

DLL Local Rules – Funball Division

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The current Little League Baseball rulebook will govern all play not specified below.

Objective

The objective at this level is to ensure that every player have a safe and enjoyable playing experience. The emphasis is to be placed on developing a basic understanding of the game. This is a non-competitive program. Positive re-enforcement is key at this level.

Managers and coaches from both teams are required to work together during games, with the goal of providing the best possible learning environment.

The ball used at this level is a "softer" version of a regulation baseball, which greatly reduces the potential for serious injury.

The score shall not be kept.

The Teams

All eligible players of League Age 4 will be assigned to the Funball division. Some players of League Age 5 with little or no baseball experience may also be assigned to the Funball division. The number of players on each team will depend on the number of Team Manager applicants, but we hope to assign no more than 9 players per team. Team Managers must notify their Player Agent with 24 hours should your team lose a player (quits, injury, etc).

The Home Team

The home team shall utilize the 3rd base dugout.

DLL Local Equipment and Safety Rules

1. All batting helmets must have either a protective face cage or "C" flap (on the appropriate side of the helmet - left ear for right-handed hitter, right ear for left-handed hitter). (Tee Ball through Majors).
2. *All* male players *must* wear a protective cup.
3. No on-field batting practice before games. Batting practice with live balls is limited to the batting cages for those fields so equipped. This includes batting balls into fences, which is likewise banned at all times (including practice). Whiffle balls may be batted in the outfield under coach supervision except when the other team is taking infield practice. Balls may be hit into a portable batting net in the outfield under coach supervision except when the other team is taking infield practice.

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Mandatory Play

All players shall be listed in the batting order and shall bat once every inning.

Players arriving after the start of the game will be added to the end of the batting order.

All players shall play in the field every inning.

All players must play at least one inning in the infield and one inning in the outfield.

The Defense

All players shall play on defense every inning. The extra players must be positioned in the outfield. All outfield players shall be positioned at least 15 feet beyond the outfield grass cut.

A player in the outfield may not make a put out in the infield unless acting as a back up on a run down. The outfielder must throw to an infielder to make an out.

Up to three (3) defensive coaches may be positioned on the outfield grass in order to reposition and coach players both before and during live play. A fourth defensive coach should be placed by the backstop, near the catcher, in order to help prevent injury and to retrieve balls after the completion of a play or pitch. No other defensive coaches should be on the playing field.

The pitcher, catcher and 1st basemen shall wear a batting helmet while on defense.

The pitcher (player) shall be positioned with one foot on either side of the pitching mound, even with, or behind the pitching rubber.

The catcher shall be positioned in such a way that a potentially thrown bat poses no danger. For example, in the case of a right-handed batter, place the catcher a few feet behind and to the right of home plate. Reverse this for left-handed batters.

The infield fly rule is NOT in effect.

The Offense

The batting order will consist of all eligible players.

Two (2) adult base coaches are allowed, as long as there is at least one coach in the dugout. Base coaches must be adults.

All three innings of play will feature traditional T-ball play, with each player getting a turn to hit off the tee each inning. Although runners are removed when they are put out, the side does not retire until all players listed in the batting order have completed their turn at bat.

One (1) adult coach shall operate the tee and determine whether the ball is fair/foul. This coach should also police the home plate area to ensure the safety of the catcher.

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The Tee

The tee shall be placed directly in front of home plate. It shall not be placed on the plate. The tee should be placed such that the ball is above the front edge of home plate.

The Batter

All batters shall wear a helmet.

The batter swings at a ball placed on the tee until the ball travels at least ten feet into fair territory.

Strikes shall not be recorded.

There is no penalty for “throwing” the bat after a swing, but when this happens the offensive manager should call time after the play is over to explain to the batter what happened and to teach the proper method of dropping the bat. If the same batter continues to throw the bat, and the defensive catcher is at risk of injury, the manager should consider removing the player from the game for the safety of others until the player has learned the proper way to drop the bat.

The Runner

All base runners shall wear a helmet.

Stealing is not allowed.

The runner is removed from the base when he/she is put out.

There is no advance on an overthrow. For balls hit to the outfield, base runners may advance until the ball has been thrown into the infield and an infielder gains possession of it while in fair territory. If a base runner is more than half way to the next base, he/she may attempt to reach the next base at the risk of being tagged out. Otherwise the runner must return to the last base legally occupied.

Bottom line: Employ common baseball sense when deciding when to allow runners to take an extra base. If it is good fundamental baseball (e.g. the ball is beyond the outfielders) then by all means let the runners take another base and the batter to get a double or triple. If it is not good fundamental baseball (e.g. the outfielder has the ball and the only reason you are sending the runner is because you know there is a 10% chance of the outfielder and infielder completing a good throw & catch) then hold the runner.

The last batter runner may only run as far as his/her hit allows or the batter/runner has been put out. At that point all play, and runners, shall stop and the half inning shall end. NO EXCEPTIONS!! Allowing the last batter to continue around the bases poses an injury risk to defensive players coming off the field, and encourages poor fundamental base running.

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Starting and Ending the Game

A maximum of three innings shall be played at this level.

The game will end **1 hour** after the SCHEDULED game time or after the published sunset time for that game day, whichever is earlier.

Regardless of the time of day, play should be terminated whenever early darkness poses a safety hazard to the players. The managers should make the call to terminate play when darkness becomes a safety issue. The sunset time rule does not apply to lighted fields.