

2025 LITTLE LEAGUE RULES FOR ROOKIE BALL & THE MINOR /MAJOR BASEBALL DIVISION



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Overview:

Erindale Little League is affiliated with Little League Canada, and as such strives to follow the Little League Official Regulations and the Little League Operating Manual.

The following are rules that will be used in the operation of the Erindale House League program at the rookie ball, minor / major baseball divisions.

In season adjustments/changes to house rules can occur. Recommended changes will be brought forward by the convenor to the VP of Baseball. Once approved, changes will be communicated to the coaches from the VP of Baseball (or President).

House league rules are reviewed annually prior to the start of the season by the board of directors.

VP of Baseball will review rules prior to the start of the season with the umpire-in-chief.

League Regulations

Game times and curfews

Early Games

Start time for early games during week is 6:15 PM unless otherwise changed by scheduler.

Game will begin so long as each team has a minimum of 8 players (regular season)

Team is deemed to default if they do not have 8 players ready to play by the scheduled start time. A 15min grace may be implemented by the umpire if a player or call up is on their way. Once the 15min grace period has passed, the game will be forfeited.

No inning to start after 1:45 minutes of the start time. Dead ball is at 2 hrs after scheduled start time. If the dead ball time occurs during an at bat, current batter will complete at bat. If game not completed, score would revert to last completed inning, or if home team is batting and game is tied, the final score will be recorded as a tie.

A new inning is deemed to start immediately upon completion of previous inning.

In all circumstances the home umpire's time piece is the official time and coaches should be notified of the time of first pitch.

In the last inning, the visiting team may forfeit final outs to attempt to complete inning.

Late Games (S1 only)

Start time for late games is 8:20PM.

Game will begin so long as each team has 8 players (regular season)

Team is deemed to default if they do not have 8 players ready to play by the scheduled start time. A 15min grace may be implemented by the umpire if a player or call up is on their way. Once the 15min grace period has passed, the game will be forfeited.

No inning to start after 1:45 minutes of scheduled start time. If the dead ball time occurs during an at bat, current batter will complete at bat. If game not completed, the score would revert back to last completed inning, or if home team is batting and the game is tied, the final score will be recorded as a tie.

A new inning has deemed to start immediately upon completion of previous inning.

In all circumstances the home umpire's time piece is the official time and coaches should be notified of the time of first pitch.

In the last inning, the visiting team may forfeit final outs to attempt to complete inning.

Adjustment to curfew times and procedures may be adjusted by VP baseball. Any change will be communicated to both coaches prior to start of game.

Warm up

The first time a pitcher comes into the game they get a 6-pitch warm up (or 2 minutes).

If the same pitcher that completed the previous inning is returns, they are limited to a 4-pitch warm up (or 2 minutes).

Team Regulations

Team Rosters

The number of players on a team roster shall be a minimum of 9 and a maximum of 15.

Call ups.

All call ups are to be done through and approved by the Division Conveners and a TeamSnap Group will be created. No players may be contacted directly by a coach and chosen to be called up.

Team Manager and Coach Regulations

Team Managers and/or coaches are responsible for the action and conduct of their team players and spectators before, during and after games.

The team manager/coach of both teams must report game scores to Statistics Convenor within 24 hours of completion of game.

Minor/ Major Division, pitch counts must be reported to Statistics Convenor within 24 hours of completion of game.

Team managers are responsible for appointing scorekeepers for each game who shall keep track of outs, runs scored and pitchers used, including pitches thrown. The home team is the official scorekeeper.

Team Managers and/or coaches are required to have a completed VSC and wear the issued Erindale Red coaching shirt and grey hat on field, during games at first or third base. League or parent helpers are allowed to assist in dugouts or in the bullpen.

Home team responsibilities

It shall be the responsibility of the home team to ensure that bases and pitching rubber are on hand and positioned correctly at least 5 minutes prior to scheduled starting time.

It shall be the responsibility of the home team to provide 1 new game ball and one good used ball. The home team shall also supply good used balls as necessary.

At S1 (Stadium), the home team of the final game is responsible for removing the bases from the field to the placed in the green storage bin.

At S1 (Stadium), the home team is responsible to ensure that all gates, including the batting cage are locked, the stadium lights are turned off and all clubhouse doors are locked and secured.

Ground Rules

Unless specified below, the Official Little League playing rules govern league play.

