

COSTA MESA LITTLE LEAGUE LOCAL RULES 2024 (in effect 1/1/2024 – 12/31/2024)

Costa Mesa Little League Local Rules are adopted by the Costa Mesa Little League Board of Directors for the current season in accordance with Little League's *Official Regulations, Playing Rules, and Operating Policies* and Costa Mesa Little League's Constitution.

I. DIVISIONS OF PLAY

Costa Mesa Little League (CMLL) offers programs in the following divisions:

- Little League Baseball (Major Division – league ages 10-12)
- Minor League Baseball (5-11)
 - Minor League Player Pitch (Minor A, Minor B, and Minor C)
 - Minor League Machine Pitch (Farm)
 - Minor League Coach Pitch
- Tee Ball Baseball (4-5)

II. MANAGERS

CMLL uses a five-step process for selecting and appointing team managers annually.

- a. Applicants must submit a Little League Official Volunteer Application (available in SportsConnect) and present a government-issued photo identification card.
- b. CMLL will perform a background check (annually) per Regulation I(c)8 and 9.
- c. The CMLL Board will assign 1 or more officers to interview the applicant.
- d. If the applicant is a new volunteer, a minimum of 3 reference checks will be completed by an officer assigned by the CMLL Board.
- e. CMLL will conduct other separate and additional background checks as required by the State of California.

After these steps are complete, the League President appoints Managers for all teams. The Board of Directors approves or disapproves each appointment. If a Manager applicant is disapproved, the President appoints a substitute Manager for Board approval.

III. DRAFTS

CMLL will utilize Plan B (Redraft) in Little League's Local League Draft Methods Policy to draft players onto teams in the Major Division, Minor A, Minor B, and Minor C, with two exceptions: (1) instead of separating players into two pools (returning players and players new to a division), all players eligible to be drafted will be in a single pool; and (2) the order of managers' selections will be drawn out of a hat (the draft rotation will not follow the reverse order of finish from the previous season). Coach Pitch, Farm, and Tee Ball player assignments will consider competitive equity, geographic area, school attendance, league age, and friends.

In accordance with Regulation V, the following individuals are allowed in the draft room: League President, League Vice President, Division Player Agent, the Manager of each team or a designated person, and a clerical assistant selected by the League President.

IV. MANDATORY PLAY

Little League Regulation IV(i) states (in part) that every rostered player present at the start of a game will participate for a minimum of 6 defensive outs.

- In the Minor A, Minor B, and Minor C Divisions all players must play 9 defensive outs.

V. SCHEDULES

In accordance with Regulations VII(d) and VII(h), and Rules 4.10(c)(2) and 4.11(d), the following time limits are applied to games:

- Major Division – no time limit.
- Minor A Division – no new inning will start after two hours.
- Minor B Division – no new inning will start after one hour and fifty minutes.
- Minor C Division – no new inning will start after one hour and forty minutes.
- Farm Division – games will not exceed 90 minutes.
- Coach Pitch Division – games will not exceed 90 minutes.
- Tee Ball Baseball – games will not exceed 60 minutes.

For the purpose of time limits, in each division, a new inning begins when the last out of the previous inning occurs.

VI. SEASON

In the Major Division, Minor A, Minor B, and Minor C, games will be scheduled in the preseason, regular season, and postseason, in accordance with Regulation VII. Regular season standings determine postseason seeds. Postseason champions choose their berth in the District 62 Tournament Of Champions. The postseason runner-up is assigned the berth that is not selected by the champion.

Tiebreakers for postseason seeds are as follows:

1. Head-to-head record among all tied teams
2. Coin flip

VII. COACHES

Per Rule 3.17, the only adults allowed in the dugout are a manager and no more than two coaches.

In Minor C a team may have one manager and three coaches.

In Tee Ball, Coach Pitch, and Farm a team may have one manager and four coaches.

VIII. GAMES

In accordance with Rules 1.01, 4.16, and 4.17, in the Major Division, Minor A, Minor B, and Minor C, a game may not be started with less than 8 players on each team. In case of injury or ejection, a game may not be continued with less than 8 players on each team. In all such cases, the CMLL Board of Directors will decide whether a forfeiture has occurred. In accordance with Rules 4.04 and 6.05(n), a team with 8 players will not be penalized for playing with 8 players – no out will be called after the 8th player in the batting line-up bats.

In accordance with Rule 4.04, the Major Division will utilize a continuous batting order (CBO). All players on the team roster present for a game will bat in order. (Little League mandates CBO for Tee Ball and Minor Leagues – CMLL opts to also use CBO for the Major Division.)

In accordance with Rules 3.04 and 7.14(b), in the Major Division, Minor A, Minor B, and Minor C, a “courtesy runner” is permitted for the catcher and/or pitcher of record when there are 2 outs. Per 7.14(b), the “courtesy runner” must be the player who made the last out.

In accordance with Rule 5.07, in Minor A, Minor B, and Minor C, the five-run rule is suspended in the last half-inning for either team – the last inning is an “open inning” (ends after 3 outs are recorded or all batters in the lineup have batted once, whichever happens first).

To comply with Regulation VI (c) and (d), all managers in the Major Division, Minor A, Minor B, and Minor C must maintain an accurate pitching affidavit.

