

PLAY
LAWTON
YOUTH BASEBALL
RULE BOOK

Rev. 01/2024
2024 EDITION

PURPOSE

This program is designed to give children an opportunity to play sports under good adult supervision. The primary goal of youth sports programs is to build good character and values through sport, winning is secondary.

ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION

Every team in the program should designate a Manager who serves as an organizer and contact person for that team. Their primary responsibility is to obtain competent coaches.

All persons accepting responsibility in this program must strive to teach good sportsmanship, good health habits, and good citizenship. They should exercise the type of behavior that will set a good example for players and follow the rules and regulations. Embarrassment of any player or team must be avoided. Abuse of players will not be tolerated. All coaches should strive to practice and play all players on their team. The participants should be exposed to all game conditions, regardless of wins or losses.

Play Lawton does not issue cash refunds. We do not consider refunds unless a program or event is canceled and is not rescheduled.

COACHES

We want to take the opportunity to thank all of you fine coaches for the many hours you work with our youth. Without you, the sports programs could not possibly function so successfully.

We appreciate that you are helping to build good character traits in the children you coach. Thank you for being patient and considerate with the players, while at the same time maintaining control of your team.

We hope at the end of the season, you may evaluate your work by answering, "Yes" to the following question: "Did I build good character in the players on my team?"

Thank you,
Play Lawton

COACHING GUIDELINES

I agree as coach or assistant coach to comply at all times with the provisions listed below:

1. **To read the “2024 Youth Baseball Rule Book” and comply with all rules and regulations contained within.**
2. To never make abusive or insulting remarks to or about officials of the game, officials of the programs, or opposing coaches and players.
3. To hold regularly scheduled practices and that my assistants or I will be there on time
4. Not to use profanity around players or consume alcoholic beverages before or during any meeting with the players.
5. At all times I will set a good example of sportsmanship for my players, keeping in mind that the primary goal of this program is to build character. I will make the maximum effort to keep my spectators, parents and fans from harassing the game officials. I will congratulate the opponents and have my players do the same.
6. I will play all players who practice regularly and with maximum effort, as the situation permits.
7. I will never take my team off the court until the game is finished.
8. Reasons for Ejection:
 - Using profanity, insulting or vulgar language or gestures;
 - Attempting to influence a decision by an official;
 - Disrespectfully addressing an official;
 - Indicating objections to an Official's decision;
 - Using a mechanical device to attract attention;
 - Holding an unauthorized conference;
 - Failure of a team to be ready to play;
 - Failure of the head coach, following verification, to have his/her player(s) wear legal and/or required equipment;
 - Be on the playing field except as a substitute or replaced player;
 - Be outside the designated area (i.e., team/coaches box, bench or dugout);

I understand that the penalty for violation of any of the above is automatic suspension from coaching until reinstated.

GAME DISMISSAL/EJECTION

When a coach, manager, player or parent is dismissed or ejected from a game, said individual may be subject to additional discipline based on a number of factors to be reviewed by the league director. An individual who is dismissed from a game may be penalized, by sitting out the next game, suspended for the remainder of the season or may not be reinstated to participate in Play Lawton youth sports programs.

If a player or coach is playing (coaching) in two different age divisions and is suspended in one age division; the player or coach cannot play (coach) games in the second age division due to being on suspension. While on suspension, the suspended party may not participate in scheduled Play Lawton activities per the suspension letter, until the suspension has been served and the suspended party is reinstated.

Play Lawton will not discuss suspensions with anyone other than the suspended party. Play Lawton will notify the party of suspension status via email and may or may not contact the suspended party via phone.

MISCONDUCT

Play Lawton reserves the right to suspend any player, coach, manager and/or fan for misconduct of any kind.

Examples of misconduct include, but are not limited to:

- Fighting
- Profanity
- Obscene gesture
- Disrespectfully addressing an official
- Objecting to an official's decision
- Improper contact with an official
- Illegal player

NOTE: If a player or coach is playing (coaching) in two different age divisions and is suspended in one age division; the player or coach cannot play (coach) games in the second age division due to being on suspension. While on suspension, the suspended party may not participate in scheduled Play Lawton activities per the suspension letter, until the suspension has been served and the suspended party is reinstated.