Final standings for playoff seeding.

Most points (2 pts for win, 1 for tie)

If 2 tied, record head-to-head.

If 3 tied, or 2 still tied after 4.6.2, lowest runs allowed.

If still tied, coin flip with all involved teams.

1. Sportsmanship & Ejections (Refer to LL rule 14.00)

1.1 All players, coaches, managers, sponsors, and spectators are expected to always conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner. The league/tournament director has the authority to remove anyone from the event at any time for unsportsmanlike conduct. Any player, coach, manager, sponsor, or spectator whose conduct is unbecoming or abusive shall at a minimum be reprimanded with a warning. If warranted, the offending party shall be ejected from the game at the discretion of the Umpires and / or the League / Tournament Director.

1.2 Any player, coach, manager, sponsor, or spectator leaving their position or base, in the field, on the bench, in the dugout area or grandstands to participate in a fight, brawl or altercation shall be immediately ejected from the game and may be disbarred / suspended.

1.3 Any coach, manager, sponsor, or spectator ejected from a game shall immediately remove themselves from the vicinity of the playing field and / or grandstands for the remainder of the game. Any player ejected from a game shall either immediately remove themselves from the vicinity of the playing field for the remainder of the game or be confined to the dugout area for the remainder of

the game at the discretion of the Umpire. Additional penalties may be assessed at the discretion of the League.

1.4 Any related spectator ejected from a game shall immediately remove themselves from the vicinity of the playing field and / or grandstands for the remainder of the game at the discretion of the Umpire. The head coach of that related team will also be ejected from the game and shall immediately remove themselves from the vicinity of the playing field and / or grandstands for the remainder of the game. Not further action will be taken on the head coach for the next game.

1.5 If necessary, a team may be forced to forfeit a game and / or be removed from the league.

1.6 EJECTIONS: Any manager, coach, or player ejected from a game will be suspended for the next physically played game (See LL Rule 4.07). This includes pregame and postgame activities. Any manager, coach, or player ejected from a 2nd league game will not attend a physically played game prior to a board hearing and decision. The board hearing will take place when all members are available to discuss a vote on further disciplinary action.

2. Fair Play – Rookie, Minor / Major

2.1 No player may sit out an inning a second time until every player has sat out 1 inning.

2.2 Exception to 2.1 –Minor / Major

STARTING pitchers. Assuming all players have sat once, a starting pitcher must sit out for the next inning once taken from the game. If the pitcher is removed prior to everyone sitting, the coach has discretion on when they will sit. This rule applies only to STARTING pitchers. If your second pitcher has not sat, he must be removed from the game if it is his turn to sit.

2.3 Each player should play a minimum of one “infield position” inning for every three completed innings. (Regular Season and Playoffs)

Hit by Pitch - If a pitcher hits 2 batters in an outing (within the innings pitched), a warning will be given. If a pitcher hits a 3rd batter in an outing, they will be removed and not allowed to pitch for the remainder of the game.

2.4 Batting order/lineup – Continuous Batting Order

Erindale has instituted Continuous Batting order. The batting order will not change based players who are on the field or sitting for that inning. The order will remain the same throughout the game unless a player is removed entirely due to injury or in the event they need to leave. An out will not be required due to the player removed and the continuous batting order will continue without that player.

2.5 Intentional walks will not be allowed at any level regardless of if during regular season or playoffs

3. League Rules Legal Bats

3.1 The bat must be a baseball bat which meets the USA Baseball Bat standard (USABat). The use of USSA and BBCOR bats are prohibited.

3.2 If a non-USA bat is used during an at bat (1 pitch), the ball is deemed as dead, the batter is deemed as out, and any base runners must return to their original base prior to that at bat. The head coach will also be given a warning for that game. If a non-USA bat is used again in the same game (even by another player), that player is deemed as out and base runners must return to their original base prior to that at bat and the head coach will be ejected for the remainder of that game.

ROOKIE BASEBALL DIVISION

4. Pitching Machine

4.1 All innings pitched with a pitching machine will have the machine placed 40-46 feet from the back of home plate.

4.2 A circle: five feet in diameter will surround the machine with chalk or a dirt imprint.

4.3 If a batted ball hits the machine, or rolls to a stop in the circle, the ball is dead; the batter is awarded first base, and any base runner is moved who is forced to advance by the batter being awarded first base. If the ball directly hits the machine, only forced runners advance. If the ball is impeded in the circle (i.e. pitcher touches and stops the ball) all runners advances.

