

# East Nepean Little League 2016 House League Rules

The initial sections apply to all divisions. Some local rules and rules specific to each division come later. To contact League Executives, Directors, Equipment Manager, or the Umpire Assigner, go to <http://www.eastnepeanbaseball.on.ca/> and click on “Contact”.

## All Divisions

### Sportsmanship and Conduct

- *Managers are responsible for the sportsmanship of their players, parents, and coaching staff.*
- *Be patient with all umpires.*
- *You may **politely** ask an umpire how he saw the events of a play but may not question his judgment. Teach players respect for the officials through your actions.*
- *Any abuse of equipment, bat or helmet, will result in player ejection.*
- *Players must get permission from an umpire to leave the field and are not to mingle with spectators (see green book rule 3.09).*

### Rain and Inclement Weather

Before the game starts, the home team Manager is responsible for postponing a ball game. Contact someone from the team who lives near the park to determine the weather conditions as well as the condition of the field.

*If you decide to cancel the game, you must do the following:*

- contact the other team’s Manager and the umpire assigner 90 minutes before game time;
- contact your players and Coaches;
- contact your Director and reschedule the game as soon as possible.

Once a game is started, the Home Plate Umpire has the responsibility for delaying or postponing the game. The umpire shall not call the game until at least 30 minutes have passed, and may continue suspension as long as there is a chance to resume play. Safety for the players is the key factor in this decision.

Play will be stopped immediately during a thunderstorm if lightning appears. **Observe the 30-30 rule. If thunder is heard 30 seconds or less after lightning is observed, the storm is less than 10 kilometers away. Precautions should be taken. Do not resume play until 30 minutes after the last lightning strike in the area.** All players and spectators should move to safety and away from steel fences and trees. Wait in your cars until the game restarts or is cancelled.

Rained out games are to be played as soon as possible following the postponed or cancelled game. It is reasonable to play three games in one calendar week especially at the beginning of the season.

The two coaches involved in a rainout must contact the director and agree on a time to play the game when a field is available. Once a time and place are set, the umpire coordinator and umpire assigner must be notified (for levels that use umpires).

## Game Equipment

The home team Manager is responsible for setting up the diamond (see the diagrams just before section 1.00 of the green book) and returning the equipment to the storage box (and locking the box) after the game. If equipment is missing or damaged (including umpire equipment), please advise the league's Equipment Manager.

For each game, the home team shall supply a new baseball and a good quality used ball.

## Team Equipment

The league entrusts each team Manager with the care and safekeeping of uniforms, bats, catching gear, helmets, and baseballs. Care of uniforms is the responsibility of each individual and should be washed in warm water and hung to dry. Lettering and numbers could come off if uniforms are placed in the dryer.

Do not *'trade'* any bat for an East Nepean bat.

Return all balls at the end of the season along with all other equipment. Previous year's used balls are used as practice balls for future seasons. **TIP:** Bring only 6 used balls and 1 **new ball (home team)** to each game and leave the rest at home until needed.

Broken helmets are dangerous and illegal and may affect insurance coverage if an injury is sustained while using a broken helmet. Inspect helmets before each game and **do not use a helmet if it is cracked**. Contact the Equipment Manager to arrange for a replacement. Share helmets with the other team when necessary.

Catchers must wear a mask that includes the dangling throat protector (see green book rule 1.17).

## Curfews

The key to completing a game prior to curfew is to start the game on time. The pre-game meeting of umpires and coaches should take place 5 minutes before game time. Team warm-ups should be completed before the meeting of umpires and coaches, and after this meeting, the home team should take the field and be ready to throw the first pitch at the scheduled start time. Every effort will be made to start the game on time. In the event that the game start is delayed, the coaches and the umpire should note this time. Teams that habitually cause games to start late will be reported by umpires to the league.

**Rookie (regular 6-inning game):** no inning will commence after 1 hour and 45 minutes from the announced start of the game (regular season only, not playoffs).

**Rookie (4-inning game preceded by 30-minute practice):** no inning will commence after 1 hour and 15 minutes from the announced start of the game.

**Minor & Major:** no inning will commence after 2 hours from the announced start of the game (regular season only, not playoffs).

**Junior & Senior:** refer to interlock rules established at the district level.

**Note:** an inning is considered to have started when the third out is made in the previous half inning.

Games may end earlier, at the discretion of the umpire, due to darkness. **No inning should begin unless there is a reasonable expectation of completing that full inning.**

## Pitching Limits

Little League International is very serious about pitching limits. Too many players have ruined their arms while they are still teenagers. **The rules require that someone count all pitches, including 2-strike foul balls.** Little League has created a pitch log form (<http://eastnepeanbaseball.on.ca/files/resources/Pitching-Log.pdf>) to help with pitch counting.

