



BEHAVIOUR AND UNIFORMS

1. Coaches must consistently role model sportsmanship, respect, and create a positive, fun, and safe environment for young athletes to learn and develop.
2. Coaches must maintain control over the players on the benches at all times. Players should be encouraged to sit on the bench in their proper batting order. A coach, manager or parent should be present on the bench to ensure the dugout is kept under control.
3. Players will wear; running shoes or cleats (no metal spikes), grey baseball pants with belts, team shirts (tucked in) and team hats. Players must wear a protective cup and no player should play the back-catcher position if they aren't wearing one. (Yes, they will complain about this)
4. Helmets must be worn at all times by batters and baserunners.
5. Back catchers shall wear full protective catchers' gear including facemask, throat mask, chest protector, shin and kneepads regardless of whether they are warming up or playing the game.
6. No player is permitted to wear any form of jewelry.
7. All players must remain inside the dugout except the person up to bat. There are no on-deck circles and no warming up outside the dugout.

FIELD SET-UP

8. Home team is responsible for the preparation of the field before the game and for putting the equipment in the lockbox at the end of the game. This includes raking the pitching mound and home plate area both before and after the game. If it is the first or only game of the day, the home team should also line the field.
9. Field lining should include:
 - Batter's box
 - Foul lines extended past first and third bases to the outfield
 - Baselines from 1st to 2nd and 2nd to 3rd (time permitting – helpful for teaching the kids where to run and keeping defensive players out of the basepath)
 - Home run line comprised of flags or pylons (minimum 5) at 120' from home plate
10. It is important to arrive at least 30 minutes before game time to have field properly set-up including pitching machine. The pitching machine will require some amount of adjustment, especially if first game of the day

UMPIRES

11. “A Ball” games rarely if ever will have an umpire until playoffs. Respective coaches shall manage calls on the field, acting fairly and in good faith. Common sense should prevail (e.g. the third base coach shouldn't be the one to make a call at first base and the coach on the pitching machine logically should be calling strikes and keeping a pitch count).

HIGHLANDS LITTLE LEAGUE “DIVISION A”
RULES AND GUIDELINES
VERSION DATE 2024



12. Alternatively, the home team may assign a parent or coach to play the role of umpire and all calls during the game will be deferred to that person with assistance from the coaches where needed. Remember, the kids are there to have fun first and foremost!

GAME STRUCTURE

13. Home team will occupy the third base bench. Visiting team will occupy the first base bench.
14. Prior to the first inning the scorekeeper and umpire if present must be given a list of all players in their batting order. No changes to the list will be permitted during the game. If a player arrives late, their name must be added to the bottom of the list. Each player will bat in turn whether or not they are in the first fielding line-up.
15. Home team will supply the appropriate type of game ball for the division.
16. Each team must have a minimum of six players to start a game. If not, the game will be a forfeit and the score will be determined as 6-0. Teams may lend their opponent one or more players to fill out their roster, though a forfeit will still be recorded.
17. Unless a team is playing with fewer than nine players, coaches should not have a bucket of balls beside the pitching machine during the game. Coaches are encouraged to play a catcher every inning and that player should retrieve the ball and throw it back to the mound.
18. Each team will provide a scorekeeper and they will work together to ensure their records match throughout the game.
19. A league game shall ordinarily consist of four innings or ninety minutes of play, whichever comes first. No new inning may start after 90 minutes of play.
20. Except for the coach operating the pitching machine, coaches are not allowed on the field of play during the game. When their team is up to bat they are encouraged to coach from first or third base and must remain in the designated coaching boxes. Coaches of the fielding team must remain near their dugout.
21. No more than six runs may be scored by either team in one inning. After six runs are scored in one inning, the team in the field goes to bat, regardless of the number of outs. This rule does not apply to the playoff semi-finals and finals where the last inning shall be “open” with unlimited runs.
22. On the completion of the game, each team will cheer the other, line up along their respective baselines and proceed to shake hands with the opposing players at home plate. A relay race around the bases can occur.

TEAM ROTATION

23. Coaches will fairly rotate players through all positions; they may choose to do this by inning or by game.
24. Notwithstanding the above, each player must play a minimum of one inning in the infield and one inning in the outfield.
25. No player can sit off two innings in a row or sit out twice during the same game before all other players have sat out at least once.



BATTING

26. Coaches will use the pitching machine to pitch to their own team's batters. No walks allowed, players must hit or be struck out.
27. There will be a maximum of five pitches per batter (unless 5th pitch is fouled off). The batter will be out on the first to occur, three strikes (via missed swings or foul balls (excluding 5th pitch foul ball) or five pitches. This means, if the batter does not swing at the fifth pitch, they will be called out. The pitching machine will pitch strikes, kids should be encouraged to swing.
28. Umpires will be calling strikes. If there isn't an umpire, the coach operating the pitching machine will be responsible for making the call. Coaches are encouraged to be reasonable on these rules if the hitting team coach is having difficulty getting the pitching machine to throw strikes. Again, the goal is to get the kids to make contact and run the bases.
29. If a player throws his bat when running to first base, they will be given a warning. If it happens again in the same game, the batter will be called out. Coaches must educate their players on what to do with the bat after they hit the ball.
30. If a player throws their bat in a display of temper, it is left to the coach's discretion but is strongly encouraged they be removed from the game.
31. If the pitching coach or pitching machine is hit by the batted ball or during the fielding of the ball, the play is dead, a single is awarded, and all runners advance one base only.

BASE RUNNING AND FIELDING

32. There is no infield fly rule in effect.
33. There is no stealing and no lead-off.
34. If a rolling or bouncing ball crosses the home-run line, by error or otherwise, the batter is entitled to a two-base hit. A home-run ball must clear the home-run line in the air.
35. Fielders must stay off base paths unless making a baseball play. Fielders are not allowed to impede the runners or block the base paths or the bases at any time. Infielders should position themselves in front of or behind the base paths so as to avoid contact with runners.
36. There are no overthrows in this division. All players are encouraged to throw to bases, even if there is no chance of getting runner in time. No players will advance on any overthrow.
37. On an infield hit (as defined by a ball that does not go past any of the bases or base lines) runners may only advance one base and the play is dead once a throw to a base is attempted or the infielder has control of the ball.
38. When a ball is hit to the outfield, the play is dead once the outfielder has retrieved the ball and makes a motion to throw the ball to where the infield play would be. At this stage, players will simply continue to the base they are headed to. Base coaches should NOT get aggressive about sending stationary runners in this situation. The goal is to encourage fielders to throw quickly, not to create panic by pushing runners.



POSTPONED GAMES

39. Opposing coaches will decide if a game cannot be played due to weather; however, unless the game is called off early teams must be at the field ready to play. Three completed innings will constitute a game called due to the weather.
40. Rained out games should be rescheduled if possible and will be played over from the beginning if they were cancelled before three innings were completed.
41. Teams must arrange makeup games with their Age Group Coordinator based on field availability.