Misconduct reports will be filed with the League Director. Game Officials, Play Lawton Staff, Tournament Officials, or Site Officials may eject a player, coach, manager or fan from the game or game site, as he or she deems necessary. All other player ejection penalties will be imposed at the discretion of the League Director. The League Director and/or General Manager are responsible for deciding the level of penalty imposed in cases of misconduct.

ASSAULT ON AN OFFICIAL

Oklahoma Statutes

Title 21. Crimes and Punishments

§21-650.1. Athletic contests - Assault and battery upon referee, umpire, etc.

Universal Citation: 21 OK Stat § 21-650.1 (2016)

Every person who, without justifiable or excusable cause and with intent to do bodily harm, commits any assault, battery, assault and battery upon the person of a referee, umpire, timekeeper, coach, official, or any person having authority in connection with any amateur or professional athletic contest is guilty of a misdemeanor and is punishable by imprisonment in the county jail not exceeding one (1) year or by a fine not exceeding One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00), or by both such fine and imprisonment.

USE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

Play Lawton will utilize Law Enforcement as a last resort measure when enforcing game dismissals/ejection or site dismissal/ejections. We expect that when a player, coach, manager and/or fan are asked to leave the site, they do so on their own accord. If a party who is asked to leave refuses to do so under their own power, law enforcement may be called to remove said individual(s).

PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

6U DIVISION - TEEBALL

Players who are 4 - 6 years of age on 01/01/24 are eligible. Players who turn 7 prior to 01/01/24 are not eligible for this division.

8U DIVISION - COACH PITCH

Players who are 6 - 8 years of age on 01/01/24 are eligible. Players who turn 9 prior to 01/01/24 are not eligible for this division.

10U DIVISION - KID PITCH

Players who are 8 - 10 years of age on 01/01/24 are eligible. Players who turn 11 prior to 01/01/24 are not eligible for this division.

12U DIVISION - KID PITCH

Players who are 10 - 12 years of age on 01/01/24 are eligible. Players who turn 13 prior to 01/01/24 are not eligible for this division.

RECREATION LEAGUE PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

A player must meet the age requirement for their age division. A player cannot be over the division age before the age cutoff date. Parents should consider a player's skill level of play when registering.

Recreational Leagues are for players who are learning the game and developing their skills. Recreational leagues will play seven (7) regular season games and a postseason championship tournament for top teams.

COMPETITIVE LEAGUE PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

A player must meet the age requirement for their age division. A player cannot be over the division age before the age cutoff date. Parents should consider a player's skill level of play when registering.

Competitive Leagues are for players who are more skilled or have more experience. Competitive leagues will play seven (7) regular season games and a postseason championship tournament for top teams.

PLAYER ELIGIBILITY VERIFICATION

Birth Certificates or Report Cards may be required to verify player eligibility if questions or concerns arise. Birth certificates made from affidavits are not acceptable unless approved by the League Director. Report cards must be from the current school year. Documents may be required on protest of eligibility. Parents should be prepared to present verification documents if requested. The player is not eligible to play until they can be verified by supporting documentation.

Protesting an Illegal Player

Only the **Head Coach** or **Team Manager** may protest the eligibility of any player on an opposing team at any time. The protest must be filed, in writing (email), with the League Director within **seven (7) days** after the supposed illegal player participated in a game. If the protest is deemed valid, it will be reviewed by the League Director. Players suspected of being ineligible will be unable to participate until their eligibility has been verified.

USING AN ILLEGAL PLAYER

Any coach found using illegal players on their team is subject to suspension from coaching the remainder of the season. If the infraction accrues and/or is discovered at the end of the regular season or playoffs; the suspension may carry to the next coached sport. In addition to being suspended, the coach may also be placed on probation by the Play Lawton Management until the end of the athletic season at which time a decision will be made as to whether the coach may continue to coach in Play Lawton youth sports programs. It is the coach's responsibility to ensure all players are registered appropriately and to communicate any potential issues with Play Lawton staff.

PLAYER MOVE UP

Players at the top of their division (10yr old in 10U or 12yr old in 12U) may play up a division. The parents or legal guardian must contact the League Director for approval prior to participating in any league games. The League Director may move players up a division to maintain competitive balance.