The limits for Senior and below are as follows (see the rule book for Big League limits):

League age	7-8	(Rookie)	50 pitches per day
	9-10	(Minor)	75 pitches per day
	11-12	(Major)	85 pitches per day
	13-16	(Junior, Senior)	95 pitches per day

Any player who plays up a division observes the age limits not those of his new division.

Rest requirements for players aged 14 and younger:

1-20 pitches	no rest required	If pitched Monday, wait until Tuesday
21-35 pitches	1 calendar day of rest	If pitched Monday, wait until Wednesday
36-50 pitches	2 calendar days of rest	If pitched Monday, wait until Thursday
51-65 pitches	3 calendar days of rest	If pitched Monday, wait until Friday
66+ pitches	4 calendar days of rest	If pitched Monday, wait until Saturday

**Pitchers reaching a threshold may finish pitching to the current batter. This effectively means that the last batter faced counts as only 1 pitch.**

**At Minor and Major, East Nepean also limits pitchers to 2 innings pitched per game.**

All Managers shall have available a listing of the pitchers used and the number of pitches they threw on each day. This is necessary to ensure that the pitching rest rules are followed.

- Any player on a team can and should be encouraged to pitch.
- Delivery of a single pitch constitutes having pitched an inning.
- A player, once removed as a pitcher, shall not pitch again in the same game.

A pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day. Any player, who has played the position of catcher in four (4) or more innings in a game, is not eligible to pitch on that calendar day.

**In levels where kids pitch, no adult may play catch with a child (even to warm up a pitcher).**

## Cell Phones

Electronic devices such as cell phones are permitted as long as they do not become a distraction and are not used to communicate with others on the field (see green book rule 3.17).

## Mercy Rule

For Rookie, Minor, and Major, if after four (or more) innings of play one team is ahead by 10 runs or more the game is officially over (3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead). There is also a 5 run per inning maximum (including the last inning). If both team managers agree, teams may continue to play a

game even if it is no longer possible for one team to catch up because of the 5-run limit (unless the 10-run rule applies). The umpires have agreed that they will only use the score to end a game unilaterally based on the 10-run rule.

## Scores

The home team is responsible for reporting each game score on the East Nepean web site (<http://www.eastnepeanbaseball.on.ca/>) using the Coach's Corner section.

## Rule Book

East Nepean Baseball Association is a chartered organization with Little League Canada, and uses the official Little League Rule Book for all rules and regulations except for specific '*local*' rules as outlined below. All Managers and Coaches are required to read, apply and respect the regulations and rules as laid down in the rulebook. Take the time to read the book and apply the philosophy. Share the rules with your players.

## Local Rules

### Dugouts

The home team shall occupy the 3rd base dugout and visiting team will occupy the 1st base dugout.

### Number of Coaches

Teams may have one manager plus a maximum of 2 coaches (3 adults in all) in the dugout.

### Number of Players

East Nepean places ten to thirteen players on each team. This is an optimum number for each team during the regular season and playoffs. The league is aware that not all players can make all games or are available for the start of each game. Normally, 9 players are required to play the game. However, 8 registered players is the minimum number required to start and continue all games.

All games are expected to start at the time on the schedule; however, to avoid protests and forfeited games, a 15 minute grace period from the scheduled start is allowed for a team to ensure that 8 players are available to start. In the event that a team is unable to field 8 registered players the Umpire shall declare the game forfeited. The game score shall be registered as 6-0 for the team with 8 or more registered players. In the event that both teams are unable to field 8 players, the game will be cancelled and rescheduled. If a team is unable to continue the game with at least 8 players, the game shall be forfeited.

**When a game involving 2 East Nepean Teams is forfeited due to lack of players by one team, but there are at least 16 players across both teams, one team will give the other team volunteer players to balance the teams and have a game. The official standings will still show a forfeit, but in the interest of playing the game, the umpires will stay and umpire a game.**

Umpires are instructed not to stay and umpire exhibition play after a game has ended due to the mercy rule or a game involving a team that is not from East Nepean has been forfeited.

## Call-Ups

Managers who know that players will not be available to play due to sickness, injury, school trips, holidays, etc. are strongly encouraged to '*call up*' players from a lower division to bring the playing roster to at least 8 players, preferably more than 9. Called up players shall be used exactly like regular team members subject to the rules listed below. Players may not be called up if they have a scheduled game with their regular team.

Managers are not permitted to use a player from the same level except in the Rookie division. **Called up players cannot Pitch.**

*Canadian-level teams*: may call up National-level players from the same division. (Big League may call up from Senior, and Senior may call up from Junior.)

