



Lake Orion Youth Baseball League



Rule Book

Highlights Indicate Rule Changes

I. GENERAL

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Baseball Rulebook will serve as the playing rules for the Lake Orion Youth Baseball League except as amended as provided in the LOYBL Rulebook below.

1. The action of all players, coaches, managers, umpires, and parents must be above reproach. ANY person, in the opinion of the umpire, not acting in the best interest of the League, will be required to leave the area. Further, if, in the opinion of the umpire, any relative of a player is not acting in the best interest of the League, not only will he be requested to leave the playing area, but that player may be ejected from the game by the umpire. Failure to comply with the umpire's ruling may result in forfeiture of the game by the offending team. The umpire should make a full written report of the incident within 24 hours of the game. Further disciplinary actions may be taken by the League, including, but not limited to, revocation of the coach's team.
2. Only uniformed players, managers, coaches, and umpires are permitted within the confines of the playing field prior to and during the game. Except for the batter, the on-deck batter, base coaches, and base runners, all team members must remain in their dugout while their team is at bat. When a team is on defense, all extra players must remain in the dugout, with the exception that pitchers may warm up outside the playing area.
3. The use of hitting sticks and/or other similar training apparatus is prohibited once a game starts. This rule applies not only to the actual playing field, but to all surrounding area in foul territory, behind or near the benches, behind the backstops, bleachers, etc. If using a hitting stick or similar training apparatus as part of a pre-game activity it must take place with-in the confines of the game field fencing.
4. Only managers, coaches, assistant coaches, or players on the roster are allowed to coach the bases. The only exception is that, if there are an insufficient number of coaches in any given game, the manager may appoint a substitute coach for that game.
5. A manager or coach may not leave the vicinity of his bench except to confer with an umpire or one of his players or to serve as a base coach.
6. No tobacco, marijuana, illegal drugs, or alcohol is permitted on the playing field or dugout areas. Spectators must also refrain from the use of these substances while watching the game.
7. Prior to the draft each team is allowed one head coach and two assistant coaches.
8. The head coach of the winning team must report the score of the game directly on the QuickScores website as soon as possible after the game, and prior to 9pm the day following the game. Names of each pitcher that was used by both teams and the number of pitches that each pitcher pitched is also required.

9. Each team will have an official scorekeeper. The scorekeepers will compare scores at the end of each half inning, and keep the number of pitches pitched by each pitcher.
10. Players in school ball governed by the MHSAA cannot practice or play in games until the school season is complete. Violation of this rule will result in forfeiture of all games in which that player participated.

II. PLAYING MINIMUMS, PLAYERS, AND INNINGS

All team members present in uniform that are ready, willing, and able to play, shall bat in a continuous batting order and play at least three innings defensively. Additionally, each player shall play a minimum of one inning within the first three innings of the game. If a team member is present in uniform but unable to play, the head coach must inform the opposing team prior to the start of the game, and that player shall be deemed ineligible to play that game. In the event a player arrives after the game has begun, he will be placed at the end of the batting order. In order to enter the game, the player must be available to play the three innings defensively. In the event of a Mercy Rule, the playing minimums will not apply for that game. Violations of this rule will result in forfeiture of the game in which the infraction took place.

1. Tee Ball, Clinic, and Junior Division line-ups will consist of ten defensive players, four of which will be outfielders. Intermediate and Senior Division line-ups will consist of nine fielders. All teams must field a pitcher and a catcher, regardless of player minimums.
2. A game shall consist of seven innings in the Senior and Intermediate Divisions, and six innings in the Junior and Clinic Divisions. An abbreviated game shall be counted as official if four innings have been played (3 ½ with the home team ahead) in the Major, Senior and Intermediate Divisions. An abbreviated game shall be counted as official if three innings (2 ½ with the home team ahead) have been played in the Junior and Clinic Divisions. A game with less than the minimum innings played will continue from the point of suspension if called due to reasons such as rain or darkness. No game will start over from the beginning.

III. PROTEST

1. The proper protest procedure is for the head coach to inform the umpire that the game is being played under protest. THIS MUST BE DONE AT THE POINT THE ALLEGED VIOLATION OCCURS. After one pitch has been made the protest cannot be accepted. A written summary of the protest must be submitted to the league coordinator within twenty-four hours of the game's conclusion. The umpire will note the game conclusion time on the winning team's scorecard and the official game summary sheet.
2. Judgment calls cannot be protested.
3. All protests shall be decided ruled on by the league coordinator.

