



# 2025 HWLL LITTLE LEAGUE MAJORS COMMANDMENTS

## WEATHER

If you or the umpire hears thunder or sees lightning, you must clear the field and get everyone to safety. HWLL requires a 30 minute delay from the sound of thunder or sight of lightning. The safest place is in an automobile or in a grounded building (i.e. not in a shed). Avoid all metal objects, such as backstops and flagpoles, and do not shelter under a tree. Once a game is delayed due to thunder or lightning, it is the umpire’s decision, not the coach’s, as to whether or not play will resume. The umpire is ultimately responsible for deciding whether to terminate a game due to inclement weather.

Make-up games: a postponed game must be played on the next available date. The next available date should be no later than the weekend following the day on which the game had to be postponed. The availability of a manager or specific player should not impact rescheduling.

## TIME OF GAME / PACE OF PLAY

- Games are not to exceed 1 hour and 45 minutes, with the caveat that any inning which has been started prior to the time limit expiring will be completed. No new inning will begin once the 1 hour and 45 minute time limit has been reached.
- The umpire will determine the official start of the game and be responsible for tracking the time, not the coaches.
  - Ultimately, the decision to call a game should be left to umpire discretion. If a game is called, it is a regulation game so long as 4 innings have been completed (or 3 1/2 innings if the home team is winning).
  - Regular Season games can end in a tie and no extra innings will be required.
  - All playoff games must be played to completion. While the 1 hour and 45 minute time limit does not apply to the playoffs, a playoff game is complete if it’s called for weather or darkness so long as the minimum innings requirement (see 2nd bullet under Time of Game) is met.
  - The maximum amount of time in between innings is 2 minutes. This should allow more than enough time for the pitcher to throw the recommended 8 warm-up pitches.
  - The manager may go to the pitcher’s mound to talk to the pitcher no more than 2 times in one inning or 3 times in one game. A 3rd visit in an inning or the 4th visit in a game will require the pitcher to leave the game as a pitcher.
  - In situations where a playoff game is lopsided, a team may be running out of pitching, and the time limit has been passed, the losing team manager shall have the option to concede. (2025 Update)

## BASE RUNNING / STEALING

- Delayed stealing is permitted
- Baserunners MUST - slide or avoid fielders and MAY NOT slide head first when advancing. The umpire shall call any offending player out

## BUNTING

- Bunting is not limited but the same player should not be asked to bunt excessively.
- **NO Slash Bunts** Players may not fake a bunt, pull the bat back, and swing. The umpire shall call any offending payer out.

## CHANTING

Hamilton Wenham Little League Board of Directors recognizes that cheering on one’s teammates has been, and will forever be, an integral part of the Little League experience. With that being said, Managers are responsible for ensuring that the cheering remains positive and directed solely at their own team, as governed by Little League International Rule 4.06(c).

## ADDITIONAL RULES

- A minimum of 8 players is needed to start and finish a game
- Infield fly rule is in effect
- NO on deck & NO swinging outside dugout
- Dropped third strike rule is in effect. Batter may try to reach first when: The umpire calls the third strike AND the pitch is not caught, AND EITHER: First base is not occupied, OR There are two (2) outs.
- Both 1st and 3rd base coaches may be coaches.

## PITCHING

HWLL follows National Little League Pitching Rules and Limits. Pitch counts are to protect the pitcher. All pitch count limits should be followed even if the player is pitching in more than one League.

- 11-12: 85 pitches per day**  
**9-10: 75 pitches per day**  
**8: 50 pitches per day**

**Exception:** If a pitcher reaches the limit imposed for his/her league age while facing a batter; the pitcher may continue to pitch until the at bat is over. The pitch count will revert to the prior threshold. For example, Pitcher A has thrown 18 pitches prior to facing batter B. It takes 5 pitches to retire Batter B. If Pitcher A does not throw a pitch to another batter, his/her pitch count will revert to 20 pitches despite having thrown 23 pitches.

**Club Pitch Counts:** HWLL will abide by all Little League pitch count and days rest requirements inside of the confines of gameplay in HWLL. Pitch counts and rest days related to play outside of HWLL will be at the discretion of the player’s parent(s). Managers are expected to communicate with parents of prospective pitchers throughout the season to manage player safety.

### Pitchers league age 12 and under must adhere to the following rest requirements:

- If a player pitches **66 or more pitches** in a day, **4 calendar days** of rest required
  - If a player pitches **51-65 pitches** in a day, **3 calendar days** of rest required
  - If a player pitches **36-50 pitches** in a day, **2 calendar days** of rest required
  - If a player pitches **21-35 pitches** in a day, **1 calendar days** of rest required
  - If a player pitches **1-20 pitches** in a day, **0 calendar days** of rest required
  - NO Balks will be called & NO Intentional walks
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- A pitcher who delivers **41 or more** pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day.
  - A catcher who has caught **more than 3 innings** cannot pitch.
  - A player may not pitch in more than one game in a day.
  - Pitchers who hit 3 batters in one inning or 4 batters in one game must be removed as a pitcher.
  - 2 mound visits per pitcher per inning or 3 total per pitcher. The next visit must result in removal of the player as pitcher.
  - A pitcher once removed from the mound cannot return as a pitcher
  - NO Balks will be called & NO Intentional walks

## HWLL GAME PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES

**1)** Continuous batting order. All players available to play in a game will be included in the batting order. Every batter in the order bats before the first batter bats for his second time. A player reporting to a game late will be inserted as the last batter, unless his/her spot in the line up has yet to hit. A batter may be skipped without penalty due to injury or illness.