*National-level teams*: may call up National-level players from the lower division.

*Rookie*: to be determined in consultation with the Director

**Important: Major players may NOT be called up to Junior.** Doing so will make them ineligible for the Major All-Star Team (see the last note in Regulation IV of the Little League rule book).

There are no call-downs. Players in an older division or a higher level of the same division may not play.

## Batting

Every player is placed in the batting order. A player who arrives after the start of the game is placed last on the batting order (even if the team is on the second time through the order). A player who is on the batting order and arrives late and misses his turn is placed at the bottom of the batting order. No automatic out is allowed. Example: 10 players on the batting order prior to the start of the game. Tommy, scheduled to bat 6th does not arrive until after the 8th batter has been at bat. Tommy is scratched from the 6th position, bats after the last person in the order, and is not an automatic out because he was not available to bat 6th. Joey, the 11th player, arrives in the second inning and is placed 11th after Tommy.

In major and younger there is no on-deck circle. Players may not handle a bat until it is their turn to bat. Only the on-deck batter should be standing near the team's collection of bats.

## Defensive Positions (Player Rotation)

East Nepean promotes the principle of equal play throughout the House League season.

On defense, all players will share equally infield positions and outfield play except for skill and safety positions such as pitcher, catcher and first base. This does not mean that there is a 50-50 rule for infield and outfield. There are six infield and three outfield positions. All players' defensive play must be two-thirds infield and one-third outfield over the innings that they are not sitting. All players will share equally in sitting out.

Should a player not begin the season with the skills to pitch, catch or play first base, every effort must be made to help the player develop the skills required to play those positions (if the player is willing) at practice. Once again, keep in mind, at the Canadian level, first base would rarely be a safety concern. Players who do not pitch or catch must still be given two-thirds of their play in the other infield positions.

*Coaches must strive to achieve the above objectives on a game-by-game basis, and not spread them out over a week or a season. In addition, there is rarely a reason for a player to sit out two consecutive innings, and a Coach should never plan this while doing a line up. It happens too often that you do not get to finish all six innings.*

**\*\*FAILURE TO FOLLOW THE ABOVE RULES SHALL MAKE THE GAME SUBJECT TO FORFEITURE ON CHALLENGE BY THE OPPOSING COACH\*\***

- All such challenges should be brought to the director of the division after the game rather than to an umpire during the game.

## **Volunteer Umpires**

At Rookie during the regular season, both teams will supply one volunteer umpire for each game. The league will supply umpires for playoff games.

## **Players Leaving the Game Early**

If a player must leave the game early for any reason, injury or otherwise, his/her spot in the batting order is removed (no automatic out). If this happens while the player is batting, the at bat is cancelled and the next batter takes the plate with a 0-0 count. If the player is on base, the last player to either get out or score a run takes the leaving player's place. The player may return later to take his/her original position in the batting order. Teams may not abuse this rule to reduce the playing time of weaker players.

## **Playoffs**

The league will decide on a playoff structure for each division with the seeding based on the regular season standings. All teams make the playoffs.

## **Regular Season Standings Tie-Breakers**

Regular season standings shall be determined by total points based on 2 points for a win, and 1 point for a tie, and 0 points for a loss. The first procedure for resolving ties is to apply the following tie-breaking rules (in order):

- most wins
- best record in games involving only the tied teams

The second procedure if 2 or more teams are still tied is to apply the following criteria (in order) to determine the **top** team among them:

- least number of runs allowed (in all games)
- greater number of runs scored (in all games)
- coin toss

Note: once the second procedure determines the top team from a tie among 3 or more teams, the remaining tied teams go back to the first tie-breaking procedure again.

# Specific Division Rules

## Major Canadian and Major National

- **For Major Canadian only: catchers must catch the third strike for a stikeout. The batter is out when a 3<sup>rd</sup> strike is legally caught by the catcher, or when it is not caught by the catcher and 1<sup>st</sup> base is occupied before 2 are out.**
- A pitcher may pitch no more than 2 innings in a game, and the pitch count and pitcher rest rules must be followed (see Pitching Limits section above).
- Pitching distance shall be 46 feet and base paths shall be 60 feet.
- A team may score a maximum of 5 runs in any one inning. If the batter, when the 5th run is scored, has not completed his turn, then he shall be the first batter in the next inning of the same game.
- All other rules from the Little League rulebook apply.

