



# Youth Baseball Rules



## SECTION A: LEAGUES & AGE DIVISIONS

1. The Sumter County Parks & Recreation Department offers the following levels of play based on age & ability:
  - a. TEE Ball for children with a playing age of five (5)
  - b. Coach Pitch for children with a playing age of six (6)
  - c. FLEA League for children with a playing age of seven (7) or eight (8) / **Machine @ 38 MPH**
  - d. MITE League for children with a playing age of nine (9) / **Machine @ 45 MPH**
  - e. Little League™ Minor for children with a playing age of ten (10) or eleven (11) / **Live Arm** (new in 2009)
  - f. Little League™ Major for children with a playing age of eleven (11) or twelve (12) / **Live Arm**
2. The age control date for all levels of baseball is May 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year. A child's age on April 30<sup>th</sup> determines their playing age!
3. No-One is allowed to play above their own age division. This applies in ALL divisions! (Revised 2009)
4. The only players allowed to play below their age division are players with a documented physical or mental disability. This must be approved and signed off on by the Executive Director, during the registration process.

## SECTION B: GOVERNING BODY / ELIGIBILITY

1. The SCPRD youth baseball program at the MITE level and below will be governed by the rules and regulations of the Georgia High School Association with the exceptions found in the GRPA Athletic Manual and this local supplement.
2. The Sumter Area Little League™, at both the Minor and Major Divisions, shall be governed by the rules of Little League Baseball™, Inc. with the exceptions found in this local supplement.
3. All divisions are operated by the Sumter County Parks and Recreation Department. The agency's athletic manager and recreation manager shall have the responsibility for direct supervision of the program.
4. Good Sportsmanship is not only expected, it is demanded at all times!!! The SCPRD has full authority to remove anyone from the complex for behavior deemed to be inappropriate.
5. The SCPRD request that you boost the players by limiting your public comments to those of praise.
6. Any player that represents an SCPRD team on the District and State level in GRPA must be a resident and/or full-time student in Sumter County, Georgia. (This applies to FLEA and MITE league teams)
7. Any player that represents the Sumter Area Little League™ on the District, State, Regional or National levels must be a resident of Sumter, Schley, Terrell, Webster or Macon Counties and must have played in at least 60% of the regular season games within our league.
8. The SCPRD requires any player who does not reside in Sumter County, Georgia to pay a registration fee equal to double the amount, of the normal registration fee paid by a Sumter County resident. (Revised 2009)

## SECTION C: SPEED UP RULES / LENGTH OF GAMES

1. An inning must be completed in a time limit game, unless the home team is ahead and batting when time expires.
2. A regulation game in TEE Ball is 2 innings in which all players on both rosters bat in each inning.
3. A regulation game in Coach Pitch is 2 innings in which all players on both rosters bat in each inning.
4. A regulation game in FLEA League is 5 innings or a 1 hour time limit with a Continuous Batting Order.
5. A regulation game in MITE League is 6 innings or a 1 hour and 15 minute time limit with a Continuous Batting Order.
6. A regulation game in Little League™ is 6 innings or a 1 hour and 40 minute time limit with a Continuous Batting Order.
7. No new inning may begin once the time limit has expired unless the game is tied.
8. A game called due to Lightning, rain or unusual circumstances will be considered a complete game during regular season play at: (a) 3 complete innings or (b) 2 ½ innings if the home team is ahead
9. The **MERCY RULE** for all local play is: 12 runs after 3 innings or 8 runs after 4 innings
10. In FLEA / MITE league games, a courtesy runner may be used at anytime for the catcher. The courtesy runner must be someone who did not play defense in the previous inning. If in the top of the 1<sup>st</sup> inning, the courtesy runner must be someone who is not scheduled to start defensively in the bottom of the 1<sup>st</sup> inning.
11. In Little League™, the **SPECIAL PINCH RUNNER** (Rule 7.14) will be used rather than a courtesy runner. This rule reads: *"Once in each inning, a team may utilize a player who is not currently in the game, as a Special Pinch Runner, for any offensive player on base. The player for whom the pinch runner is running for is NOT subject to removal from the line up."*
12. There are NO intentional walks allowed in TEE Ball, Coach Pitch or FLEA Divisions.

13. In MITE Division, each player on the roster may be intentionally walked only once per game. No pitches are required at this division, simply notify the umpire and the batter/runner will be allowed to go to first base.
14. In both Minor and Major Divisions of Little League™, if a player is to be intentionally walked, the pitcher must throw four balls and those pitches will count against their pitch count. No individual player may be intentionally walked more than once per game in Little League™.

