



Laguna Beach Little League Coach Pitch “Rookie”

Division Rulebook, Version 1.0
Updated January 6, 2026

Introduction

Welcome to the Laguna Beach Little League (LBLL) Coach Pitch “Rookie” Division Rulebook, crafted to guide our young athletes, parents, and coaches through a fun, skill-focused, and community-driven baseball experience. This division, designed for players transitioning from Tee-Ball, introduces a mild competitive edge while prioritizing the development of fundamental baseball skills, teamwork, and sportsmanship. Our 10-game season is structured to ensure every player has equal opportunities to bat, field, and grow in a safe, supportive environment. This rulebook, aligned with Little League guidelines, outlines clear rules and recommendations to foster a love for the game while building confidence and camaraderie. Whether you’re a player, parent, or coach, this document serves as your roadmap to a season filled with learning, laughter, and memorable moments. Let’s play ball and build a vibrant baseball community together!

How to Use This Rulebook:

- **League Goals:** Understand the core objectives driving our approach to the Rookie Division.
- **Basic Rules of Play:** Find detailed regulations for game structure, field setup, and offensive/defensive play.
- **Team & Community Building:** Explore recommendations to enhance sportsmanship, teamwork, and community engagement.
- **Closing Note & Contact Information:** Learn about our commitment to continuous improvement and how to connect with LBLL leadership. This rulebook is a living document, reviewed annually to reflect the evolving needs of our players and community. For additional resources, visit: www.beachbaseball.com

LEAGUE GOALS

1. **Fun with Purpose:** Prioritize enjoyment while introducing a balanced level of competition to spark enthusiasm and engagement in baseball.
2. **Skill Mastery and Competition:** Focus on developing core baseball skills (hitting, throwing, catching, and base running) with a mild competitive element to encourage effort and improvement.
3. **Equal Opportunity:** Ensure all players have ample opportunities to bat and play in the field, fostering inclusion while promoting individual growth and team spirit.
4. **Parent Engagement:** Parents serve as active supporters, role models, and assistants during practices and games, strengthening the community and supporting player development.
5. **Coaches as Guides:** Coaches and managers act as encouraging educators, teaching coach-pitch fundamentals and fostering a competitive yet positive environment for learning.
6. **Safety and Encouragement:** Players are closely supervised, guided, and celebrated to ensure a safe, supportive environment that promotes confidence and skill-building.

BASIC RULES OF PLAY

General Game Structure:

- **Season Length** (LBLL Rule): This division plays a total of 10 games per season, providing ample opportunities for skill development and competitive play.
- **Teams:** 8+ players per team, with at least two outfielders required in the field to ensure balanced defensive coverage.
- **Game Duration** (LBLL Rule): Games are 3–4 innings or limited to 75 minutes, whichever comes first. No new inning starts after the time limit.
- **Pre-Game Arrival** (LBLL Rule): Players and parents must arrive 30 minutes before the scheduled game time for parent-led warm-ups, team strategy discussions, and equipment checks to ensure readiness and team cohesion.
- **Scorekeeping** (LBLL Rule): No official scorekeeping is maintained, but coaches may track runs and plays informally to highlight players' skill development (e.g., successful hits, catches, or throws) for learning purposes.
- **Field Setup:** Use a diamond with 50-foot bases and a pitching distance of 35 feet.
- **Ball Type:** Only Little League-approved Level 1 or Level 2 safety baseballs are permitted during games and practices. Softer balls (e.g., wiffle or tennis balls) may be used in practice for drills.
- **Pitching** (LBLL Rule): Coaches pitch to their own team, delivering up to 6 pitches per batter. If no fair ball is hit after 6 pitches, a tee is REQUIRED to ensure participation and success.
- **Inning Structure** (LBLL Rule): For the first half of the season (Games 1–5), an inning ends after three outs or when all players in the batting order have batted once, ensuring equal participation. Starting at Game 6 (midpoint of the season), an inning ends when the defensive team records three outs, to introduce a more competitive structure while maintaining skill development focus.
- **Pre-Game Inspection** (LBLL Rule): Coaches and parents inspect equipment, verify player counts, and ensure helmets and bats meet safety standards before games.

