

# American League Rules

March 14, 2008

The **American League** continues to focus on player development. During the regular season all players will be given equal playing time, opportunities to develop at different fielding positions and at bats. The American League is selected through tryouts of all interested 11 and 12-year-old players. Little League Baseball, Inc., headquartered in Williamsport, PA, publishes a handbook titled "Official Regulations and Playing Rules" which East Tonka Little League abides by. ETLL supplements or reinforces Little League rules with the following local rules: (Games played at South Tonka parks will be governed by South Tonka local rules.)

## **General Rules**

1. Players, coaches, parents and fans will observe the *ETLL Code of Conduct* at all times.
2. The umpires are in complete control of the game, including starting and ending times. All coaches, players and fans must abide by their rulings. There will be no protests of umpire rulings.
3. Coaches may not leave the dugout and go out onto the field without first getting the approval for a "Time Out" from the umpire.
4. Each game has 6 innings or a time limit of 1 hour 55 minutes from the SCHEDULED start time of the game, unless you are the last game of the day on your field. A new inning may not be started with less than 15 minutes remaining before the scheduled start time of the next game. **Without exception, regardless of the game circumstances, the game must end five minutes before the scheduled start of the next game.** If the game is stopped due to the 5 minute rule, and the home team is behind, the score will revert back to the score at the end of the last completed inning. A complete game is 4 completed innings or 3.5 innings if the home team is ahead.
5. During the first 3 weeks of the season, any game not completed due to darkness should be scheduled for completion at the next earliest time convenient to both teams. Any games rained out prior to being a complete game, should also be rescheduled quickly.
6. All games ending in a tie will be recorded as a tie. Exception: when there are no further games scheduled for that field for that day, the game must be played until the tie is broken or game is called due to weather or darkness by the umpire.
7. Teams are responsible for cleaning their dugout and the bleacher areas following each game. After the final game of the day the home team should put the tarps on the mound and home plate.
8. The home team will supply two new game balls and a sufficient number of "backup" balls to the umpire and occupy the third base dugout.
9. All batters, base runners and player-base-coaches must wear a helmet. Catchers must wear all catchers' gear including a catcher's mask. And all players must wear a protective cup.
10. Only coaches and players are permitted in the dugouts - friends or relatives are not. Bat girls or boys are not permitted.

## **Fielding**

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11. A team must field at least nine (9) players to start AND finish the game or will forfeit the game. An unofficial game can be played with borrowed fielders from the other team being used in the outfield. The umpires will not be required to stay as it is not an official game.
12. All players must play in the field at least 9 outs. No player shall sit out defensively more than one consecutive inning or two innings in a game. All players should sit an inning on the bench before any player sits out two. Players will have a chance to play both infield and outfield during the year and coaches are encouraged to rotate players to different positions throughout the game. A team may deviate from playing-time rules for disciplinary reasons with prior approval from the league director.
13. **Pitchers must follow the LL pitch count program.** Any player on a regular season team may pitch. There is no limit to the number of pitchers a team may use in a game. A pitcher remaining in the game, but moving to a different position, can not return as a pitcher anytime in the remainder of the game. The manager must remove the pitcher when said pitcher reaches the 85 pitches, but the pitcher may remain in the game at another position [other than catcher](#). Please see "Pitching Rules" for 11 and 12 year old pitching rules.

