

Little League Rules True/False Quiz

(The LL rules are based on Major League rules. All of the answers in this quiz apply to the Major Leagues also unless noted otherwise)

Explanations and Rule References (The 'Question' is in bold type) *(Base quiz courtesy Jim Booth)*

1. **The hands are considered a part of the bat.** **FALSE** The hands are part of a person's body. As the LL Case Book says, "check any anatomy book." If a pitch hits the batter's hands the ball is dead; if he swung at the pitch, a strike is called (NOT a foul). If he was in the strike zone when hit, it is just a strike. If he was avoiding the pitch, he is awarded first base. Rules: 2.00 PERSON, TOUCH, STRIKE (e) and 6.05(f)
2. **The batter-runner must turn to his right after over-running first base.** **FALSE** The batter-runner may turn left or right, provided that if he turns left he does not make an attempt to advance to second base. An attempt is a judgment made by the umpire. The requirement is that the runner must immediately return to first after overrunning or oversliding it. Rule: 7.08(c and j)
3. **If the batter breaks his wrists when swinging, it's a strike.** **FALSE** A strike is a judgment by the umpire as to whether the batter attempted to strike the ball. Breaking the wrists, or the barrel of the bat crossing the plate are simply guides to making the judgment of an attempt, these are not rules. Rule: 2.00 STRIKE
4. **If a batted ball hits the plate first it's a foul ball.** **FALSE** The plate is in fair territory (Rule: 1.04, 1.05.) There is nothing special about it. If a batted ball hits it, it is treated like any other batted ball.
5. **The batter cannot be called out for interference if he is in the batter's box.** **FALSE** The batter's box is not a safety zone. A batter could be called out for interference if the umpire judges that interference could or should have been avoided. A batter who remains still in the box is NOT guilty of interference on a catcher's throw to a base on a steal attempt. (Think of it this way, if he were "automatically" guilty of interference, then all a catcher would have to do is hit the batter instead of throwing to a base). Rules: 2.00 INTERFERENCE, 6.06(c)

6. **The ball is dead on a foul tip.** **FALSE** There is nothing foul about a foul-tip. If the ball nicks the bat and goes sharp and direct to the catcher's hand or glove and is caught, this is a foul-tip by definition. A foul-tip is a strike and the ball is alive. It is the same as a swing-and-miss. If the ball is not caught, it is a foul ball. If the nicked pitch first hits the catcher somewhere other than the hand or glove, it is not a foul-tip, it is a foul ball.

Rules: 2.00 FOUL-TIP, STRIKE

7. **The batter may not switch batter's boxes after two strikes.** **FALSE** The batter can switch boxes at any time, provided he does not do it after the pitcher is ready to pitch.

Rule: 6.06(b)

8. **The batter who batted out of order is the person declared out.** **FALSE** The PROPER batter is the one called out. Any hit or advance made by the batter or runners due to the hit, walk, error or other reason is nullified. Any outs on base runners are nullified. The next batter is the one who follows the proper batter who was called out. Rule: 6.07(b, 1)

9. **The batter may not overrun first base when he gets a base-on-balls.** **FALSE** Rule 7.08(c and j) simply state that a batter-runner must immediately return after overrunning first base. It doesn't state any exceptions as to how the player became a runner. It could be a hit, walk, error or dropped third strike [Note: A batter cannot run on an uncaught third strike in LL Majors and below].

10. **The batter is out if he starts for the dugout before going to first after a dropped third strike (majors and over only).** **FALSE** The batter may attempt first base anytime prior to entering the dugout or a dead ball area. He may take a direct line from his position to first base. Rule: 6.05(c), 6.09(b) Casebook interpretation. (Note that in pro rules the batter-runner is out if he leaves the dirt circle around the plate before he starts for first base.)

11. **If the batter does not pull the bat out of the strike zone while in the bunting position, it's an automatic strike.** **FALSE** A strike is an attempt to hit the ball. Simply holding the bat over the plate is not an attempt. This is umpire judgment. Rule 2.00 STRIKE (Note: It IS true in many softball rules, but not in baseball)

12. **The batter is out if a bunted ball hits the ground and bounces back up and hits the bat while the batter is holding the bat.** **FALSE** The rule says the BAT cannot hit the BALL a second time. When the BALL hits the BAT, it is not an out. If the batter is still in the batter's box, it is a foul ball. Rules: 6.05(h) and 7.09(b)

13. **The batter is out if his foot touches the plate.** **FALSE** To be out the batter's foot must be on the ground and ENTIRELY outside the box when he contacts the pitch. There is no statement about touching the plate. The toe could be on the plate and the heel could be touching the line of the box, which means the foot is not entirely outside the box. Rule: 6.06(a)

