

SOLANA BEACH LITTLE LEAGUE LOCAL RULES

MAJORS *(updated 2/7/2024)*

A. GENERAL GUIDELINES

Solana Beach Little League is a recreational program. Equal emphasis should be placed on sportsmanship, teamwork, learning, fun and competition. Managers and coaches need to respond to all players, regardless of ability, in a positive and calm manner. Many children drop out of recreational youth sport programs because of managers and coaches who place too much emphasis on competition and who are less than patient with players who are not at the top of the game.

Managers, coaches, parents and players should show encouragement and good sportsmanship towards one another. **Derogatory remarks directed at players, managers/ coaches, parents, family members or umpires WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.** Managers are responsible for the behavior of their coaches, players, player's parents and family members.

Please make sure that all of your players are picked up by their parents or an authorized adult after all games and practices. You are responsible for your players until their parents or an authorized adult arrives. **If you are having problems with this issue, please alert the Player Agent or your Division Rep Immediately!**

The Little League Parent/Volunteer Pledge

- I will teach all children to play fair and do their best.
- I will positively support all managers, coaches and players.
- I will respect the decisions of the umpires.
- I will praise a good effort despite the outcome of the game.

B. DIVISION/PLAYER DESCRIPTION

Children league ages 9 through 12 who demonstrate the highest level of skill, coordination and understanding of the game during player evaluations are placed on a draft list as possible Majors Division players. Teams are created through a player draft. Managers of the Majors teams meet with league officials and draft players from the pool of registered players. Majors players "fine tune" fielding, throwing, hitting, running and pitching skills in competitive play. There are two games a week and one to two practices per week.

C. SCHOOL/FIELD CARE

Please Pitch In! Help Keep Our Schools & Baseball Fields Neat, Clean & Beautiful!

1. All Majors games, with the exception of some Interleague games, if scheduled, are played at Solana Vista Elementary.
2. Remove all trash bags that are half full from the trash cans.
3. Securely close the full trash bags and carry them over and deposit them into the dumpster located at the northeastern corner of the field. Please do not put inappropriate trash in the recycle dumpsters.
4. Please line the emptied trash cans with a clean trash bag liner. (Clean trash bag liners are conveniently stored in the bottom of each trash can.)

D. LOCAL RULES

NOTE: The Solana Beach Local Rules shall be followed by the teams participating in Solana Beach Little League. However, these local rules are **NOT** a complete list of all baseball rules applicable to the little league divisions. The Official Regulations and Playing Rules provided by Little League Baseball set forth the complete rules of the game. All managers and coaches shall have a good understanding of the Official Baseball rules. In the event of a conflict in the rules, the Solana Beach Local Rules shall be applied.

1. GENERAL

a. **Regulation games are played.** (Refer to Rule 4.10 and 4.11—special attention to 4.10c).

b. **Game Time.** Every effort must be made to start the game on time. If you have **eight (8)** players, you must start the game. If game delays become a problem, we will be forced to shorten your games by the period of time the game starts late. Starting the first morning games on time is critical.

c. **Run Limit.** There is no run limit in Majors.

d. **Time Limit.** There is a two-hour time limit for all games. The time begins when the Umpire starts the game. No new inning can begin after the two-hour limit, but if a new inning begins before the two-hour time limit, it will be completed unless darkness or weather prohibits it. The next inning starts the moment the third out occurs.

e. **Tie Game.** Tied ball games can go past six innings if it is within the two-hour time limit. If the game ends in a tie, each team is awarded one point. Wins count as two points, losses count as zero points.

f. **Mercy Rule.** If after four (4) innings, or three and one-half innings if the home team is ahead, one team has a lead of fifteen (15) runs or more, the manager of the team with the least runs shall concede the victory to the opponent.

g. **Rain Outs.** If a game is rained out, you must contact the Division Rep immediately and schedule a make up game.

h. **Rescheduled Games.** You may not reschedule a game without the approval of the Division Rep. For all rescheduled games, it is the home team manager's responsibility to contact the umpires and advise them of the changes. Contact information is provided separately.

i. **Dugouts.** Only three (3) adults (appointed managers/coaches) are allowed in the dugout or on the field during a game. One appointed manager/coach must stay in the dugout at all times when there are players on the bench. All players sitting on the bench waiting to bat or who are sitting out an inning, should stay in the dugout, unless they are warming up in the bullpen. No other adults or minors are permitted in the dugout.

j. **Disputes.** If there is a dispute about a game, please resolve the issue(s) with your Division Rep & the Player Agent, and if necessary, the President. No protests please. All protests must be made with the umpire before he leaves the field at the conclusion of the game.

k. **Dugout Assignment.** The home team will occupy the first base dugout.

l. **Game Forfeiture.** In the event of a forfeit, the game will be recorded as six innings with a final score of 6-0.