**2)** Playing time: No player may sit out more than two innings in a game (unless for disciplinary reasons, for chronic absenteeism, or injury). HWLL strongly encourages equal playing time for all of its players. Consecutively singling out any one player for less playing time is not permitted (i.e. don’t sit the same player two innings every game while other players are only sitting one). For example, if a team has two substitutes out per inning, every player must sit out at least one inning before a player sits out their second. The only exception to this rule is detailed below with a Major League Pitcher and Catcher.

**3)** Playing positions: Per game, each player must play **at least two (2) innings** (defined as six defensive outs which need not be consecutive) in the infield and **at least one (1) inning** (defined as three defensive outs which need not be consecutive) in the outfield by the end of the game. Not having the home half of the 6th inning is not an exception. The only exception to this rule is that a major league pitcher (and catcher who continuously catches that pitcher) may pitch up to his/her pitch limit and remain on the mound (and behind the plate), potentially for the entire game. If pulled from the mound before the end of the game, that pitcher (and catcher if they were continuously catching the pitcher) still need to fulfill their outfield and “sitting out” requirements (as defined in #2 Playing Time above) to the extent possible. For example, if a pitcher is removed after the 5th inning and the same catcher has been catching that pitcher continuously, the pitcher and catcher MUST fulfill their out-field requirement or sit out, they may not be reinserted in the infield. When deciding if the pitcher and catcher should sit out or play outfield, they can only be inserted into the outfield to the extent that this doesn’t result in another player sitting more than one inning. If it does, then the player must sit out.

Players arriving late to the game must fulfil their infield/outfield requirement if there is more than 1 inning remaining in the game. For example, if a player arrives in the 4th inning, that player can play any position including pitcher, but must still fulfil their outfield requirement by the end of the game. A late arriving player is required to sit out an inning only if it will prevent a player from sitting out for the second time. Players arriving in the 6th inning may play any position.

4) Nine (9) Positional Players: Play with three (3) outfielders. No short fielders are allowed and outfielders must be positioned on the outfield grass, at least ten (10) feet from the infield. A team can start and end a game with a minimum of eight (8)players.

5) Managers should strive to change lead off batters for every regular season game.

6) No “Ten-Run Rule.” Play the full 6 innings and coaches please make every effort to not let games get or continue to be out of hand (which a 10-run lead certainly implies).

7) All batters must have shirts tucked in and helmets properly on before they enter the batter’s box.

8) Tie break rules for post-season/playoff seeding in Majors and Minors:  
**a.** Win – Loss Record **b.** Head-to-Head Record **c.** Random Draw

9) Home vs Away Team: The Home Team will be responsible for paying the umpire and providing 3 game balls. The Home Team will occupy the first base dugout. The Away Team will use the field first for warmups, from a half hour before game time until 15 minutes prior to game time. The Away Team will occupy the 3rd base dugout. The Home Team will use the field from 15 minutes prior to game time until game time. Batting practice with baseballs is not allowed on the field within 30 minutes of game time. Following the game, both teams are responsible for cleaning up all trash in their dugouts and raking the dugout, home plate, and pitching mound areas, filling holes where appropriate.

10) Both Teams must count pitches and compare after each half inning. All disagreements must be settled prior to the start of the next inning. Mangers are responsible for knowing when their player reaches his/her pitch count.

11) A total of 3 Coaches including Managers are allowed in the Dugout. Only 2 coaches are allowed outside the dugout (on field) while team is on defense and 1 (+ base coaches) while team is on offense. All other Assistant Coaches must stay outside of the Dugout and off the field of play. (2025 Update)

12) Replacing Players for one game or longer: Managers who learn (a) they will or less than 10 players for a game for any reason or (b) a player will miss at least 2 weeks:

This spot on the roster must be filled and the Manager must notify the league director(s) for replacement. The replacement may come from a Wait List or the League directly below at the discretion of HWLL board. The replacement may be a permanent player or rotation of players based on the situation. However, any replacement player regardless of age would go back into the draft pool for the following season. It is understood that this may weaken the team who will be losing the player, but the overriding factor is an opportunity for another child to play or by giving a deserving player a promotion when a spot at the higher level is available. Any temporary player may not play the position of pitcher for the game that he/she is called up to play in. All requests for a replacement player must be made through the League Director(s).

13) Injured Player: If a base runner is injured and is unable to run, the manager may replace him/her with another runner. The replacement will be the last player in the batting order, previous to the injured player, who is not currently a base runner. The injured player may return to the game once he/she is able. If their spot in the batting lineup is due up and they can not hit, their spot in the lineup is skipped without penalty.