## Hitting and Running

14. All players must bat at least once during the game. Teams will bat in continuous order, (round robin), with all players batting. The batting order for each game shall be determined by the head coach. During the season all players will have a chance to bat in different spots in the order. Late players will be added to the end of the order. If a player leaves a game early, his/her spot in the lineup will be skipped without penalty to the team.
15. Bunting and stealing all bases is allowed. The runner may not leave the bag until the pitched ball reaches the batter. This is defined as a ball that the batter is able to hit. Therefore, it may or may not have crossed the plate.
16. Runners may slide at any base and at any time. Headfirst slides are not allowed except when returning to a base. A player cannot run more than 3 feet off the base line to avoid a tag.
17. On any play at any base, the defensive player (fielder) may not block the base path until having the possession of the ball and ready to make a tag. Penalty for blocking the base path: runner is automatically safe.
18. Base coaches will be adults or properly equipped players. There may not be any assistant base coaches.
19. Runners may advance on an overthrow that remains in play, at their own risk. If a ball is thrown out of play, the batter/runners will be awarded one base past the base they were going towards at the time the ball went out of play, umpires discretion.
20. Play will be considered dead only when time has been called or granted by the umpire.
21. The infield fly rule will be enforced.
22. There is not an on-deck circle. All on-deck batters must stay in the dugout.

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23. American League Modification: The following rule applies to American League only. A 10 run rule is in place. After each complete inning starting with the 4<sup>th</sup> if one team leads by 10 runs or more they are declared the winner. Or, when the home team goes ahead by 10 runs in their half of the inning.

## **ETLL Pitching Rules**

24. Pitchers once removed from the mound may not return as pitchers. **Pitchers who deliver one or more pitches cannot play catcher for the remainder of that day.**
25. Any player on a regular season team may pitch and there is no limit to the number of pitchers a team may use in a game.
26. ETLL does not outlaw curveballs, because Little League Baseball allows them to be thrown. However we urge parents and coaches to recognize that some medical experts believe throwing curve balls incorrectly creates the risk of long term damage to a young player's arm. ETLL recommends to parents, coaches and players that curveballs not be thrown at the Little League level.
27. Appropriate Innings Pitched per game. Starting in 2006 ETLL has adopted the pitch count method of controlling the use of pitchers. However ETLL would like to give as many players as possible the opportunity to develop as pitchers over the course of the year. The following recommendations for use of pitchers are suggested during the regular season. In the post season pitchers may be used longer.
28. **Pitch Count Rules and Rest:** Pitchers at all levels must adhere to the following Little League rest requirements:
- If a player pitches 61 - 85 pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest must be observed **Plus one game.**
  - Example: Throw 65 pitches Sunday: Rest; Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday; Pitch again Thursday **provided the one game rule has been fulfilled.**
  - If a player pitches 41 - 60 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest must be observed **plus one game.**
  - If a player pitches 21 - 40 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar day of rest must be observed.
  - If a player pitches 1-20 pitches in a day, no calendar day of rest is required before pitching again.
  - **Note the maximum pitch count for 9-10 year olds is 75 per day vs. 85 for 11-12 year olds.**
  - **Pitchers may not pitch in more than one game in a day.**
29. Each team must designate the scorekeeper or another game official as the official pitch count recorder. The pitch count recorder must provide the current pitch count for any pitcher when requested by either manager or any umpire. However, the manager is responsible for knowing when his/her pitcher must be removed. The official pitch count recorder should inform the umpire-in-chief when a pitcher has delivered his/her maximum limit of pitches for the game. The umpire-in-chief will inform the pitcher's manager that the

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pitcher must be removed. However, the failure by the pitch count recorder to notify the umpire-in-chief, and/or the failure of the umpire-in-chief to notify the manager, does not relieve the manager of his/her responsibility to remove a pitcher when that pitcher is no longer eligible. Violation of any section of this regulation can result in protest of the game in which it occurs.

30. Pitchers must follow the LL pitch count program. The manager must remove the pitcher when said pitcher reaches the 85 pitches (75 for 9-10 year olds), but the pitcher may remain in the game at another position other than catcher.
  - Exception: If a pitcher reaches the 85 pitch limit while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until that batter reaches base or is put out. If the pitcher reaches the limit on his/her last pitch to a particular batter, the pitcher must be removed before delivering a pitch to the next batter.
31. American League 11 year old pitching requirements
  - 12 year olds may pitch up to  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the total innings pitched in a week, with 11 year olds required to pitch at least  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the total innings pitched in the week. 12 year-olds are allowed to pitch the first 6 innings in a week meaning that the  $\frac{3}{4}$  ratio may not apply in a week with only 1 game.
  - For this regulation a pitching week will be used which runs from Sunday through the following Saturday.
32. One pitch is considered an inning pitched. This means that in a 6 inning game, more than six innings can be pitched for counting purposes.