ROSTERS

All players must be registered, paid, have a waiver signed, and be on the DaySmart Roster prior to game start. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the League Director. Players who do not meet the requirements will not play. **ALL ROSTERS WILL BE LOCKED AFTER THE SECOND WEEK OF PLAY.**

Playoff Rosters - players must play in a minimum of two (2) regular season games AND meet all previous roster requirements to be eligible to play in playoffs. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the League Director.

FREE AGENT REQUEST

Free agents will be placed on to rosters when team registration is finished. If a free agent has a specific team request they can submit it to the League Director via email or by registration note in DaySmart.

MAXIMUM TEAM SIZE

Fifteen (15) players per team, although recommended team size is no more than twelve (12) players. Exceptions will be made at the discretion of the League Director

COACHES

- Coaches are expected to adhere to the coaching guidelines and code of conduct outlined above.
- Coaches and Team Managers are responsible for the conduct of their players and parents.

PARENTS/SPECTATORS

The following punishments will be handed down if a parent/spectator/fan is thrown out of the game for misconduct (defined under 'Misconduct'):

- **FIRST STRIKE:** If a parent/spectator/fan is removed from a game for misconduct, the TEAM will receive a warning which lasts the entire season, including playoffs.
- **SECOND STRIKE:** If a parent/spectator/fan is removed from a game for misconduct, after the team has already received their first strike, the TEAM will immediately forfeit the game they are playing, resulting in a score of 24-0 for the team not forfeiting.
- **THIRD STRIKE:** If a parent/spectator/fan is removed from a game for misconduct, after the team has already received their first and second strikes, the TEAM will forfeit their remaining games for the season, and will not be eligible for playoffs, regardless of record.

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ALL Misconduct will be reviewed by the League Director

BOTTOM LINE:

As a parent/spectator/fan who is passionate about the sport, your child, and/or your team. It is your right to feel emotion, for example, happiness of your team scoring a point or frustration with a call that didn't go your way. However, it is also your RESPONSIBILITY, to conduct yourself in a way that is appropriate and aligns with the purpose as stated above. Misconduct of any kind will not be tolerated.

UMPIRES

The umpire has authority to rule promptly, and in the spirit of good sportsmanship, on any situation not specifically covered in the rules. The referee's decisions are final in all matters pertaining to the game. The game officials shall assume authority for the contest.

The game officials' authority extends through the umpire's declaration of the end of the game including overtime. The game officials retain clerical authority over the game through the completion of any reports, including those imposing disqualifications, that are responsive to actions occurring while the game officials had jurisdiction. Play Lawton may intercede in the event of unusual incidents that occur before, during or after the game officials' jurisdiction has ended or in the event that a game is terminated prior to the conclusion of regulation play. The game officials shall have the authority to make decisions for infractions of the rules. **The use of any replay or television monitoring equipment by the game officials in making any decision relating to the game is prohibited.**

RAINOUTS

Visit www.facebook.com/playlawton to get information on rainouts. Information on rainouts will be posted by 3:00 PM if Play Lawton staff has determined that games should be canceled. The League Director, Field Marshal, or game officials may terminate any game due to inclement weather. Games canceled due to weather, electrical issues or any other reason are not guaranteed to be made up. Every effort will be made to reschedule a canceled game.

LIGHTNING SAFETY PROCEDURE

Lightning Safety Procedure:

1. Keep an eye on the sky. Look for darkening skies, flashes of lightning, or increasing wind, which may be signs of an approaching thunderstorm.
2. Listen for the sound of thunder. If you can hear thunder, go to a safe shelter immediately. If you **“See it, flee it” and if you “Hear it, Clear it”**
3. Postpone activities promptly. Don't wait for rain. Many people take shelter from the rain, but most people struck by lightning are not in the rain!
4. Go quickly to your vehicle. An open garage, baseball dugout or picnic shelter does not provide safety. An enclosed building is the best location to go to. However, if no enclosed building is convenient, get inside your hard-topped all-metal vehicle.
5. Stay away from tall or individual trees, lone objects (light or flag poles), metal objects (metal fences or bleachers), standing pools of water, and open fields. Avoid being the tallest object in a field. Do not take shelter under a single tall tree.
6. If you feel your hair stand on end or your skin tingle or hear crackling noises, immediately crouch to minimize your body surface area.
7. Avoid leaning against vehicles. Get off bicycles and motorcycles.