- **Parent Presence** (LBLL Rule): A parent or guardian must be present at all practices and games for supervision and support.
- **Game Start** (LBLL Rule): Games begin with a joint team cheer led by parents or coaches to promote sportsmanship, followed by a brief team huddle to discuss strategy.

Field Measurements/Regulations:

- **Base Distances** (LBLL Rule): Bases are set 50 feet apart, with the following measurements:
 - Home → First: 50 ft
 - First → Second: 50 ft
 - Second → Third: 50 ft
 - Third → Home: 50 ft
 - Home → Second: 70.71 ft
 - First → Third: 70.71 ft
- **Pitching Distance** (LBLL Rule): The pitching rubber is set at 35 feet from the back of home plate.

Offensive Rules:

- **Batting Stance Guidance** (LBLL Rule): Coaches assist batters in setting up a proper stance (foot placement and grip) before each at-bat to reinforce technique and improve hitting consistency.
- **Continuous Batting Order** (LL Rule 4.04): All players present bat in a continuous order, ensuring equal batting opportunities, regardless of fielding status.
- **No On-Deck Batter** (LL Rule 1.10): For safety, no on-deck circle or practice swings are permitted during games.
- **Batter's Turn at Bat** (LBLL Rule): Coaches pitch up to 6 pitches per batter. If no fair ball is hit after 6 pitches, a tee is REQUIRED to allow the batter to hit and advance. The tee is adjusted to mid-chest or waist level for the batter.
- **Foul Balls and Strikes** (LBLL Rule): No strikes are called. Foul balls allow the batter to continue until a fair ball is hit or the tee is used. Hitting the tee without contacting the ball is a foul.

- **Hit/Run Rule** (LBLL Rule): Runners advance one base on an infield hit and up to two bases on an outfield hit to encourage strategic running while maintaining simplicity.
- **Base Coaches** (LBLL Rule): Each team provides three adult base coaches (at first, second, and third bases) to guide runners, teach base-running strategy, and ensure safety. A coach oversees home plate for bat safety and tee adjustments.
- **Played Outs** (LBLL Rule): Outs are counted, and if a runner is out, parents and coaches encourage the out player to give a high-five to the defensive player who made the out at the base or via a tag. The runner returns to the dugout and is celebrated with teammate high-fives to maintain positivity.
- **Counting Outs** (LBLL Rule): Outs are tracked to teach game structure. For the first half of the season (Games 1–5), innings continue until all players have batted once unless three outs occur first. Starting at Game 6, innings end after three outs to increase competitive play.
- **Home Run Hitter** (LBLL Rule): The last batter in the lineup hits and runs all bases for a “home run,” with the lineup rotating to ensure fairness.
- **Bat Regulation** (LL Rule 1.10): All bats must meet the USABat standard, featuring the USA Baseball mark. Bats must be 33 inches or shorter with a maximum diameter of 2-5/8 inches and made of metal or composite materials as specified in the provided list.

USABat Approved bat finder: <https://usabat.com>

- **Batting Helmets** (LL Rule 1.16): All batters, runners, and players in the dugout must wear NOCSAE-approved helmets, checked for proper fit by parents or coaches.
- **The Thumbs Up Rule** (LBLL Rule): A coach at home plate ensures bat safety, giving a “thumbs up” signal before the batter swings to maintain a safe environment.
- **Runners Touching Home Plate** (LBLL Rule): The coach at home plate controls the bat when a runner scores, encouraging high-fives between the batter and runner.
- **No Base Stealing** (LBLL Rule): Runners advance only on hits, not through stealing, to keep the game focused on hitting and fielding.
- **No Throwing Bats** (LBLL Rule): Batters must drop or toss the bat gently within three feet of the batter’s box. A warning is given for the first offense; subsequent violations result in the batter being called out to promote safety.

