

## Rules and Regulations

The LSO Youth Baseball Association is affiliated with Babe Ruth League, Inc., which includes the Cal Ripken Baseball (formerly Bambino) league. These organizations have adopted the [Official Baseball Rules](#), published by the Commissioner of Baseball, as their primary playing rules. However, some modifications to these rules have been made by the respective youth baseball organizations in order to adapt the game to fit the needs of their young participants.



Some of the rule differences pertain to the dimensions of the playing field and playing equipment. Other rule changes are intended to enhance safety and prevent injury. These modifications are published by the organizations as addendums to the official rules and are distributed to their affiliates each year. ([see below](#))



In addition to these rules and amendments, the youth baseball organizations publish regulations that govern the conduct of league affiliates and stipulate the requirements for affiliation. These regulations may also direct the organizations' official tournament playoff system for their respective national championship tournaments.



Finally, the local league affiliate may enact "local league rules and regulations" that further define the playing rules and methods of operation for the independent locality. The national organizations generally allow local league affiliates the authority to enhance their rules, but may require a formal waiver from the parent organization before major changes may be made. Some rules may not be waived - such as restrictions on the rules governing the frequency of use of young pitchers, which is intended to prevent arm injury.

The following sections outline the rules and regulations under which the LSO Youth Baseball Association operates.

### Official Baseball Rules

The [Official Baseball Rules](#) are published by the office of the Commissioner of Baseball and are written to govern the playing of baseball games by professional teams. The rules are divided, as shown below. Click a rule link to see the official rules.

#### [Foreword](#)

#### [1.00 - Objectives of the Game](#)

#### [2.00 - Definition of Terms](#)

#### [3.00 - Game Preliminaries](#)

#### [4.00 - Starting and Ending a Game](#)

#### [5.00 - Putting the Ball in Play](#)

#### [6.00 - The Batter](#)

#### [7.00 - The Runner](#)

#### [8.00 - The Pitcher](#)

#### [9.00 - The Umpire](#)

#### [10.00 - The Official Scorer](#)

The rules of baseball have evolved into a complex code which may be difficult to understand due to the "legalistic" manner in which it is recorded. A rule often may be unclear as to its intent and thus be subject to interpretation. The *Case Book of the Official Playing Rules Committee* was created to provide insight into the committee's intent when drafting the official rules. Some published versions of the official rules include these notations which interpret and elaborate on the language of the official rules. These enhanced rule-book versions are frequently available at bookstores.

A lack of understanding of the rules of baseball and the resulting incorrect interpretation may be the primary cause for disputes which sometimes arise during the course of a baseball game. It is incumbent upon umpires, coaches, and players to learn the rules and to study the case book in order to properly conduct themselves during a game.

## Links of Interest

[The Top 40 Baseball Rule Myths](#)

[Baseball Rules Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[Youth Baseball Playing Field Dimensions](#) 

## Youth Baseball Rules and Regulations

### League Charter

In order to be eligible to participate in post-season district, state and national championship tournaments a local league must be affiliated with an organization that offers these types of tournaments. Each local baseball league who wishes to affiliate with a national youth baseball organization must apply for and be granted a charter or franchise. Procedures and requirements for granting a charter vary from organization to organization, but are usually listed in the organizations regulations.

The *LSO Youth Baseball Association* youth baseball program is chartered by Babe Ruth League, Inc., which includes Cal Ripken Baseball.

### Geographical Boundaries

One primary responsibility of a national youth baseball organization is to establish the geographical boundaries for each franchise that it charters.

The *LSO Youth Baseball Association* charter from Babe Ruth League, Inc. basically encompass the same geographic area served by the LSO Public School District.

### League Insurance Coverage

Most youth baseball organizations require local affiliates to acquire accident and liability insurance coverage for their baseball operations.

The *LSO Youth Baseball Association* provides accident and liability insurance coverage for the coaches and players in our league. Insurance claims for accidental injury sustained during practice and games may be initiated by notifying a league officer. The proper insurance claim forms will be provided as quickly as possible after notification of an injury claim.

### Youth Baseball Rules

Each national organization publishes a set of rules and regulations for their respective franchises. This section outlines the rules and regulations under which the LSO youth baseball program operates.

Virtually all national youth baseball organizations have adopted the Official Baseball Rules as their playing rules. Exceptions are noted in each organizations rule book. Some of the exceptions to the Official Baseball Rules that are in effect for the LSO youth baseball program are noted below.