2. PRE-GAME

a. **Visiting Team.** The visiting team sets up the bases (if needed)

b. **Lineup Exchange.** At the beginning of the game, managers will exchange lineups. The Home Team will identify the official scorekeeper. Each manager will identify on the lineup, which players (if any) have limited pitching availability due to pitching in the previous days and game.

c. **Scorekeeping.** The home team is responsible for keeping score and for the official pitch count throughout the game. **Managers and coaches can NOT be official scorekeepers.** Only the official scorekeepers should be behind the plate area. Anyone behind the plate area must be supportive of all players, teams and the umpire. Any scorekeeper or spectator must refrain from making any comments related to the umpiring.

3. POST-GAME

a. **Dugout Clean Up.** Each team is responsible for cleaning up its own dugout after the game. Please have parents/managers/coaches clean out any equipment and trash in the dugout when the game is over so the next team can move in on time. Please move out of the dugouts promptly. Conduct team meetings and serve snacks off to the far sidelines so as not to interfere with the next team.

b. **Stat Reporting.** Each manager must provide to the division representative and official league scorekeeper after each game, the results, pitch counts, home runs and list of missing players and the basis for the player absence. Try to turn in results the night of or the day after the game; the players check the website frequently for updates! Please remember that if a player misses three (3) consecutive games, you must notify the Player Agent, Division Rep and President, and all Division Managers will be apprised of the situation if necessary.

c. **General Clean Up.** Please ask players and their family members to clean up dugout and bleacher areas after each game. We are completely responsible for cleaning up after ourselves! Thank you for your help.

d. **Visiting Team.** The visiting team drags the infield and locks bases in the first base dugout.

e. **Home Team.** If last game of the day, the home team makes sure batting cages are cleaned up and locked, covers the pitchers mound with the tarp and confirms bathrooms are locked.

4. PLAYERS

a. **Substitution.** There will be free player substitution throughout the entire season. Once a pitcher has been removed as a pitcher, that player cannot return as a pitcher. (Additional limitations on pitching and catching substitution noted below).

b. **Minimum Play. In the regular season,** all players will have a minimum playing time of four innings (4). No player can sit out two consecutive innings **and all players must sit out 1 inning if any player sits out 2 innings.** An exception is allowed for a team whose pitcher is in the process of pitching 4 or more consecutive innings. All players must play at least one (1) inning in a position other than the outfield (e.g. infield, pitcher, or catcher). You are encouraged to structure your game plans to allow all players equal playing time over the course of the season.

PLAYOFFS MINIMUM PLAY RULE: All players will have a minimum playing time of four (4) innings and no player can sit out two consecutive innings at a time before re-entering the game. All players must play at least one (1) inning in a position other

than the outfield.

c. Minimum Roster to Play. By rule 4.16, a game cannot begin with fewer than 8 players. By rule 4.17, a game cannot continue with fewer than 8 players. Having fewer than 8 players is a forfeit. To avoid that outcome, the board has authorized the Player Agent to maintain a pool of Majors Division replacement players and to assign players to teams that request replacements. Teams may contact Player Pool players directly. If Player Pool players are not available, the Player Agent shall assign substitute players to the team(s) in need of additional players. If time constraints preclude contacting the Player Agent, any player from the division in which the two teams are playing and who is willing to play as a substitute may be utilized by mutual agreement of both team managers involved in the game. Player Pool players are not eligible to pitch or catch, must bat last in the lineup (exception: another player arrives after game start) and must satisfy minimum play guidelines. All efforts should be made to play with at least 9 players.

d. Injuries. If a player is injured in a SBLL game, you must contact the Safety Officer and President in writing. Injured players, who have been injured in a SBLL game or elsewhere, must have a treating physician/facility, provide written authorization to resume play.

e. Discipline. If a Player is benched for disciplinary reasons, the Manager must discuss it with the Division Rep., the Player Agent and the Player.

f. Replacement. If a team loses a player for any reason, or a player on your team misses 3 consecutive games for any reason, the Manager must contact the Player Agent, Division Rep and President immediately. All Division Managers will be apprised of the situation. Managers/Coaches may not contact replacement players without the approval of the Division Rep, Player Agent and President.

5. PITCHING/CATCHING

a. Pitching Limits.

Age	Pitches Per Day
11-12	85 pitches
9-10	75 pitches

Exception: If a pitcher reaches the limit for his/her league age while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until that batter reaches base, is put out, or the third out is made. The pitcher shall not start a new batter once the limit is met.

NOTE: A pitcher's pitch count for purposes of day(s) rest threshold is determined by the first pitch thrown to a batter.

b. Days of Rest.

Pitches	Days
66 and ++	4 days
51-65	3 days
36-50	2 days
21-35	1 day
0-21	0 days*

****However, according to a new Little League rule for 2018 and beyond, a pitcher may not pitch more than two consecutive days, even if he/she has thrown fewer than 20 pitches each of those days.***

c. Intentional Walk. If a pitcher wishes to intentionally walk a batter, he/she must do so by pitching four pitches intentionally outside the strike zone that are not struck at by the batter, and are called "balls" by the umpire. All such pitches will count in determining that pitcher's pitch count. The catcher must stand with both feet within the lines of the catcher's box until the ball leaves the pitcher's hand (4.03).

d. Pitcher/Catcher Eligibility. After a player has entered the game as a pitcher, and **delivered 41 or more pitches**, that player will **no longer be eligible to play catcher** for that game and for that day.

