third out is made to complete the half-inning or the game

Other Playing rules to note:

<u>Little League Rule</u>	<u>Little League comment & Little League Rule Book (2020) reference</u>
Mandatory Play	Regulation IV (i) <i>Page 60</i> Every rostered player present at the start of the game will participate in each game for a minimum of six (6) defensive outs and bat at least one (1) time.
Re-entry Rule	Rule 3.03 <i>page 110-111</i>
Special Pinch Runner	Rule 7.14 <i>page 154</i> Once each inning a team may utilize a player who is not in the batting order as a special pinch runner for any offensive player....
Designated Hitter Rule	Rule 3.03 <i>page 112</i> Senior League Designated Hitter Rule: (a) At the beginning of a game, each manager may list on the line-up card a designated hitter to bat throughout the game for a designated player in the regular line-up.
Catcher to Pitcher Restrictions	Regulation VI (a), (b), and (c) <i>page 65-66</i> 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.
No Compulsory Slide Rule	Rule 7.08 (a) (3) <i>page 146</i> There is NO Must Slide Rule.
Headfirst slide	Rule 7.08 (a) (4) Little League (Major) and below only: the runner is out if they slide headfirst while advancing.