4.4 If the ball goes through the circle without touching, the legs, coach, or bucket, then it is a live ball, and is played normally.

4.5 The circle includes the chalk that creates the circle. If a fielder plays the ball on the chalk line than the ball shall be deemed a dead ball, and the batter is awarded first base.

4.6 Any plays/outs made prior to the ball entering the safety circle stands. (Example: ball is batted, play is made to 1st, the batter is out. Attempt is made to throw out a runner coming into home. Ball hits a player and bounces into the safety circle or hits the machine. Batter is out; runner is safe. Play is dead.

4.7 The pitching machine speed will between 35-40 mph.

Setting of the machine will be done only at the top of the inning, unless, in the opinion of the plate umpire, the machine has drifted out of adjustment. Any mid-inning adjustments must be made by the umpire or his designate. The coach of the hitting team may request a review of settings; however, the umpire has the final say in the settings.

The operator of the machine will be a coach or a volunteer. The operator of the machine may not offer coaching assistance.

5. Pitching Machine / Batter Rules

5.1 Each batter receives 5 hit-able pitches. Three swings without contact during the 5 pitches and the batter is out. If the batter has not hit after 5 pitches, batter is out.

5.2 The umpires will be set behind the plate behind the catcher. The call by the umpire will follow in the format of pitches and strikes. I.e. "One pitch/one strike, 3 pitches/1 strike, 4 pitches/0 strikes" batter is out after pitch 5 or strike 3.

5.3 If the batter fouls, a strike will be called for the first 2 fouls. If the batter fouls on the 5th pitch, the batter will be given an additional pitch until the ball is hit, or the pitch is missed (3rd strike) or it is declared a hit-able pitch by the umpire (equivalent to 5th pitch).

NO PITCH is declared when:

5.4 A pitch bounces on or in front of home plate or a ball is too high for the batter to hit. However, if the batter attempts a swing, it will be a strike.

5.5 A pitch causes the batter to jump out of the batter's box to avoid being struck by the pitched ball.

5.6 A NO PITCH will not be counted as part of the 5 pitches.

5.7 The umpire must declare the last or 5th pitch to the batter, prior to the ball being placed in the pitching machine. If the ump fails to do declare a 5th pitch, a request of a re-pitch shall occur on appeal of the at bat coach only.

6 Playing Rules:

6.1 Pitcher may stand on either side of the pitching machine, outside of the safety circle and even with the release point of the machine. Once the pitch is delivered, the pitcher may move anywhere, including in front of the machine.

6.2 Pitcher must wear a helmet when pitching machine is in use.

6.3 Base Runners cannot leave the base until the batter makes contact with the ball. If an infraction occurs, the ball will be declared dead and runners may not advance. One (1) warning will be issued and for any further infractions thereafter the runner will be called out. (Each team may receive 1 warning).

6.4 No stealing allowed, applies to pitching machine and player pitching.

6.5 There will be no bunting, applies to pitching machine and player pitching.

6.6 Base runners may not advance on a passed ball, or a pitched ball returned to the pitcher by the catcher.

6.7 Catchers are required to wear a mask with throat protector, helmet, chest protector, shin guards. Catchers are to set up in the regular catcher position in front of the umpire.

6.8 Batting – when 3 outs are made, inning is over.

6.9 MERCY RULE- maximum of 5 runs per inning with the pitching machine.

6.10 All batters must bat in assigned order. Out of order batter is out on appeal of a defensive coach/player. Appeal must be lodged before the next batter has completed; they're at bat.

6.11 Game is a maximum of 6 innings long. Game is deemed official after time has expired or 4 innings have been (3 ½ innings if home team leading).

6.12 Courtesy runner can be allowed for a runner after 2 outs and the runner being replaced is the catcher in the next inning.

6.13 To speed up game when using pitching machine is used, a bucket of balls will be placed at the pitching machine for the pitching coach. Missed balls will be collected by the catcher and thrown back to the pitcher at the end of each batter's turn.