## Minor Canadian

- A pitcher may pitch no more than 2 innings in a game, and the pitch count and pitcher rest rules must be followed (see Pitching Limits section above).
- Pitching distance shall be 46 feet and base paths shall be 60 feet.
- A team may score a maximum of 5 runs in any one inning. If the batter, when the 5th run is scored, has not completed his turn, then he shall be the first batter in the next inning of the same game.
- All other rules from the Little League rulebook apply.

## Minor National

- A pitcher may pitch no more than 2 innings in a game, and the pitch count and pitcher rest rules must be followed (see Pitching Limits section above).
- *Pitching distance shall be 40 feet (6 feet closer than the pitching plate on the mound)* and base paths shall be 60 feet. With an umpire's permission, a pitcher may move back to 46 feet if he/she wishes. An umpire may move a strong pitcher back to 46 feet for safety reasons.
- ***Stealing is not allowed.***
- Infield fly rule is not in effect.
- A team may score a maximum of 5 runs in any one inning. **For the first 6 games of the season, the maximum number of runs is limited to 3 per inning.** If the batter, when the last is scored, has not completed his turn, then he shall be the first batter in the next inning of the same game.
- **For the first 6 games of the season, two defensive coaches are allowed on the field.** One coach may be in the infield behind the pitcher for the exclusive purpose of coaching the pitcher. The other coach must remain in the outfield during play.
- All other rules from the Little League rulebook apply.

## Minor Provincial

If there are enough Minor players that the league forms a third Minor level called Provincial, they will either play with the Minor National rules or with the Rookie Canadian (Coach Pitch) rules depending on the league's assessment of which approach is better-suited to the players. Two exceptions: if Rookie coach pitch rules are used the coach's pitching distance shall be 40 feet, and the standard 3 outfielders shall be used. The director may choose to switch to Minor National rules part way through the season.

## Rookie Canadian (Coach Pitch)

- During the first 3 weeks of the season, games will be 4 innings preceded by a 30-minute practice.
- After 3 weeks, games will be 6 innings with no scheduled pregame practice.
- The coach or another designated adult will pitch *overhand* to the batter.
- Pitching distance shall be no less than 38 feet (8 feet closer than the pitching plate) and base paths shall be 60 feet; however, during the regular season, the pitcher may move up to adjust to the player's needs.
- Players are allowed 5 pitches or 3 strikes (swinging strikes and foul balls only) whichever occurs first. A batter may have more than 5 pitches (or 3 strikes) if his last pitch is fouled-off. A batter may not walk after 4 balls.
- The adult pitcher shall not involve him/herself in the play. If an adult pitcher interferes deliberately with the play in any way, the batter is out and all base runners return to their original bases. If the adult pitcher is deemed to have accidentally interfered (the most likely example is a hardline drive that hits the pitcher), then all players will return to their original base and a re-pitch will occur.
- All defensive players (and in particular the player fielding the pitching position) must remain no closer to home plate than the pitching rubber until the ball is hit.
- **The defensive player playing the pitching position must wear a helmet.**
- Base runners are not permitted to advance indefinitely on errors (see the Rookie Base-Running Limits section below). Rookie Canadian uses Approach 1 to start the season. The Rookie Director will decide whether to change to Approach 2 at any point during the season.
- Runners may advance on a caught fly or pop-up, whether the ball is hit fair or foul, provided the runner tags-up when or after the ball is caught.
- Bunting is not allowed. Player will be educated and a re-pitch will occur.
- Leading off and stealing are not allowed.
- Infield fly rule is not in effect.
- A team may score a maximum of 5 runs in any one inning.
- In addition to the standard 9 defensive positions, each team may use a 4<sup>th</sup> outfielder (Rover). All outfielders must stay on the grass until the ball is hit.
- On-deck batters shall get prepared by putting on their helmets and sitting on the bench closest to the plate. *They may not touch the bat.*
- Two defensive coaches are allowed on the field, but must remain in the outfield during play.
- The two base running coaches must remain in the coach's boxes and may not physically assist the runner(s) during play.
- All other rules from the Little League rulebook apply.

## Rookie National and Rookie Provincial

Rookie National (and Rookie Provincial if there is a third Rookie level) will play either Rookie Middle Division Coach Pitch or Rookie National Tee Ball depending on which approach the league decides is best suited to the players.

## Rookie Middle Division Coach Pitch

- During the first 3 weeks of the season, games will be 4 innings preceded by a 30-minute practice.
- After 3 weeks, games will be 6 innings with no scheduled pregame practice.
- Playoff games will be 6 inning games.
- The coach or another designated adult will pitch overhand to the batter.