14) Any part of an undershirt exposed to view (i.e. long sleeve) shall be of a uniform solid color (not white) for all players on the team. (1.11 (j) ) Players must not wear watches, rings, pins, jewelry, other metallic items, or casts. (1.15 (c) ) No pitcher may wear sweatbands on the wrists.

15) Any umpire’s decision which involves judgment, such as, but not limited to, whether a batted ball is fair or foul, whether a pitch is a strike or a ball, or whether a runner is safe or out, is final. No player, manager, coach or substitute shall object to any such judgment decision.

16) If there is a reasonable doubt that any umpire’s decision may be in conflict with the rules, the manager may appeal the decision and ask that a correct ruling be made. Such appeal shall be made only to the umpire who made the protested decision.

17) Coaches are responsible for ensuring that all game equipment (especially bats) are fit for play based on the National Little League Standards and Regulations. Per Rule 6.06 (d), A batter is out for illegal action when the batter enters the batter’s box

with one or both feet entirely on the ground with an illegal bat (see bat specifications rule 1.10) or is discovered having used an illegal bat prior to the next player entering the batter’s box. The ball is dead. Runners must return if they advanced on the play. If discovered after the next player has entered the batter’s box, the bat is to immediately be removed from gameplay.

18) Ground Rules

**Black:** Out of play is a straight line drawn from the end of the fence on both 1st and 3rd base sides. If a ball lands on or over the road it will be considered a HR. Note: a fielder may not enter the road to catch a ball. If the ball rolls onto the road, the ball is dead and the batter is awarded two (2) bases from where the Umpire determines the batter to be at the time the ball enters the road

**Patton:** Out of play is a straight line drawn from the end of the fence on the 3rd base side. On the 1st base side, out of play is a line extending from the end of the fence, to the road, and along the edge of the road to the foul pole. The rocks that line the road are in play, so if a ball hits a rock and bounces back into the field of play, the ball is live. Balls that go under the fence or over the fence on a bounce are dead and considered a ground rule double. Balls that go over the fence or hit the road in the air are considered a HR. Balls that roll or bounce onto the road in fair territory are considered a ground rule double.

**Cheeseman:** Out of play is defined by the fence surrounding the field.

19) All Rules not specifically addressed in the HWLL Commandments (both Majors and Minors) or referenced in this document will be governed by the Little League Baseball Official Regulations and Playing Rules. Coaches, managers, umpires, and league officials are strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with the rules.

MAJORS COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

Coaching a youth sport program such as Little League Baseball is a privilege. As a coach, appointed by the Hamilton-Wenham Little League (HWLL) Board of Directors, you have an important role in the development of the young children in our community. We strive to teach each child the positive values of good sportsmanship, fair play and teamwork – values they can use throughout their lives. In order to ensure each coach is acting in the best interest of the children and Little League Baseball, the HWLL Board has developed a Coaches Code of Conduct for interactions with players, parents, fans, coaches, and umpires.

1) **Players** – When there are interactions with players, appropriate language and behavior is expected.  
**a. Language** - At no time is cursing or yelling at a player acceptable. As a coach you are a mentor and should focus on the positive. A coach should always be looking for opportunities to praise and encourage the players.  
**b. Discipline** – At no time is physical contact with a player acceptable. At the beginning of the season, the coaches are encouraged to establish and communicate rules of acceptable behavior to player and parents and the consequences if not followed. If an occurrence is to the extent that will warrant discipline to the point of disruption to the team’s practice or game, a coach is required to release the player from the practice/game to a parent for corrective action. If a player is a child of a coach and discipline is required, the coach is expected to pull the player aside for proper corrective action.  
**c. Sportsmanship and a positive attitude** are an important part of baseball. Cheering on your team and encouraging your players teaches this. Harassing the other team is not allowed. Acts such as switching batters boxes, shaking the bat in the strike zone, or loud chanting or banging of fences or bats intended to break the concentration of the pitcher are examples of negative coaching and do not teach the sportsmanship we desire in our children.

2) **Parents/Fans** – Coaches are expected to interact with parents in a professional manner. Appropriate language and behavior is expected. At no time should a coach respond to comments from fans during a game.

3) **Coaches** – Coaches are expected to interact with opposing coaches in a professional manner. At no time should a coach yell from one dugout to another at an opposing coach. Coaches are to address other coaches between innings and with the umpire present. If the need arises to address an opposing coach before the end of the half inning, the coach should ask the umpire to call timeout to address the opposing coach at home plate.

4) **Umpires** – Coaches are expected to interact with umpires in a professional manner. At no time should a coach yell from the dugout to an umpire. Coaches are to address the umpires between innings with the umpire’s permission. If the need arises to address an umpire before the end of the half inning, the coach should ask the umpire for permission to call timeout to address the umpire at home plate.

5) **Representatives** - Coaches are representatives of HWLL. They have an obligation and responsibility to refrain from any and all comments that are or can be viewed as disparaging to the HWLL, its’ Board of Directors and Volunteers. In the event a complaint is received by the HWLL Board of Directors of a coach failing to comply with the above listed code of conduct, the Board may decide to 1) dismiss the case, 2) draft a warning letter or 3) revoke all or part of the coach’s privileges.