IV. STARTING TIMES, FORFEITURES, DELAYED GAMES, AND MERCY RULES

1. Starting times: Game starting times will be posted to the online league schedule. The scheduled start time for a game will be used to determine the time limit. (Unless either the field is not available for play or an umpire is not present) Thirty minutes prior to starting time, the visiting team shall have the field for practice purposes. Fifteen minutes prior to starting time, the home team shall have the field for practice. Games are scheduled for one hour and fifty minutes, with no inning starting after the one hour and fifty-minute time limit; all started innings should be completed. For purposes of this rule, the next inning starts at the moment that the third out from the previous

inning is made. In the case of a tie, ONE extra inning will be played if the inning begins within the time limit. All decisions made under this rule are within the umpire's sole discretion.

2. All players must show up at the field even when it is raining unless otherwise notified by the head coach. The other exception is if the tornado siren is blowing.
3. A rain-out will not be considered if one of the teams cannot provide at least seven players within fifteen minutes after the starting time. In this instance, a forfeit will be declared.
4. The home team shall have the responsibility of having the field ready for play by game time and to clean up the field immediately following the game (e.g., remove and store bases, machines, pitching rubbers, etc.). Each team is responsible to clean up its respective dugout area following the game.
5. Each team must have a minimum of seven players to start and finish a game. Fifteen minutes grace time is allowed before a forfeit is called. The game time limits are in effect from the scheduled game time. The exception is that after the grace period has expired, the visiting team may take its first at-bat with less than seven players. If seven players are not present by the time all present team members have batted or in time to take the field, the game is forfeited. If any game is started with seven players, outs are awarded in the normal manner. If the roster drops below seven, for any reason, the game will be forfeited at that point.
6. All games shall be delayed immediately when weather conditions threaten the safety of the players. If, in the opinion of at least head coach and the umpire, weather or field conditions warrant postponement, the game shall be postponed. If lightning is observed, teams should leave the field immediately. The game should not resume until 30 minutes after the last observed lightning. In case of a weather-related delay of at least 30 minutes, one (1) fifteen-minute extension will be added to the game time limit if no other game or practice follows immediately. The home team head coach will be responsible for alerting the league coordinator if a game in progress is delayed or abbreviated due to weather. Postponed games will be resumed with the exact game situation that existed when the game was postponed, including lineups if those players are present.
7. If a player is absent for the make-up game there are no automatic outs in this instance. A player missing the original game may play in the make-up and enters at the end of the original batting order.
8. The Mercy Rule is in effect if either team is ahead by ten or more runs at the end of five innings. The mercy rule is in effect at the end of four innings for the Junior and Clinic Divisions. At that point, the game will be considered complete.
9. No automatic out will be assessed to a player who leaves a game and the player's spot in the batting order reappears before the end of the game, unless the player has been ejected. Opposing head coach and umpire should be made aware of the change to the line-up.
10. No game will be rescheduled due to matters of inconvenience

V. UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

All players shall be in uniform for each game. Teams will wear uniforms supplied by the League only.

1. Metal cleats are not allowed.

2. Catchers are required to wear all protective equipment while catching (mask, helmet, throat protector, chest protector, shin guards, and protective cup).
3. **SEE END OF RULE BOOK FOR BAT RULES**
4. All batters and base runners shall wear batting helmets. Runners who intentionally remove their helmets while running will be called out.
5. The umpire will not allow a player to enter the batter's box without a helmet.
6. It is recommended that all players wear protective cups.
7. Pitchers in the Clinic and T-Ball Divisions are required to wear helmets with face cages.
8. Each manager will supply one new game ball for each game.

VI. SPORTSMANSHIP

1. A base runner maliciously running into a defensive player, including the catcher will be ejected from the game. It is up to the umpire to decide whether the collision is malicious. Runners should be instructed to slide or otherwise attempt to avoid a collision. Runners are never required by rule to slide into any base. Defensive players should not stand in the base path unless they are attempting to make a play.
2. Players throwing helmets or bats in anger are subject to ejection from the game. A team will get one warning, the second offense will result in an out being called on the player.
3. Substantial emphasis will be placed on good sportsmanship. Team members cannot make derogatory remarks or gestures to any official or member of the opposing team, or attempt to distract an opposing player by talk or action while that player is batting or fielding. Umpires will be encouraged to eject from the game anyone not complying with this rule.
4. An offensive player hollering at a defensive player in order to cause a mistake can be called out for offensive interference.