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## 2008 ETLL Leagues and Age Local Rules

Starting in the 2006 season Little League International (LLI) changed the date that determines a player's playing age from July 31st to March 30th. To help families and players enjoy their baseball experience, ETLL adopting "Local Rules" allowing players who are affected to continue to play with their grade in school. In 2006 each player decided if they were going to "play in their LLI age" or "play with their grade". ETLL will not consider requests to "play up" or "play down" beyond this exception.

Returning players in 2008 will advance to the next league from their 2007 season. Only 11 and 12 year olds may try out for the American League. All players that were 9 years old by LLI rules in 2007, but opted to "play with their grade" in the 10AAA league, will play in the National League in 2008. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

For players new to ETLL this year they may play in the following leagues.

American League: Players born on or between May 1, 1995 and April 30, 1997; try outs required, a limited number of players selected. (See note 2 below)

National League:: Players born on or between May 1, 1995 and April 30, 1997; and players entering the 6th grade in the fall of 2008. (See note 3 below)

10AAA League: Players born on or between May 1, 1997 and April 30, 1998; and players entering the 5th grade in the fall of 2008. (See note 3 below)

9AA League: Players born on or between May 1, 1998 and April 30, 1999; and players entering the 4th grade in the fall of 2008. (See note 3 below)

8A League: Players born on or between May 1, 1999 and April 30, 2000; and players entering the 3rd grade in the fall of 2008. (See note 3 below)

Coach Pitch - 7: Players born on or between May 1, 2000 and April 30, 2001; and players 2nd grade entering the in the fall of 2008. (See note 3 below)

Coach Pitch - 6: Players born on or between May 1, 2001 and April 30, 2002; and players entering 1st grade in the fall of 2008. (See note 3 below)

Rookie League: Players born on or between May 1, 2002 and April 30, 2003; and players entering Kindergarten in the fall of 2008. (See note 3 below)

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1. Players must play in their ETLL appropriate age group and league. Players may not play “up” or “down”. Rare exceptions may be made for extreme medical / physical limitation.
2. To try out for an American League team players must be 11 or 12 years old by LLI definition. (See below)
3. All players are encouraged to play with their LLI age group and are not required to play with their grade. For a player to play outside their LLI age group, but with their grade, parents must provide a copy of the player’s current report card with school contact information.
4. Once a player is assigned to a regular season team they must play the entire summer at that level. (Players may not change age groups during the season or for post-season play)
5. Players who choose to play with their grade during the regular season may not be eligible for post-season tournaments because they fall outside the age range required by LLI or the tournament sponsor. This is at your own risk.
6. Players that decide to play up with their grade will continue to play up with their grade throughout their ETLL career.
7. Players from outside ETLL boundaries must play in their appropriate LLI age group. (See below)

## 2007 Little League International (LLI) official age groupings:

- 12 year olds: born on or between May 1, 1995 and April 30, 1996.
- 11 year olds: born on or between May 1, 1996 and April 30, 1997.
- 10 year olds: born on or between May 1, 1997 and April 30, 1998.
- 9 year olds: born on or between May 1, 1998 and April 30, 1999.
- 8 year olds: born on or between May 1, 1999 and April 30, 2000.
- 7 year olds: born on or between May 1, 2000 and April 30, 2001.
- 6 year olds: born on or between May 1, 2001 and April 30, 2002.
- 5 year olds: born on or between May 1, 2002 and April 30, 2003.
- 4 year olds: born on or between May 1, 2003 and April 30, 2004.