#### SECTION D:

#### SPECIAL PROVISIONS

1. In all age divisions, a team may begin play with one fewer than the required number of players (to avoid forfeiture). In FLEA/MITE divisions, a team must have nine (9) players to begin play. In Little League™, a team must have eight (8) players to begin play. When a team begins play with fewer than the required number of players, the empty spot in the batting order is an out! There are NO EXCEPTIONS to this rule! If a player arrives late, they may be immediately inserted into the line up in the last batting position.
2. For local play only, there is free substitution and a Continuous batting order in FLEA - Little League™.
3. Any player removed from the game at the request of an umpire or a parent, will NOT be considered an out in the continuous batting order, unless it causes the team to fall below the required number of players (Example: FLEA/MITE = 10 players, Little League™ = 9 players)
4. For local play in the FLEA/MITE Leagues, when a team scores five runs in an inning, it will be just as if the 3<sup>rd</sup> out of the half inning has been recorded and the teams will "flip-flop". This rule applies in all innings except the final inning of the game or extra innings (Flea = 5<sup>th</sup> inning & following / MITE = 6<sup>th</sup> inning & following)
5. Anyone ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct must (1) leave the park immediately (2) sit out the remainder of that game + the following game (3) may not have any contact with the team at practice or in games until their entire suspension has been served. A second ejection in a season will result in the same penalty plus disqualification from any post season all-star consideration and possible expulsion from the league.
6. **Little League™ Pitching Regulations:** During League Play, the Sumter Area Little League™ will use the following pitching regulations:
  - a. A pitcher that pitches 20 or less pitches in a game requires NO rest and may pitch in the next game.
  - b. A pitcher that throws between 21 – 35 pitches in a day must have 1 calendar day of rest.
  - c. A pitcher that throws 36 - 50 pitches in a day must have 2 calendar days of rest.
  - d. A pitcher that throws 51 – 65 pitches in a day must have 3 calendar days of rest
  - e. A pitcher that throws 66 or more pitches in a day must have 4 calendar days of rest
  - f. The maximum number of pitches a pitcher may throw in a day in Minor League is 75 pitches.
  - g. The maximum number of pitches a pitcher may throw in a day in Major League is 85 pitches.
  - h. A pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day!
    - i. **EXCEPTION:** If the pitch limit is reached during an at bat, the pitcher may continue to pitch until the batter has reached base or has been declared out, at which time the pitcher must be replaced.
    - ii. A pitcher may not pitch in more than two (2) consecutive games
    - iii. Pitchers, once removed from the mound, may NOT return as a pitcher in the same game.
7. A coach is allowed three free conferences at the mound per game. A visit in which a pitching change is made does NOT constitute a free conference. **All visits after the 3<sup>rd</sup> free conference must result in a pitching change!**
8. While on offense, a team is only allowed one free conference with a hitter per inning. The penalty for violating this rule will be a strike on the current batter.
9. In FLEA League, **NO STEALING IS ALLOWED!** A runner must maintain contact with the bag until the pitched ball reaches home plate.
10. In MITE League, the GRPA passed ball rule will be in effect: This rule reads: "A solid line will be drawn five feet behind the catcher's box. If a ball gets passed the catcher and lands on or behind this line, a base runner may attempt to move up one base. If an attempt is made by the defensive team to throw out a runner and the ball is overthrown, the offensive player may NOT advance another base. A player who is on third base may not attempt to advance to home plate on a passed ball, unless a defensive play is attempted at another base ...for example: if runners are at first and third base and there is a passed ball, the runner at first base attempts to go to second base and the catcher throws to second base...this is the only time a runner at third may attempt to advance to home plate.
11. In all divisions of youth baseball, the head first slide has been outlawed! Any player going INTO a bag or at home plate head first will be declared out. This is regardless of a play being made or not! A dive back to a bag on an over-run does NOT constitute a head first slide. If a player stumbles and goes into a base head first...they will be declared out. A runner must lead with their feet & legs on a attempted slide!