VII. TOURNAMENT SEEDING

1. Seeding for the year-end tournament will be determined as described below: In the event of a tie between any positions, the tie will be broken as follows:
 - A. Head-to-head record
 - B. Total runs allowed
 - C. Run differential of tied teams
 - D. Flip of a coin

VIII. PITCHING

1. Pitchers will be limited to the number of pitches they may throw in any one calendar day.
 - a. **SENIOR – 80 pitches**
 - b. **INTERMEDIATE – 75 pitches**
 - c. **JUNIOR – 70 pitches**
2. Pitchers are limited to the number of pitches they may throw in one week. A week is Monday – Sunday.
 - a. **SENIOR – 160 pitches**

b. INTERMEDIATE – 150 pitches

c. JUNIOR – 140 pitches

3. Mandatory rest will be enforced based on the following table of pitches thrown in a day for all divisions.

a. 0 – 20 Pitches	May Pitch the next day
b. 21 – 35 Pitches	May Pitch after one full calendar day
c. 36 – 50 Pitches	May Pitch after two full calendar days
d. 51 – Max for division	May Pitch after three full calendar days

Example: If a pitcher throws 70 pitches on a Friday then they are not eligible to pitch again until Tuesday of the following week.

4. If a pitcher pitches one pitch in an inning, he will be considered to have pitched. If a pitcher is removed from the mound, he may be removed from the game defensively or move to a defensive position. He may not return to the mound as a pitcher at any time for the remainder of the game.
5. Pitches thrown in a game delayed, postponed, or otherwise declared no contest are charged against the pitcher for that day/week. Violations will result in a forfeiture of the game in which the infraction took place.
6. Pitching – Pitch Counts. In order to enforce Rules VIII 1 and VIII 2 the pitch count will be kept by a scorekeeper on each team and verified at the conclusion of each half inning or at the time of a pitching substitution. The base umpire will keep track using a mechanical pitch counter of pitches made in the current half inning by the current pitcher and will provide this information to either scorekeeper upon request. It is the responsibility of the manager and/or scorekeeper to alert both teams to a pitcher reaching the pitch count limit. Once reached, that pitcher may upon discretion of the manager complete pitching to any batter that was at bat (AT bat defined in this instance as having received at least ONE pitch) when the pitch count was reached. Pitching statistics for each pitcher used in the game will be kept and provided to the league coordinator within 24 hours of the conclusion of the game. Violations will result in a forfeiture of the game in which the infraction took place.
7. Intentional walks are not allowed.
8. Curve balls are not allowed in the Junior and Intermediate Divisions. Whether a pitcher has thrown a curve ball is within the umpire's sole discretion. If a pitcher has thrown a curve ball, the umpire shall warn both the pitcher and their coach. After the first warning is issued, subsequent violations of this rule may result in removal from the pitching position for the remainder of the game.
9. Eight practice pitches are allowed for any new pitcher. Five practice pitches are allowed for returning pitchers.
10. The Balk Rule shall be in effect for all divisions utilizing pitchers. No warnings will be issued if runners are on base in ANY division. Warnings can and will be given ONLY when no runners are present and are limited to one per pitcher as a developmental opportunity. A balk shall be called per NFHS rules of baseball or called if:
 - a. The pitcher drops the ball while standing on the pitching rubber
 - b. The pitcher fakes a throw to first or home plate while standing on the mound
 - c. The pitcher fails to noticeably pause when pitching from the set position,
 - d. The pitcher stops in the middle of his wind-up, unless time is called.
 - e. The pitcher rotates his shoulders after coming to a set position

11. Bases/pitching mound distances for each division shall be:
 - a. SENIOR – 80’ bases/56’ mound
 - b. INTERMEDIATE – 70’ bases/50’6” mound
 - c. JUNIOR – 60’ bases/46’ mound
 - d. CLINIC – 60’ bases/45’ to front of pitching machine wheel
 - e. TEE BALL – 50’ bases/45’

IX. COURTESY RUNNERS

1. When a courtesy runner is required, due to injury or running for the pitcher or catcher, the batter making the previous out shall be used. Neither the pitcher nor the catcher will be required to leave the game under such circumstances.
2. A player may not run as a courtesy runner for the pitcher or catcher and then be used as a runner for another player in the same inning.

X. INJURIES

1. If a courtesy runner is substituted for an injured player, the umpire shall decide if the injured player may return to the game. This rule does not apply if the player leaves the game for any other reason, including ejection.
2. If there is an injury on the field, play will stop immediately and runners will be designated appropriate bases by the umpire.