6.14 Time is granted on defense rule. (I.e. After a batted ball, time is granted to the defense when the ball is being returned to the pitcher. (ie the defense is no longer trying to get an out) – general guideline is if player is less than 1/3 of the way to next base, and ball has been sent back to pitcher – even if pitcher drops – the play is over)

6.15 At the rookie ball level, we are trying to encourage the players to make plays. To foster this culture, players can not advance on overthrows to a base. (For example: While a runner is approaching second base, the defending team throws the ball over second base. The play is dead.) An evaluation of this rule will take place after 5 weeks into the season to see if the rule can be repealed if it is felt that the caliber of rookie ball warrants rule will be eliminated, and the ball will remain live.

6.16 Batters at Rookie Ball must drop the bat and not throw it (intentionally or unintentionally) upon hitting the ball. Penalty, each team shall be entitled to one warning per game. After the warning, any further offences by a team shall result in the batter being declared out, the ball being dead and runners returning to their bases.)

6.17 Infield fly rule does not apply.

7. Equitable play rules.

7.1 For batting: players must be rotated equitably so that in a month they get approximately the same at-bats. As an example, each month the rotation is set for that month, and players rotate equitably for that month (i.e. 1 moves to 2 after game 1). The line-up will continue the next game at the ending point of the prior game. (I.e. if the 5th batter was the last out of the previous game, the 6th batter will bat first in the next game. Please note that this is a guideline as this could change with player availability.

7.2 For fielding: players must be rotated equitably between infield and outfield. Each player must play at least 1 of the first 3 innings in the infield.

7.3 No player can sit out an inning on defence a second time until everyone has sat out once.

8. Defensive Playing Roster

8.1 Teams may use 10 fielders on defence. The extra defensive must play in the outfield.

8.2 For the first 5 weeks of Rookie ball, we will incorporate the gradual use of the pitching machine as players coming from Sr T Ball are not accustomed using the pitching machine and, in an effort, to keep players engaged throughout and to improve pace of play and reduce the number of innings to 5.

8.3 For the first inning, we will utilize the tee to have ALL batters go through once, with the last batter forcing the play to home plate

8.4 For the second and third inning, the pitching machine will be used

8.5 If the batter has not been able to make contact with the pitching machine after three (3) hit-table pitches, the batter will then use the tee

8.6 The batter will have 3 attempts at the tee and if the batter does not make contact that results in a playable hit, then the batter is determined to be out

8.7 For innings number 4 to 5, each batter will receive 3 hit-table pitches (refer to 8.11 for further clarification)

8.8 Refer to 8.30.3, 8.30.4, 8.30.4 and 8.30.5 if the batter has not been able to make contact that results in a playable hit

8.9 After week 5, in conjunction with convenor, coaches and the Head of Coach and Development, it will be determined whether to transition to full time use of the pitching machine. After week 15, it will be determined to include live pitching for part of the game for the balance of the season. Factors that will play into decision will be pitching potential on all teams, average age, experience and overall skill level of rookie ball for given year.

8.10 If it is decided to go to pitching, the following rules will go into effect.

8.11 Games will be played with pitching machines in the following rotations, subject to convenor discretion on timeframes with coach consultation:

Week 1 to week 7: pitching machine.

Week 7 to end: 2 Innings pitching to start the game, remaining innings pitching machine; mercy is 3 runs when pitching.

Pitcher player limitations are per following rotations:

Full Season:

1 inning max and use minimum of 3 pitchers in a 2-game week.

Minimum pitcher usage (The intent of these rules is to ensure that proper pitcher development occurs in each team. To develop pitchers at the Modified Rookie ball level the following minimum pitcher usage rules shall occur.)

A minimum of 3 pitchers must be utilized by each team for a minimum of 2 innings over a 1-week period. This rotation requirement applies only during rookie modified format. The one-week period goes from Sunday to Saturday.

For a pitcher to be counted as part of the minimum 3 pitcher rotation, the pitcher must pitch to a minimum of 3 batters during the inning/game. If the pitcher pitches less than 3 batters, the pitcher cannot be counted as part of the minimum rotation requirement. However, pitcher limitation still applies. (Example: If a pitcher enters the game and pitches once to batter and is then removed, he

can pitch in the next game, but that pitcher's rotation in that game cannot be counted as a part of the weekly minimum pitcher rotation).

If live pitching is put into effect, playoffs will stay with the pitching rules.