12. In all division, tobacco products are not prohibited by players or coaches. There is also no smoking allowed by anyone inside the complex. Designated smoking areas have been set up outside of the gates between the Hall-Young and Red Fields as well as between the Hall-Young and Yellow Fields.
13. Only three adults are allowed inside the fenced area. These adults should include a head coach, an assistant coach and either a 2<sup>nd</sup> assistant or a team mom to coordinate the dugout.
14. In FLEA League only, while a team is on defense, one coach is requested to stand near the backstop, behind the catcher to retrieve passed balls. All other defensive coaches should be within arms reach of the dugout. If there is a problem with defensive coaches interfering with play – defensive coaches may be restricted to the dugout by the umpire.
15. In MITE League and Little League™, coaches are not restricted to the dugout while their team is on defense but must remain within arm's reach of the dugout.
16. In Little League™, there are NO "on deck" batters. All offensive players...other than the hitter, must be inside the dugout.
17. In Little League™, a coach is not allowed to be the "warm up catcher" between innings. It must be a player that is NOT playing defense in the upcoming inning. The "warm up catcher" must wear a hockey style mask with a dangling throat guard.
18. If a coach has a child in the baseball program, they may only coach in the league(s) in which their own child is playing, unless a suitable coach cannot be found for other leagues.

#### **SECTION E: PLAYING REQUIREMENTS**

1. If a game ends early because of rain, lightning or Mercy Rule, the playing requirement is pro-rated.
2. In FLEA - Little League™, a continuous batting order will be used and a player who did not play in the previous inning, must play the following inning defensively. Defensive Requirement: every other inning! (This is a local rule).
3. If it is discovered and verified that a player did NOT meet the playing requirement, the game is declared a forfeit. If the violating team lost the game anyway, they will forfeit their next win. In addition, the player who did NOT meet the playing requirement will be required to play the entire game in the following game.
4. COACHES... Please use good judgment in blow out games. Players, who usually do not get a lot of playing time should get more in a blow out game. Also, if a team builds a 10 run or more lead – the leading team should refrain from stealing bases, moving up on passed balls, etc. Show class and good sportsmanship and remember...what goes around, comes around!

#### **SECTION F: EQUIPMENT**

1. Steel Spikes are NOT allowed in any division of SCPRD baseball
2. Bats in all age divisions may NOT exceed 2 ¼" in diameter. There are no weight restrictions or minus ratio restrictions.
3. A pitcher may not wear a batting glove or wrist band while pitching. If a long sleeve is worn by the pitcher, it cannot be white in color.
4. A catcher must wear shin guards, chest protector, a hockey style mask with a dangling throat guard and all male catchers must wear a protective cup.
5. All players must wear a batting helmet while batting, on deck or running the bases. In TEE Ball – MITE Leagues, the helmet must have an attached facemask. In Little League™, a facemask is NOT required.
6. The SCPRD will supply a limited number of batting helmets, but players/parents are asked to supply their own batting helmets, if possible.

#### **SECTION G: UNIFORMS**

1. A uniform in youth baseball consists of a jersey with a factory style, non duplicated number on the back, full length baseball pants, socks, shoes and caps. The SCPRD will provide the jersey, cap and socks.
2. A uniform jersey in Little League™ Minor and Major divisions must have the Little League™ patch or emblem on the left sleeve.
3. A player who does NOT have an identical uniform is ineligible for play unless a member of the SCPRD can verify that the player is legally registered.
4. No shorts are allowed! Full length baseball pants must be worn.

#### **SECTION H: TEE BALL & COACH PITCH TEAM PLACEMENT**

1. TEE Ball and Coach Pitch teams will be selected at random, with no draft. Every effort will be made to ensure that each team gets an equal amount of male and female players. These two divisions are the only divisions in which request could possibly be made regarding carpools, neighbors, etc. Once a child reaches the age of seven (7) and is in a league where the draft occurs, they must go through the draft.

**SECTION I:****THE DRAFT**

1. The roster limit for all teams will be 13 players. Every effort will be made in the live arm leagues to keep roster limits to 12 players, but in certain cases, it may be required to carry 13 players. In pitching machine leagues, it is advantageous to carry 13 players because 10 players are on the field at a time.
2. Each player that is not a head coach's child(ren) should attend the skills evaluation. This allows the coaches to determine the skill level of each player. Any player that does NOT attend the skills evaluation will be ineligible to be drafted until all of the players who actually attended have been drafted. *(EXCEPTION: If there are fewer players than a full round requires, then everyone becomes eligible in that round)*
3. The head coach's child(ren) will be placed in draft spot #2. If the coach has multiple children, they will fill in succeeding draft spots (i.e. 3, 4, etc.)
4. Only the head coach's child(ren) will be frozen entering the draft.
5. The draft order will be determined by random draw just prior to the draft beginning. Once the draft begins, everyone will have a 1<sup>st</sup> round pick. At the end of the first round, anyone who has a blank spot in the #2 spot will pick in opposite order of the first round. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> round, whoever had the last pick of the 1<sup>st</sup> round will have the first pick of the 3<sup>rd</sup> round and work backwards. From this point on in the draft, it will reverse every round.
6. No team may have more than seven (7) players of any single age...unless that is all that remains in the draft.
7. During the draft, coaches will have 60 seconds to make a draft selection or be passed over until the end of the round. This applies in all rounds except the last round.
8. Once the draft is completed, there will be NO TRADES!
9. To avoid hurt feelings, the only people allowed in the draft room will be head coaches, SCPRD staff and others pre approved by the SCPRD staff.