Division Specific Rules

TEE BALL DIVISION SPECIFIC RULES

1. All players will bat and play the field every inning
2. The pitcher shall remain within the pitcher’s 20’ circle until the ball is hit off the tee. No team may field more than four infielders, not including the pitcher and the catcher.
3. Any ball hit off the tee that comes to rest within a 15’ radius of home plate shall be considered a strike. After two strikes, any ball hit into fair territory is playable.
4. Any batter failing to hit the ball into fair territory will be out after the third attempt.
5. Intentionally rolling a ball to make a put-out is not allowed. Players should be instructed to make an overhand attempt.
6. An offensive coach shall place the ball on the tee for the batter.
7. Two defensive coaches will be allowed in the field.
8. Base stealing is not allowed.

CLINIC DIVISION SPECIFIC RULES

These rules are in place to promote making the play and learning the fundamentals so that the players have the knowledge and confidence to advance to the next division.

1. The pitching machine will be located 45’ from home plate, as measured from the back tip of home plate to the

pitching machine wheel. The commissioner may recommend machine speed (36 mph), but ultimately the managers agree to the speed based on game conditions. Speed will be calibrated and agreed upon by both managers. If players are having difficulty hitting, the speed may be adjusted, but only at the top of an inning to a speed agreed upon by both managers. If a speed cannot be agreed upon, the umpire shall decide.

2. The pitcher shall stay on the first base side of the machine within a 4' circle until the ball is hit by the batter.
3. An adult offensive coach will load the machine and be responsible for the safety of the pitcher and any other player(s) that come near the machine.
4. If the batted ball hits the coach that is feeding the machine or the machine itself, it is considered a dead ball and the batter is awarded first base. All other runners advance one base. The coach must make an attempt to avoid being hit.
5. A base runner may only advance one base on a batted ball to the infield that results in an out on the initial play. In the event of an over throw/past ball/non-out, runners may advance until an infielder has control of the ball and calls time out.
6. When a ball is hit into the outfield, play shall stop when the ball is returned to an infield position in fair territory and the infielder can demonstrate control (by holding up his hands, asking for time, or other method deemed as control by the umpire). A throw to the pitcher is not necessary. If, in the umpire's judgment, a runner has advanced more than halfway to the next base before control is demonstrated, the runner is awarded that base (unless the runner is put out). Overthrow at first or third: only if the ball goes out of play (past the fence or boundary line) is the runner automatically awarded the next base. If the ball is in play, the same rule for runner advancement applies as for a ball hit to the outfield, the ball must be returned to an infield position before play can be stopped.
7. Bunting is not allowed.
8. Walks are not allowed.
9. Called balls or strikes will not be made.
10. The batter is out after three strikes.
11. The maximum allowable pitches delivered to a batter are five. However, once the fifth pitch is reached, there is no limit on the number of consecutive foul balls that a batter may hit. If five pitches occur, and the last pitch does not result in a foul ball, the batter is then out, unless he or she safely reaches base. The machine will not be adjusted per individual batter. The height of the machine can be checked and adjusted at the start of every half inning or if the machine begins pitching erratically.
12. Base stealing is not allowed. Leading off is not allowed. A runner may not leave his base until the ball is hit. Runners will be given one warning, and then called out on the second occurrence, for leaving the base early.
13. Courtesy runners will be allowed only in case of injury or the offensive player leaving the game for some other reason.
14. One defensive coach will be allowed to stand 20 feet behind both first and third base in foul territory only. The defensive coaches should not be on the playing field at any time while the ball is in play. This 20-foot delineation will be considered the outfield minimum distance for defensive players during each game and should be agreed

upon by both head coaches and the umpires during the pre-game meeting.

15. The coaches which have been designated as defensive coaches on both the first and third base lines may be asked to assist with fair and foul calls in the event that the umpire is unable to determine whether to batted ball was fair or foul. Defensive coaches will NOT be allowed influence in determining safe or out calls and will only be able to have input at the request of the umpire. The defensive coach on the side of the field where the play is in question will be the only coach with the ability to provide information to the umpire in these situations.
16. One baseball from each team will be supplied to the umpire before the game. These two baseballs should be the only baseballs used by the pitching machine coach. One ball should be kept in the possession of the umpire while the other ball is in play. If for some reason, the baseball has to be replaced, it should be on a one-to-one ratio.
17. The dropped third strike rule does not apply.
18. Each offensive side gets three outs or a maximum of six runs per inning. In the next inning, the batting order continues after the last batter in the previous inning.
19. Infield fly rule does not apply.
20. Outfielders must play a minimum of 20ft behind the baseline until a play has been initiated.

JUNIOR DIVISION SPECIFIC RULES

These rules are in place to promote making the play(s) and learning the fundamentals so that the players have the knowledge and confidence to advance to the next division.