MINOR / MAJOR BASEBALL DIVISION

9. Defensive Playing Roster

9.1 Teams may use 6 infielders and 4 outfielders on defence if they have 10 or more rostered players available at gametime. If a team has 9 players available at game time, only that team is required to field and play 3 outfielders. If a team has 8 players available at game time, only that team is required to field and play 2 outfielders. All teams reserve the right to only use 3 outfielders, at any time if they choose to do so, independent of what the other team is choosing or required to do.

9.2 If the next inning's catcher or pitcher is on base with 2 out, the offensive team may replace the runner with the previous out.

9.3 Dropped 3rd Strike.

A batter is out on a swinging or called third strike regardless of if it is caught cleanly or not.

10. Mercy

10.1 At the Minor/Major Baseball Level there is a mercy of 5 runs per inning

10.2 If after 4 full innings of play (3 ½ if the home team is leading) there is a run differential of 10 runs or more, the game is over.

11. Base Running

11.1 Players may only slide feet first. If a player slides headfirst, they are automatically out, ball is dead. Exception when a player returning to a base.

11.2 On a swinging 3rd strike, batter is out. Batter can not advance to first on dropped ball.

11.3 As a runner on dropped third strike. Runner may not steal a base.

11.4 When the ball is caught by the catcher, stealing is permitted for all bases, excluding home. Scoring is only allowed through a hit, fielding error or a forced walk.

12 Stealing for Minor/Major

12.1 Stealing will be permitted for Minor/Major

12.2 Stealing will not be allowed on wild pitches/past ball

12.3 Any base runner is allowed to leave the base and take a secondary as the pitched ball crosses home plate. Any base runner that is NOT back on their base by the time the pitcher steps back on the rubber is OUT"

- 12.4 Stealing will be allowed only once the ball has crossed the home plate
- 12.5 Stealing home base will not be allowed
- 12.6 The pitch must have been caught by the catcher to allow the attempted steal
- 12.7 Catchers are encouraged to catch the ball and guard the ball as part of the position
- 12.8 Any attempt to manipulate this rule and have the catcher intentionally drop the ball to prevent stealing will result in a warning given and a free base awarded for all repeated offences for the remainder of the game.
- 12.9 This prevents penalizing newer pitchers and catchers from many steals for lack of control and encourages normal play for experienced players
- 12.10 All runners are permitted to take a 3-step maximum “secondary lead” once the ball has crossed the plate. If a runner takes more than three steps and the batter does not hit the ball, a warning will be given to the runner for the first offence and the umpire may call an out for a 2nd offence during the same inning only. This is at the umpire’s discretion.
- 12.11 If a runner leaves the base prior to the ball crossing the plate, an umpire warning will be given. If a runner again leaves the base prior to the ball crossing the plate, the umpire can call the runner out.

13 Pitch Count

- 13.1 For the 2025 season, please see Pitch Count Summary at the end of this document
- 13.2 Completion of Batter

If a pitcher reaches the pitch-count limit for their age, or day(s) of rest threshold while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until the batter reaches base, the batter is retired, or the third out is made to complete the half-inning. 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 before delivering a pitch to another batter.

14 Minor/Major Pitch Count Summary:

- 14.1 Maximum of two (2) innings pitched
- 14.2 If a player pitches one (1) inning or less, one (1) calendar day of rest must be observed
- 14.3 If a player pitches 60 pitches within the first inning, two (2) calendar days of rest must be observed, and the pitcher must be replaced
- 14.4 If a player pitches more than one (1) inning, two (2) calendar days of rest must be observed
- 14.5 If a player pitches 60 pitches within the second inning, two (2) calendar days of rest must be observed, and the pitcher must be replaced
- 14.6 **NOTE 1: Under no circumstance shall a player pitch in three (3) consecutive days.**

14.7 **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.**

15 Pitcher/Catcher Rule

15.1 A pitcher that delivers more than 41 pitches in a game can does not play the position of catcher for the remainder of the game.

15.2 Any player that plays the position of catcher for 4 or more innings is not eligible to pitch.

NOTE: If a pitcher reaches 40 pitches while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch, and maintain their eligibility to play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day, until any one of the following conditions occurs: (1) that batter reaches base; (2) that batter is retired; (3) the third out is made to complete the half inning or the game; or (4) the pitcher is removed from the mound prior to the batter completing his/her at-bat. The pitcher would be allowed to play the catcher position if pitcher is moved, removed, or the game is completed before delivering a pitch to another batter. If a player delivers 41 or more pitches, and is not covered under the threshold exception, the player may not play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day.