Defensive Rules:

- **No Catcher Position** (LBLL Rule): No player is positioned as a catcher behind home plate, as the coach pitches and the focus is on fielding and throwing skills.
- **Minimum Outfielders** (LBLL Rule): At least two outfielders must be positioned in the outfield during defensive play to ensure balanced field coverage and teach outfield skills.
- **Parent Coaching** (LBLL Rule): Each defensive player is paired with a parent or coach who provides real-time feedback on fielding, throwing, and positioning to enhance skill development. Each parent should have a ball to practice with their child between pitches, with 1–2 ball tosses between batter rotations acceptable to keep players actively engaged in the game.
- **Position Rotation** (LBLL Rule): Players rotate through all defensive positions each game to build versatility, with no player staying in the same position for consecutive innings.
- **Skill-Based Encouragement** (LBLL Rule): Players and parents cheer for successful defensive plays (e.g., catches, accurate throws) to reinforce skills and boost team morale.
- **Throwing Practice** (LBLL Rule): Defensive players practice controlled throws to teammates or bases up to 20 feet to develop accuracy and arm strength during plays.
- **Active Base Play** (LBLL Rule): Players are encouraged to cover bases by stepping on or near them with the ball, guided by coaches or parents to improve footwork and game awareness.
- **Skill Drill Retreat** (LBLL Rule): If a player misses a play, they may step to a designated area for a quick skill drill (e.g., fielding or throwing) with their parent, coach or manager to turn mistakes into learning opportunities.
- **Team Spirit Boost** (LBLL Rule): Players and parents actively cheer for teammates' plays (e.g., "Great stop!" or "Nice throw!") to foster a competitive yet supportive environment.

Team & Community Building Recommendations

- **Sportsmanship Cheer for Opponents:** Both teams huddle for a joint cheer before or after the game, followed by high-fives and “Good game” to the opposing team to promote respect and sportsmanship. Suggested cheers:
 - “2, 4, 6, 8, who do we appreciate [opposing team]!”
 - “Give a shout, give a cheer, [opposing team], we’re glad you’re here!”
 - “Hey, hey, what do you say, great game to [opposing team] today!”
 - “Clap your hands, stamp your feet, [opposing team], you can’t be beat!”
- **Post-Game Parent Tunnel:** Parents from both teams form a tunnel after the game, allowing players to run through as a celebratory conclusion before snacks, fostering team spirit.
- **Snack Thank You's:** Players receiving snacks should verbally thank the providing parent, promoting gratitude and social skills.
- **Team Cheer Practice:** Players, coaches, and parents gather for an energetic team cheer after games or practices to enhance teamwork, vocal coordination, and morale.

MANAGER'S CERTIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF OBLIGATIONS

I, _____ (Full Name), in my capacity as Manager of the _____ (Team Name) in the Laguna Beach Little League (LBLL) Coach Pitch "Rookie" Division, do hereby certify that I have carefully reviewed and fully comprehend the provisions, regulations, and objectives set forth in the Laguna Beach Little League Coach Pitch "Rookie" Division Rulebook (EST 2025, Version 1.0).

I acknowledge my responsibility to strictly adhere to, consistently enforce, and actively promote all rules, safety protocols, and league goals throughout the entirety of the 2025 season. I further commit to balancing enjoyment with purposeful skill-building, introducing appropriate levels of competition, and ensuring equal participation, in full alignment with the mission of LBLL to support player growth, family engagement, and a positive transition into structured youth baseball.

Manager Signature: _____

Date: _____

Closing Note

This Coach Pitch “Rookie” Division Rulebook, tailored for the Laguna Beach Little League (LBLL) and aligned with Little League guidelines, balances fun, skill development, and a touch of competition for young players. As of October 16, 2025, these rules reflect our commitment to fostering a love for baseball while promoting teamwork, sportsmanship, and skill growth. We aim to make every practice and game a positive, growth-oriented experience. For updates or resources, visit littleleague.org or contact LBLL leadership. Let’s build a vibrant baseball community—play hard, compete smart, and support each other!

- **Contact Information:** Reach out to LBLL at info@beachbaseball.com or check league announcements.
- **Review Date:** This rulebook will be reviewed annually in Q4 to incorporate new insights and meet players’ evolving needs.