1. Base stealing and leading off bases are allowed within a six-foot limit of the base as noted by a painted, chalked, or otherwise marked line in the base path. Exceeding that limit until the pitch has crossed the front edge of the plate will result in the runner being called out. Base stealing is limited to stealing second and third base while leading off is allowed at all three bases.
2. Runners may not come home on a wild pitch or passed ball, but may attempt to reach home base if a play is made on another runner. A pitch being returned to the pitcher by the catcher is NOT a play on another runner.
3. In instances where the offense has runners on first and third, the base runner may not advance from third to home on an attempted throw from the catcher to second base during a steal. The runner on third may only score on a ball hit into play.
4. A walk will be treated as a dead ball play.
5. The dropped third strike rule does not apply.
6. Each offensive side gets three outs or a maximum of six runs per inning. In the next inning, the batting order continues after the last batter in the previous inning.
7. Infield fly rule does not apply.
8. Outfielders must play a minimum of 20ft behind the baseline until a play has been initiated.

INTERMEDIATE DIVISION SPECIFIC RULES

1. Infield fly rule does not apply.
2. Outfielders must play a minimum of 20ft behind the baseline until a play has been initiated.
3. The dropped third strike rule does not apply in the Intermediate Division.
4. Each offensive side gets three outs or a maximum of eight runs per inning. In the next inning, the batting order

continues after the last batter in the previous inning.

MAJORS DIVISION SPECIFIC RULES

1. The Major division will adhere to the rules as published in the 2020 (or most current edition) National Federation of High School Associations (NFHS) book except as modified by the rules set forth by Independence Township.

Code of Conduct

The purpose of this section is to clearly document conduct expectations for league coordinators, coaches, players, parents, spectators, and all other LOYBL stakeholders and Orion Township. Failure to abide by the following code of conduct may result in disciplinary actions including but not limited to verbal warnings, written warnings, game suspensions, and season suspensions.

1. Individuals should act as positive role models for all involved. This includes good sportsmanship, showing respect, being courteous, and demonstrating positive support for all LOYBL or Orion Township stakeholders.
2. Individuals should not engage in or encourage any kind of poor sportsmanship with any umpire, player, coach, parent, or any other LOYBL or Orion Township stakeholder on or off the field. This includes but is not limited to taunting, booing, and offensive language or gestures.
3. Equipment is intended for Orion Township and LOYBL use. Individuals must ensure that Orion Township property (i.e. equipment) is only used for Orion Township sponsored activities unless receiving prior written permission to the contrary from the Orion Township.
4. Individuals should remember that the game is for the players, not the adults. Adults are here to provide a positive and fun learning environment for the players. Individuals should never yell or ridicule anyone for losing or making a mistake.
5. Individuals should put the physical and emotional wellbeing of the players ahead of their desire to win. Individuals should never encourage any activity or behavior that may endanger the health or wellbeing of the players.
6. Spectators should never attempt to question, confront, or engage coaches, players, or umpires at the game field (including practices). Such discussions should be held privately at the discretion of both parties involved. Offended coaches and players should report spectator misconduct to the umpire or League Coordinator without directly engaging the offending spectator. The offending coach shares behavioral responsibility for his/her offending spectator.
7. Individuals should avoid resorting to violence, hostility, or inappropriate/loud verbal encounters to resolve conflicts. Conflict resolution should be accomplished via calm discussions.
8. Individuals should promote teamwork, positive reinforcement, and ensure players know that doing their best is more important than winning. Players should be recognized for competing fairly and putting forth their best effort.

Bat Rules

LOYBL Bat Rules

The USSSA Bat Performance Factor (BPF) is no longer an approved certification for bats in LOYBL

Approved Bats beginning Spring 2020

Beginning in the Spring 2020 season LOYBL will be adopting the USA Baseball Bat standard (USABat). The below rules are broken down by division for LOYBL.

Tee Ball: Tee Ball bats must feature the USA Baseball Mark and it shall not be more than 26 inches in length and have text which reads "ONLY FOR USE WITH APPROVED TEE BALLS."

Clinic & Junior Divisions: The bat must feature the USA Baseball Mark and it shall not be more than 33 inches in length; nor more than $2\frac{5}{8}$ inches in diameter.

Intermediate & Senior Divisions: The bat must feature the USA Baseball Mark and it shall not be more than 34 inches in length; nor more than $2\frac{5}{8}$ inches in diameter. **BBCOR bats are still permitted in these divisions.**

For a list of approved USA Bats please use this link: [Approved USA Bats](#)