Decision to Postpone and Resume Game:

1. Allow 30 minutes to pass after the last sound of thunder or flash of lightning before resuming any athletic activity.
2. No consideration will be given to completing the game when making the decision to postpone or resume the game. The only factor that will be considered is the presence/absence of lightning/thunder/threatening skies.

What to do if someone is struck by lightning:

1. Call 9-1-1 or your local ambulance service for help.
2. Get medical attention as quickly as possible

For questions or more information call the Play Lawton at (580) 730-1830 or email info@playlawton.com

YOUTH BASEBALL LEAGUE RULES

ALL DIVISIONS ARE GOVERNED BY CURRENT NFHS BASEBALL RULES

GENERAL

COACHES IN THE DUGOUT

A maximum of four (4) coaches are allowed in the dugout.

AUTOMATIC OUTS

Nine players will constitute a team. Teams must have at least eight players to play a game. If less than nine players are available, an automatic out will be recorded on non-player and can be placed anywhere in the lineup.

TIE GAMES/OVERTIME

There will be no extra innings for regular season games, if the score is tied at the end of regulation, the game will be recorded as a tie. This rule does not apply to playoff or championship games, for playoff extra inning rules, see below per division.

TIE BREAKER ANALYSIS

If there is a tie in the standings at the end of regular season play, the following tie breaker configurations will be used to break the tie or ties:

- Winning Percentage
- Head-To-Head Record
- Head-To-Head Run Differential
- Total Run Differential
- Lowest Number of Forfeits
- Coin Toss

RUNS PER INNING

A team may score a maximum of five (5) runs per inning, including the last inning. For extra inning runs per inning, see below per division.

BATTING ORDER AND SUBSTITUTIONS

After the start of the game, players must remain in the same batting order for the remainder of the game. Players in the field may be changed out in between innings. All batter substitutions must be listed on the lineup card.

OVERTHROW/OUT OF PLAY

If the ball goes out of play as the result of an overthrow or by non intentional means, the runner will take two bases from the last base they earned when the ball was thrown.

6U TEEBALL DIVISION

GENERAL

Defensive Players/Extra Hitters/Participation

A team may play up to ten (10) players on defense, and at least four (4) must play in the outfield. No infielder can play closer to home plate than the distance to the pitcher's mound in an arc (46'). All players should play in the game.

- Every team will be allowed as many players in their lineup as are on their official roster. Teams will not be penalized by automatic out for only having nine (9) players.

Batting Attempts

Each batter will get five (5) attempts to hit the ball off the tee, after 5 attempts, the batter is out.

Stealing Bases

Base runners are not permitted to steal or lead-off base and must remain in contact with the base **until the ball is hit**. The runner may be called out by the umpire for this rule violation.

FIELD

Batting Tee

Three (3) feet behind, and in line with home plate.

Bases

Sixty (60) feet.

Fair Ball Arc

There will be a ten (10) foot arc drawn from the first baseline to the third baseline in front of home plate. A batted ball must go past the arc line to be considered a fair ball. The ball is put in play when a batter hits a legally batted ball. A legally batted ball is a ball hit into fair territory and travels on or past the 10 foot legal hit arc.

Pitching Rubber

The pitching rubber is forty six (46) feet from home plate.

EQUIPMENT

Bats

- Wood and metal bats are allowed. Bats may not be altered in any way.

Footwear

- All players must wear shoes. Rubber cleat shoes will be allowed. Open toe, open heel or hard soled shoes will not be allowed. Absolutely NO metal cleats.

Ball

- MacGregor #56 Official Tee Ball or equivalent 'Vyntan' Synthetic leather cover/lower bounce rubber core/double-stitched seams.

Mandatory Protective Equipment

- All runners, batters, on deck batters, or players in the coaching box, must have a helmet protecting the top of the head, temples, ears, and base of skull. Helmets with chin straps are recommended to prevent accidental loss of protective equipment while running or sliding.