- Pitching distance shall be no less than 35 feet (11 feet closer than the pitching plate) and base paths shall be 60 feet (or less if the diamond infield is too small); however, during the regular season, the pitcher may move up to adjust to player needs.
- Players are allowed 5 pitches or 3 strikes (swinging strikes and foul balls only) whichever occurs first. A batter may have more than 5 pitches (or 3 strikes) if his last pitch is fouled-off. A batter may not walk after 4 balls.
- The adult pitcher shall not involve him/herself in the play. If an adult pitcher interferes deliberately with the play in any way, the batter is out and all base runners return to their original bases. If the adult pitcher is deemed to have accidentally interfered (the most likely example is a hardline drive that hits the pitcher), then all players will return to their original base and a re-pitch will occur.
- All defensive players (and in particular the player fielding the pitching position) must remain no closer to home plate than the pitching rubber until the ball is hit.
- **The defensive player playing the pitching position must wear a helmet.**
- Base runners are not permitted to advance indefinitely on errors (see the Rookie Base-Running Limits section below). National Coach Pitch uses Approach 1.
- Runners may advance on a caught fly or pop-up, whether the ball is hit fair or foul, provided the runner tags-up when or after the ball is caught.
- Bunting is not allowed. Player will be educated and a re-pitch will occur.
- Leading off and stealing are not allowed.
- Infield fly rule is not in effect.
- A team may score a maximum of 5 runs in any one inning.
- In addition to the standard 9 defensive positions, each team may use a 4<sup>th</sup> outfielder (Rover). All outfielders must stay on the grass until the ball is hit.
- On-deck batters shall get prepared by putting on their helmets and sitting on the bench closest to the plate. *They may not touch the bat.*
- Two defensive coaches are allowed on the field, but must remain in the outfield during play.
- The two base running coaches must remain in the coach's boxes and may not physically assist the runner(s) during play.
- All other rules from the Little League rulebook apply.

## Rookie National Tee Ball

- During the first 3 weeks of the season, games will be 4 innings preceded by a 30-minute practice.
- After 3 weeks, games will be 6 innings with no scheduled pregame practice.
- Run rule limit is five (5) runs per inning, and then the team batting takes the field.
- There can be only two (2) offensive base coaches on the field (first and third bases).
- All defensive players (and in particular the player fielding the pitching position) must remain no closer to home plate than 42 feet until the ball is hit.
- **The defensive player playing the pitching position must wear a helmet.**
- Base paths shall be 60 feet.
- **Leading off and stealing are not allowed. Base runners must wait for the ball to be hit before running. This can be difficult to detect, but runners who take a step when the batter swings and misses should be instructed to wait for the ball to be hit.**
- Before the game an arc should be drawn from foul line to foul line at 10 feet from home plate. Any hit ball that fails to cross this line is foul.
- In addition to the standard 9 defensive positions, each team may use a 4<sup>th</sup> outfielder (Rover). All outfielders must stay on the grass until the ball is hit.

- **The catcher must wear catcher's equipment.**
- Every offensive player must wear a helmet when batting and running the bases.
- If the batter hits the Tee without touching the ball, it is a foul ball even if the ball rolls into fair territory.
- Base runners are not permitted to advance indefinitely on errors (see the Rookie Base-Running Limits section below). Tee Ball uses Approach 1.
- Two defensive coaches are allowed on the field, but must remain in the outfield during play.
- Coaches are responsible for adjusting the Tee for individual batters.
- The Tee must be moved by an offensive coach after a hit when a runner is coming in to home plate.
- Home team furnishes plate umpire, and sets up the Tee and bases.

## Rookie Base-Running Limits

Each Rookie level uses one of these two approaches.

### Approach 1

- Once any infielder is in possession of the ball, all runners must advance (or retreat) to the nearest base. (**Exception:** each runner is permitted to attempt to advance at least one base from the start of the play.) The defense may make any number of risk-free attempts to put runners out. Once the play ends, any runner who has not been put out and has taken more bases than this rule permits will be returned to the last base he/she was permitted to take.

### Approach 2

- On any hit, runners may advance. Once any infielder possesses the ball and either holds it in the air or makes no attempt to put a runner out, play stops and all runners advance (or retreat) to the nearest base. **Exception:** once play is stopped, forced runners advance even if they are not half way to the next base.
- If the defense elects to attempt to put a runner out, runners may advance to the maximum of
  - (i) 2 bases from the start of the play; or
  - (ii) nearest base plus 1 from the time that any infielder held the ball or when a ball thrown from the outfield passes any infielder.
 If runners continue to run, the defense gets risk-free attempts to put the runners out. Once play stops, any runners not put out who have proceeded too far are returned to an earlier base (based on the maximum of (i) and (ii) above).

## Junior & Senior

- Refer to interlock rules established at the district level.