### Playing Field Dimensions

The **Cal Ripken** leagues use a smaller-size baseball diamond. for the **Minors** (10 years of age and under), and **Rookies** (8 years of age and under) divisions, the bases are set at 60 feet apart and the outfield fences are set at no more than 200 feet. For the new "**Majors 70**" (12 years of age and under) division the bases are set at 70 feet apart. For the *Minors* division, the pitcher's mound is set at six inches above the level of home plate and the pitcher's rubber is set 46 feet from the point of home plate. For the *Majors 70* division, the pitcher's rubber is set at eight inches above the level of home plate and the rubber is set at 50 feet from home plate. In all of the above age divisions, the batter's boxes are 3 feet wide by 6 feet long.

For the *Coach Pitch* and *T-Ball* divisions, the bases may be set closer together (45-50 feet) and the outfield

fence is also smaller (approximately 150 - 175 feet).

Both the **Babe Ruth** and **Senior Babe Ruth** leagues utilize a standard-size baseball diamond with 90' base lines, outfield fences from 300 - 400 feet. pitching mound height of ten inches above the level of home plate and set at 60 feet six inches from the plate, and batter's boxes of 4 feet by 6 feet.

### ***Playing Equipment Restrictions***

For the **Cal Ripken** leagues the baseball bat may not exceed 33 inches in length or 2 1/4 inches in diameter. There is no restriction on length to weight ratio.

### ***Pitching Limitations***

For **Cal Ripken** leagues the pitchers are limited to no more than six innings pitched per calendar week (Monday through Sunday). Pitchers must have two calendar days rest if they pitch three or more innings in a game.

**Babe Ruth** league pitchers are restricted to no more than seven innings per calendar week and must have two calendar days of rest if they pitch four or more innings in a game.

**Senior Babe Ruth** pitchers are not restricted as to number of innings or rest periods, but caution is urged to avoid overextending a pitcher's use and to avoid arm injury.

### ***Number of Innings Played***

For **Cal Ripken Majors, Minors and Rookies**, the game length is six innings with at least four innings require for an "official" game to be declared. For *Coach Pitch and T-Ball* divisions, the length of the game is left to the local league's discretion, which is set at 4 or 5 innings for the LSO Coach Pitch and T-Ball divisions..

For **Babe Ruth** and **Senior Babe Ruth**, the regulation game is seven innings. A game may be considered as "official" after five innings.

### ***Substitution of Players - Re-entry Rule***

**Cal Ripken** leagues permit starting players to re-enter the game one time after substitution. **Babe Ruth** and **Senior Babe Ruth** also allow one re-entry by a starter after substitution.

### ***Leading off the Base - Special Base Running Rule***

**Cal Ripken** leagues prohibit leading-off the base by base runners. The runner must maintain contact with the base until the pitched ball reaches the batter.

### ***Protective Equipment Requirements***

All leagues require protective headgear for batters and base runners. All leagues also require full protective gear for the catcher, including a protective cup, and a helmet with face mask and throat protector.

### ***Avoid Contact Rule***

All leagues prohibit "malicious" contact of a fielder by a base runner, for the sole purpose of knocking the ball loose from the fielder's grip.

### ***Third Strike not Caught***

In **Cal Ripken** leagues, the batter may not advance to first base on a dropped third strike.

## Local League Rules

## Local Rules for Each Age Division

Local league rules and options have been adopted by the LSO Youth Baseball Association for the LSO youth baseball programs. Some of these rules and options include the following:

### ***Time Limits***

All LSO divisions play under a game time limit. The time varies depending on the division, two hours per game. This rule helps ensure that multiple games will start on

time, or nearly so.

### ***10-Run Rule***

Most divisions play under a "mercy rule", which ends a game if one team is ahead by ten or more runs after the appropriate number of innings have been played to constitute an "official" game. This rule helps prevent runaway scores.

### ***Extra Hitter***

The Cal Ripken, Babe Ruth and Senior Babe Ruth leagues permit the teams to play with an "Extra Hitter", which is a tenth batter in the batting order, if elected by the local league. This player is treated as a starter and may be substituted for during the course of the game. This is not the same as professional baseball's designated hitter, who bats for the pitcher in American League games. LSO games for these leagues permit the use of the "EH",