START OF THE GAME AND TIMING

Teams should be ready to play at the scheduled game time. The time limit clock will start at the scheduled game time (unless otherwise indicated by the umpire or Play Lawton staff). There will be a ten (10) minute grace period after the clock starts for a team to get enough players, otherwise, the game will be considered a forfeit.

Time Limit

The time limit for games is 50 minutes, a new inning shall not start if five (5) minutes or less remain on the clock. Once an inning starts, it must be finished.

Innings

Five (5) innings maximum. There will be no extra innings except for during playoffs.

OFFICIALS TIME

If a ball is hit to the outfield and returned to the infield, it does not have to be under control by a player, the official will call time, the runner may only advance to the base they are already traveling to at that time. If a play is made on the runner, the ball will become dead after the play is made.

8U COACH PITCH LEAGUE RULES

GENERAL

Defensive Players/Extra Hitters/Participation

A team may play up to ten (10) players on defense, and at least four (4) must play in the outfield. No infielder can play closer to home plate than the distance to the pitcher's mound in an arc (46'). All players should play in the game.

- Every team will be allowed as many players in their lineup as are on their official roster. Teams will not be penalized by automatic out for only having nine (9) players.

Batters

Each batter will get a maximum of six (6) pitches or three (3) swinging strikes. If a batter foul tips the 3rd swing and has remaining pitches she will continue her at bat until the 6th pitch or 3rd swinging strike, but will still get **no more than 6 pitches per at bat**.

- No walking. **Exception:** When a defensive player comes closer than 46 feet in an arc to a batter in the box, everybody advances one base.

Pitcher-Player

The pitcher-player must be within eight (8) feet of the pitcher's mound when the ball is pitched. At the umpire's judgment, when the player-pitcher has the ball reasonably controlled inside the pitching circle and all play on the runner(s) has ceased, the umpire will call time. The ball at this point will be considered a dead ball and will be returned to the coach-pitcher. Players will be awarded the base they were traveling to when the umpire called time, **at the discretion of the umpire.**

- Examples: If a player has just rounded 3rd base when the umpire calls time, they will be returned to 3rd base and not awarded home. However, if that same player is 10 feet from home when time is called, they will be awarded home.

Stealing Bases

Base runners are not permitted to steal or lead-off base and must remain in contact with the base **until the ball is hit.** The runner will be called out by the umpire for this rule violation.

COACHES

- A coach of the team at bat will pitch to his/her own team. That coach may coach the team while pitching, however, they may not interfere with play at any point in time. The coach must allow adequate time for the Pitcher-Player to get in position before pitching the ball.
- Coaches must pitch with at least one foot inside of the pitcher's circle.
- The Defensive Coach may coach the team on the field. No more than two Defensive Coaches are allowed on the field at the same time, these coaches must stay behind the infielders.
- Each team is allowed up to four (4) coaches in the dugout. Only, coaches, players, and a maximum of one scorekeeper are permitted to be in the dugout.

Coach-Umpires

One Head Umpire will be present at each game. Each team may provide one coach-umpire to assist the head umpire. All final decisions will be made by the head umpire.

FIELD

Bases

Sixty (60) feet.

Fair Ball Arc

There will be a twenty (20) foot arc drawn from the first baseline to the third baseline in front of home plate. A batted ball must go past the arc line to be considered a fair ball. The ball is put in play when a batter hits a legally batted ball. A legally batted ball is a ball hit into fair territory and travels on or past the 10 foot legal hit arc.

Pitching Rubber

The pitching rubber is forty six (46) feet from home plate.

Pitching Circle

The pitching circle is marked in an eight (8) foot radius around the pitching rubber.

EQUIPMENT

Bats

- Wood and metal bats are allowed. Bats may not be altered in any way.

Footwear

- All players must wear shoes. Rubber cleat shoes will be allowed. Open toe, open heel or hard soled shoes will not be allowed. Absolutely NO metal cleats.

Ball

- Standard Hardcore Baseball.