14. ***The batter-runner is out if he runs outside the running lane after a bunted ball.*** **FALSE** The runner must be out of the lane AND cause interference with the fielder taking the throw. He is not out simply for being outside the lane. He could be called for interference even while in the lane if he interferes with a fielder attempting to field a batted ball. This is a judgment call. Rules: 2.00 INTERFERENCE, 6.05(k), 7.09(k)
15. ***A runner is out if he slaps hands or high-fives other players, after a homerun is hit over the fence.*** **FALSE** The ball is dead on a homerun over the fence. You can't be put out while the ball is dead except when you pass another runner. Rules: 5.02, 7.05(a)
16. ***Tie goes to the runner.*** **FALSE – But Not Really** From the umpire's perspective there is no such thing as a tie. The runner is either out or safe. Note: The play on the runner going to first is governed by Rule 6.05(i) and the play for a force at any other base is governed by Rule 7.08(e). By strict reading, the tie goes to the runner. **So it's really true but no umpire will admit it.**
17. ***The runner gets the base he's going to, plus one on a ball thrown out-of-play.*** **FALSE** When a fielder (or the pitcher while not on the rubber) throws the ball into dead ball area, the award is 2 bases. The award is from where the runners were physically positioned at the time of the pitch if it is the first play by an infielder, or from where each runner was physically positioned at the time the ball left the throwers hand on all other plays. It does NOT matter which direction the runner was headed at the time the ball was thrown. Rule: 7.05(g) If a pitch, or an attempted pickoff throw made from the rubber goes out of play, the award is one base.
18. ***Anytime a coach touches a runner, the runner is out.*** **FALSE** Rule 7.09(l) says the runner is out if the coach PHYSICALLY ASSISTS the runner. Hand slaps, back pats or simple touches are not physical assists.
19. ***Runners may never run the bases in reverse order.*** **FALSE** In order to correct a base running mistake, the runner MUST retrace his steps and retouch the bases in reverse order. The only time a runner is out for running in reverse, is when he is making a travesty of the game or tries to confuse the defense. Rules: 7.08(l), 7.10(b)
20. ***The runner must always slide when the play is close.*** **FALSE** There is no "must slide" rule. When the fielder has the ball in his possession, the runner has two choices; slide OR attempt to get around the fielder. He may NOT maliciously contact the fielder, but he is NOT required to slide. Rule: 7.08(a, 3) (*This rule does not apply to professionals*)

21. ***The runner is always safe when hit by a batted ball while touching a base.*** **FALSE** The bases are in fair territory. A runner who is touching a base and is hit by in fair territory is out when hit by a fair batted ball, except an infield-fly. Rules: 5.09(f), 7.08(f)

22. ***A runner may not steal on a foul tip.*** **FALSE** There is nothing foul about a foul tip. If the ball nicks the bat and goes to the catcher's glove and is caught, this is a foul tip by definition. A foul tip is a strike and the ball is alive. It is the same as a swing-and-miss. If the ball is not caught, it is a foul ball. Rules: 2.00 FOUL-TIP, STRIKE

23. ***It is a force out when a runner is called out for not tagging up on a fly ball.*** **FALSE** A force play is when a runner is forced to advance because the batter became a runner. When the batter is out on a caught fly, all forces are removed. An out on a failure to tag-up, is NOT a force out, it is an appeal. Any runs that cross the plate before this out will count. Rules: 2.00 FORCE PLAY, 4.09

24. ***An appeal on a runner who missed a base cannot be a force out.*** **FALSE** A runner must touch all the bases. If the runner misses a base to which he was forced because the batter became a runner and is put out before touching that base, the out is still a force play. If this is the third out, no runs may score. The base can be touched or the runner can be touched, either way it's a force out. Rules: 2.00 FORCE PLAY, TAG, 7.08(e), 7.10(b)

25. ***A runner is out if he runs out of the baseline to avoid a fielder who is fielding a batted ball.*** **FALSE** The runner MUST avoid a fielder attempting to field a BATTED ball. A runner is out for running out of the baseline, only when attempting to avoid a tag. Rules: 7.08(a), 7.09(L)

26. ***Runners may not advance when an infield fly is called.*** **FALSE** An Infield-fly is no different than any other fly ball in regard to the runners. The only difference is that they are never forced to advance because the batter is out whether the ball is caught or not. Rules: 2.00 INFIELD-FLY, 6.05(e), 7.10(a)

27. ***No run can score when a runner is called out for the third out for not tagging up.*** **FALSE** Yes it can. This is not a force play. A force play is when a runner is forced to advance because the batter became a runner. When the batter is out on a caught fly, all forces are removed. An out on a failure to tag-up, is NOT a force out. Any runners who were ahead of the runner called out and that cross the plate before this out will count. Rules: 2.00 FORCE PLAY, 4.09, 7.10(a)

28. ***A pitch that bounces to the plate cannot be hit.*** **FALSE** A pitch is a ball delivered to the batter by the pitcher. It doesn't matter how it gets to the batter. The batter may hit any pitch that is thrown. Rule: 2.00 BALL, PITCH. (If the ball does not cross the foul line, it is not a pitch.)