**SECTION J:****10 & UNDER MITE LEAGUE PITCHING MACHINE SPECIFICS**

1. All pitching will be done with a Jugs Jr. Pitching Machine.
2. In league play, only one umpire will be used to pitch and make all calls.
3. When a batted ball hits the machine, prior to an attempt being made by a defensive player, it is declared a "Dead Ball" and the batter is awarded first base. If there are any base runners, they will move up one base if forced. If not forced, they will stay where they were when the pitch was made.
4. If a thrown ball hits the machine, all runners who are forced will move up one base. If not being forced, it will be the umpires judgment as to whether or not the runners will advance.
5. A player in the pitcher's position must have one foot inside the 12' x 8' box that is around the pitching machine when the pitch is thrown.
6. Bunting is no longer allowed in the MITE League. A player must take a full swing. Any attempt to bunt, in the umpire's judgment, will be ruled an out, if contact is made and all subsequent action will be cancelled.
7. Advancement on a passed ball is covered in Section D Rule 10
8. Runners must maintain contact with the bag until the pitch has reached home plate. If the umpire deems a base runner to have left the bag early, they will be immediately declared out and all subsequent action is cancelled.
9. In FLEA/MITE Leagues, four outfielders will be used. Their fielding positions are normally Left Field, Left Center Field, Right Center Field and Right Field ...However, coaches may choose to play a short fielder. Regardless of the alignment, all outfielders must be in the outfield grass upon the pitch.
10. For local play only, in the FLEA / MITE Leagues, the five (5) run per inning rule will apply. If a team in these age divisions scores five runs in an inning, it will be as if the 3<sup>rd</sup> out has been recorded and the teams will "flip-flop". This will apply in all innings except the 5<sup>th</sup> inning and beyond in the FLEA league and in the 6<sup>th</sup> inning and beyond in the MITE league.

**SECTION K:****ALL-STAR SELECTION**

1. The SCPRD will have a democratic All-Star selection process for FLEA - Little League™. These teams will represent the SCPRD or Sumter Area Little League™ in District, State, Regional and National competition.
2. Prior to the end of the regular season, each team will submit their nominations for players to be considered for All-Star competition. A Master Ballot will be constructed and a coaches meeting will be scheduled.
3. The only coaches allowed at the All-Star selection meeting will be the team's head coach or their designate.
4. A discussion phase will be held prior to any voting so that all coaches know the players on the Master Ballot.
5. At the same time that nominations are turned in, coaches will be asked to vote for their choice of a coach to coach the All-Star team. Coaches may choose one of their peers or may "write in" a member of the SCPRD full-time staff to serve as the head coach. An SCPRD staff member can only serve as the head coach: if a suitable coach cannot be found.
6. A coach may NOT vote for a player who was on their regular season team.
7. Once the votes are made and turned in, all players receiving unanimous votes will be placed onto the all-star team. If there is room remaining on the roster, all players that received all but one vote will be placed onto the roster. If there

are any roster spots remaining at this point, the head coach of this team will select the remaining players to complete the roster.

8. In the 12 & Under Little League Major Division, the nomination list will be considered a tryout list. All players nominated will be asked to try out and the team will be selected based on their tryout, under the Cub Sports rules.
9. If the SCPRD staff feels that a player has been intentionally or unintentionally left off of the nomination list, they may add the player's name to the nomination list.
10. Any players who are selected to the All-Star team and decline the invitation to play, will not be eligible to participate in the Kiwanis Tournament, GRPA or Little League tournaments with any other team.
11. Players selected to an All-Star team may play on any other travel teams, provided it does NOT conflict with GRPA or Little League™.
12. Any coach who is selected to coach an All-Star team and declines the opportunity will not be eligible to coach in the Kiwanis Tournament, GRPA or Little League™ tournaments with any other teams. These coaches may also be removed from consideration of coaching in the local program in future years.
13. All ballots will be subject to the Open Records Act and will be available, upon request, for public view for a period of one year.
14. All-Star players must meet all eligibility requirements for the organization in which they are participating in. Any player discovered not to be in full compliance with eligibility standards will be removed from the roster and if needed, will be replaced.