Mandatory Protective Equipment

- All runners, batters, on deck batters, or players in the coaching box, must have a helmet protecting the top of the head, temples, ears, and base of skull. Helmets with chin straps are recommended to prevent accidental loss of protective equipment while running or sliding.
- Catchers must wear a mask with throat protector, chest protector, shin guards, and protective helmet.

START OF THE GAME AND TIMING

Teams should be ready to play at the scheduled game time. The time limit clock will start at the scheduled game time (unless otherwise indicated by the umpire or Play Lawton staff). There will be a ten (10) minute grace period after the clock starts for a team to get enough players, otherwise, the game will be considered a forfeit.

Time Limit

The time limit for games is 50 minutes, a new inning shall not start if five (5) minutes or less remain on the clock. Once an inning starts, it must be finished.

Innings

Five (5) innings maximum. There will be no extra innings except for during playoffs.

OFFICIALS TIME

If a ball is hit and returned to the infield, and is deemed to be reasonably controlled by the pitcher-player (this may include a ball that is not in possession of the pitcher-player but is controlled in the pitching circle), the umpire will call time, the runner may only advance to the base they are already traveling to at that time. If a play is made on the runner, the ball will become dead after the play is made.

- If an advancing runner is more than 50% of the way to the next base they may earn that base. If an advancing runner is less than 50% of the way to the next base they may be asked to return to their last earned base. THIS IS UP TO THE DISCRETION OF THE UMPIRE.

KID (FAST) PITCH LEAGUE RULES

GENERAL

Runs per Inning

A team may score a maximum of five (5) runs per inning. **This does not apply to extra innings.**

Fence Climbing Rule

If a player uses the fence to gain advantage to catch a ball, or climbs the fence to make any play, the player will be ejected from the game. This rule is in place to prevent player injury and damage to property.

No players, coaches, or fans shall climb fences or backstops, repeatedly hit balls into the fences or backstops, or do anything that could damage fences, backstops, or city property.

Stealing

Stealing and leading off are allowed in these divisions.

Dropped Third Strike

This rule applies when first base is open, or if there are two outs. If the batter strikes out (swinging or looking) and the catcher does not catch the pitch before it hits the ground, the batter can run to first base.

Mercy Rule

15 run lead after 3 innings, 12 run lead after 4 innings.

FIELD

Bases

Sixty (60) feet.

Pitching Rubber

The pitching rubber is forty six (46) feet from home plate.

EQUIPMENT

Bats

- Wood and metal bats are allowed. Bats may not be altered in any way.

Footwear

- All players must wear shoes. Rubber cleat shoes will be allowed. Open toe, open heel or hard soled shoes will not be allowed. Absolutely NO metal cleats.

Ball

- Standard hardcore baseball.

Mandatory Protective Equipment

- All runners, batters, on deck batters, or players in the coaching box, must have a helmet protecting the top of the head, temples, ears, and base of skull. Helmets with chin straps are recommended to prevent accidental loss of protective equipment while running or sliding.
- Catchers must wear a mask with throat protector, chest protector, shin guards, and protective helmet. A cup is at the discretion of the coach and/or parent, however it is recommended to prevent injury.

START OF THE GAME AND TIMING

Teams should be ready to play at the scheduled game time. The time limit clock will start at the scheduled game time (unless otherwise indicated by the umpire or Play Lawton staff). There will be a ten (10) minute grace period after the clock starts for a team to get enough players, otherwise, the game will be considered a forfeit.

Time Limit

The time limit for games is 75 minutes, a new inning shall not start if five (5) minutes or less remain on the clock. Once an inning starts, it must be finished.

Innings

Six (6) innings maximum. If the game is tied after the 6th inning OR once the time limit is reached, the game will be recorded as a tie. For playoffs, a game will keep going through extras until a winner is determined using International Tie Breaker (ITB) Rules.

- **ITB** - At the start of each inning, a runner is placed on second base- the runner will be the last batter scheduled to bat in this inning. Any eligible player may be substituted for this runner. At least one full inning is played, allowing each team the same chance to score. If the score remains tied, the same process is used in each inning until a victor emerges (one team scores more runs than the other at the end of a complete inning).

Visit DaySmart Recreation to check your team's schedule and scores.

For questions or concerns email info@playlawton.com