Exception: If a pitcher reaches 40 pitches while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until that batter reaches base, is put out, or the third out is made. The pitcher would be allowed to play catcher provided that pitcher is removed from the mound prior to the next batter.

e. Catcher/Pitcher Eligibility. Any player who has played the position of catcher for 4 or more innings in a game is not eligible to pitch on that same day. Any portion of an inning constitutes a full inning.

NOTE: The catcher receiving one (1) pitch in the fourth inning constitutes having caught four (4) innings.

f. Removal of Pitcher. A manager may visit the mound **ONE TIME** in an inning before removing the pitcher. On the second visit in the inning that pitcher must be removed. A manager may visit the same pitcher **TWO times** during the course of a game. On the third visit that pitcher must be removed. The managers are encouraged to

avoid frequent visits to the mound to allow for the completion of the games in a timely manner.

g. Balks (Rule 8.05). Balks are not called in Little League. There are 11 actions that would be called balks outside of Little League, which are “illegal pitches.” An illegal pitch is a ball. If a play follows the illegal pitch, the manager of the offense may advise the plate umpire of a decision to decline the illegal pitch and accept the play.

h. Catcher Gear Requirements. All catchers in the act of catching a pitch must use a catcher’s glove and a catcher’s helmet, with a chin guard —no exceptions. Under no circumstances shall a male catcher not wear a protective cup for their groin area.

i. Player Gear Requirements. Any player serving as catcher while warming up a pitcher, both on the field and in the bullpen must wear a catcher’s helmet/mask and use a catcher’s glove. During the game **and during practices**, including pre-game warm up drills, any player standing near the plate and receiving throws from the defense must wear a catcher’s helmet/mask. Any male catcher involved in a game situation must also wear a protective cup. No exceptions.

j. Pitcher Warm Up. Once the game starts, no adult other than the 3 appointed Manager/ Coaches who are authorized to be in the dugout may warm up the pitcher if no other player is available or is willing to do so. This applies both on the field and in the bullpen. If one of the 3 appointed manager/coaches elects to warm up the pitcher, they do so at their own risk of injury as our league insurance does not apply under this circumstance.

k. Dropped Third Strike. The dropped third strike rule is in effect.

6. BATTING

a. Bat Around. All teams will utilize the “bat around” method for structuring their batting order. (A late arrival will be placed at the end of the batting order.) If a player is injured, becomes ill or must leave the game after the start of the game, that player’s turn in the order will be skipped without penalty. If the player returns, he/she will be inserted into the original spot in the lineup.

b. Fake Bunt. A fake bunt-swing away tactic **is not authorized**. Please advise your players of the dangers involved with this tactic and as always, safety first.

c. On Deck Batters. **No on deck batters are allowed anywhere.** Not in the bullpen, not on the sidelines and not in the dugout. No player should have a bat in his/her hands until he/she is walking to the batter’s box.

7. RUNNING

a. **Avoid Contact.** The runner is out if he does not slide or make an attempt to go around a fielder who has the ball and is waiting to make a tag (7.08a).

b. **Head First Slide.** The runner is out if he slides head first while advancing.

c. **Substitute Runners.** There are no substitute or courtesy runners allowed. If a player is physically unable to run (or play in the field), he will not be allowed to play in the game. **Exception:** If the player is injured while running the bases, a pinch runner may be used in the same inning only until the runner is declared out, the third out occurs or until the pinch runner scores. The pinch runner must be the player who made the last out before the injury occurred.

8. **FIELDING**

a. **Fake Tag.** A fake tag is considered obstruction and is grounds for appropriate discipline from the umpire.

b. **Infield Fly Rule.** Infield Fly Rule **is** enforced in Major.

9. **UMPIRES**

a. **Umpire Feedback.** Please contact the Division Manager with any concerns or issues with umpires.

b. **Umpire Priority.** If games are scheduled on both fields at Solana Vista and only one umpire shows up at that scheduled time, then that umpire automatically calls the game for the highest division playing (i.e., Majors, first priority; AAA, second priority; and AA, third priority). If no umpire is available for a game, the Manager of each team will act as umpire and call the game during the period that such Manager's team is in the field.

10. Season Standings/Tiebreaker System. There will be a season league champion. Each win is worth 2 points and each tie is worth one point. Teams should never attempt to "run up the score". Tiebreakers are decided:

1. Head to head
2. If more than 1 team tied or head to head tied, lowest runs against per inning (average over the season)

The season standings are used for determining the season champion and for seeding purposes for the end of the year tournament (s). Coast cities qualifying and seeding will be decided as follows:

1. League Champion
2. Tournament Champion

3. Second League
4. Second Tournament
5. Third League
6. Third Tournament
7. Fourth League
8. Fourth Tournament