29. ***The batter does not get first base if hit by a pitch after it bounces.*** **FALSE** A pitch is a ball delivered to the batter by the pitcher. It doesn't matter how it gets to the batter. If the batter is hit by a pitch while attempting to avoid it, he is awarded first base. Rules: 2.00 PITCH, 6.08(b).

30. ***If a fielder holds a fly ball for 2 seconds it's a catch.*** **FALSE** A catch is legal when the umpire judges that the fielder has COMPLETE control of the ball and the release of the ball must be voluntary and intentional. If a fielder gloves the ball but falls or collides with a wall or another fielder and drops it, it is NOT a catch. Rule: 2.00 CATCH

31. ***You must tag the base with your foot on a force out or appeal.*** **FALSE** You can tag a base with ANY part of the body, including a properly worn glove/mitt, or you may tag the runner. Rules: 2.00 FORCE PLAY, PERSON, TAG, 7.08(e)

32. ***The ball is always immediately dead on a balk.*** **FALSE** If a throw or pitch is made after the balk call, the ball is delayed dead. At the end of the play the balk may be enforced or not depending on what happened. On a throw; if ALL runners advance on the play, the balk is ignored. If not, the balk award is enforced from the time of pitch. On a pitch; if ALL runners INCLUDING the batter, advance on the play, the balk is ignored. Otherwise, it is no-pitch and the balk award is made from the time of the pitch. Rule: 8.05 PENALTY

33. ***If a player's feet are in fair territory when the ball is touched, it is a fair ball.*** **FALSE** The position of the player's feet or any other part of the body is irrelevant. A ball is judged fair or foul based on the relationship between the ball and the foul line at the time the ball is touched. Rule: 2.00 FAIR, FOUL

34. ***The ball must always be returned to the pitcher before an appeal can be made.*** **FALSE** An appeal may be made anytime the ball is alive. The only time the ball must go to the pitcher, is when time is out. The ball cannot be made live until the pitcher has the ball while on the rubber and the umpire says "Play." If time is not out, the appeal can be made immediately. Rule: 2.00 APPEAL, 5.11, 7.10

35. ***With no runners on base, it is a balk (illegal pitch in majors and below) if the pitcher starts his windup and then stops.*** **FALSE** A pitch is a ball delivered to the batter by the pitcher. If the ball is not delivered, it is not a pitch. There cannot be a balk with no runners on base. If this happens with runners on base it is a balk. Rule: 2.00 PITCH.

36. ***The pitcher must come to a set position before a pick-off throw*** **FALSE** The pitcher is required to come to a complete stop in the Set position before delivering the pitch, not before making a throw. Rule: 8.05(m)

37. ***The pitcher must step off the rubber before a pick-off throw.*** **FALSE** If the pitcher steps off the rubber he is no longer the pitcher, he is a fielder. He can throw to a base from the rubber, provided he does not break any of the rules under rule 8.05

38. ***If a fielder catches a fly ball and then falls over the fence it is a homerun.*** **FALSE** As long as the fielder is not touching the ground in dead ball territory when he catches the ball, it is a legal catch if he holds onto the ball and meets the definition of a catch. If the catch is not the third out and the fielder falls down in dead ball territory, all runners are awarded one base. If the fielder remains on his feet in dead ball territory after the catch, the ball is alive and he may make a play. Rules: 2.00 CATCH, 6.05(a), 7.04(c)

39. ***The ball is dead anytime an umpire is hit by the ball.*** **FALSE** If an umpire is hit by a batted ball before it passes a fielder, the ball is dead. On any other batted or thrown ball, the ball is alive when the umpire is hit with the ball. Umpire interference also occurs when the plate umpire interferes with the catcher's attempt to prevent a stolen base. Rules: 2.00 INTERFERENCE, 5.09(b), 5.09(f)

40. ***The home plate umpire can overrule the other umps at anytime.*** **FALSE** The umpire who made a call or ruling may ask for help if he wishes. No umpire may overrule another umpire's call. Rules: 9.02(b, c)

NOTE: ***Be careful at a High School game. High School rules differ on a number of the above. Questions 9, 13, and 32 are true in High School rules. There are also other rules differences. 11 and 21 are true in softball.***

Feel free to discuss these rules with Rich Ives.