Minor B

Home plate is closed until the final six games of the regular season and playoffs. If a player has advanced to third base at the conclusion of a play, the player can only advance home on a ball put into play by the batter, a bases-loaded walk, or a bases-loaded hit-by-pitch.

Minor C

No score is kept until the regular season tournament and postseason.

When the ball in play is returned to the pitcher or any other defensive player, the play ends when that player has possession of the ball and places one or both feet into the pitcher’s circle.

- Any offensive player who has advanced past the halfway point to the next base when play ends advances to the next base without liability to be put out.
- Any offensive player who has not advanced past the halfway point to the next base when play ends returns to the last attained base without liability to be put out.
- The umpire(s) determine the position of runners when play ends. This is a judgment call and is not subject to appeal.
- On a grass infield, the dirt circle that encompasses the entirety of the pitching mound is the pitcher’s circle. On a dirt infield, the pitcher’s circle should be painted.

There is no base stealing on wild pitches or passed balls. Runners must advance only one base on an overthrow.

Pitching:

Players that are league age nine must not pitch.

If a batter takes ball 4, an offensive coach comes to the mound to pitch and must pitch from inside the pitching circle.

The batter retains the strike count.

If strike 3 is called, the batter is out (swing or call).

- If there are 2 strikes when the coach comes out, the coach might only throw 1 pitch for a strikeout. (The count does not reset when a coach comes out.)
- If the coach comes out to pitch with no count to the batter, and no strikes were recorded, then the maximum number of pitches will be 6 unless the 6th or subsequent pitches are fouled off.
 - Pitches 1,2 & 3 if not called strikes by the umpire and or offered at by the batter will be called balls.
 - Pitches 4,5 & 6 regardless of the pitch location will automatically be called strikes, even if the batter does not offer/swing at the pitch (there are no walks).
 - Any pitches thrown in excess of 6 due to the batter fouling off the pitch will automatically be a strike regardless if the batter offers at the pitch or not.
- If a player is hit by a player pitch (not a coach pitch), the batter can elect to take first base or continue batting.

Four coaches are allowed in the dugout in Minor C. One coach must remain in the dugout at all times. One defensive coach is allowed on the field of play to assist the catcher with passed balls.

Sunflower seeds (or any other type of seed with a shell) are not allowed at any CMLL field, under any circumstances.

IX. TIE GAMES

During the preseason and regular season, tie games are allowed in all divisions after 8 innings have been played. If a preseason or regular season game is called due to weather, light conditions, or curfew, the provisions of Rule 4 apply, but if the application of those provisions results in a tie game that should be resumed on a subsequent day, the game will not be resumed – it is officially a tie game (as long as Rule 4.10(c) has been satisfied). During the postseason, all games are played to completion per Rule 4.

X. UMPIRING

In accordance with Rule 9.01(d), the stealing and relaying of signs to alert the batter of pitch selection and/or location is unsportsmanlike behavior. See 9.01(d) for penalties.

XI. ALL-STAR TEAMS

CMLL will follow Little League's Tournament Rules and Guidelines when participating in Little League Tournaments. For each team, the League President will appoint a Manager (in accordance with Little League's Tournament Organization rules), and each Manager must be approved by the Board of Directors. Each Manager will select 2 Coaches in accordance with Little League's Tournament Organization rules.

- Little League Tournament Team (12u All-Stars) – All Major Division players can vote for up to 9 eligible players. Players can't vote for their own regular season teammates. The 4 players who receive the most votes make the team. Major Division managers also vote for up to 9 players and can't vote for their own players. The next 5 players selected by managers make the team. The Little League Tournament Manager will complete the rest of the roster, attempting to assemble the best team of players instead of simply the best individual players.
- 9- to 11-Year-Old Division Tournament Team (11u All-Stars) – All Major Division managers vote for up to 9 eligible players who are not on their own team. The 6 players who receive the most votes make the team. The 11u All-Star Manager will complete the rest of the roster, attempting to assemble the best team of players instead of simply the best individual players.
- 8- to 10-Year-Old Division Tournament Team (10u All-Stars) – All Minor A managers vote for up to 9 eligible players who are not on their own team. The 6 players who receive the most votes make the team. The 10U All-Star Manager will complete the rest of the roster, attempting to assemble the best team of players instead of simply the best individual players.
- SuperStars Team (9-8) – District 62 participates in the SuperStars program. All Minor A and Minor B managers vote for up to 9 eligible players who are not on their own team. The 6 players who receive the most votes make the team. The SuperStars Manager will complete the rest of the roster, attempting to assemble the best team of players instead of simply the best individual players.

XII. GAME GUIDE

CMLL maintains a Game Guide that outlines how our games will be played in all divisions. The most recent version of the Game Guide is included as Appendix A to CMLL's Local Rules.

APPENDIX A

COSTA MESA LITTLE LEAGUE GAME GUIDE

Costa Mesa Little League (CMLL) games are governed by Little League's *Official Regulations, Playing Rules, and Operating Policies* and Costa Mesa Little League's Local Rules. There are game scenarios that aren't covered by Little League's rules, primarily in the Tee Ball and Minor League levels, and this guide is intended to lay out how we play games at CMLL.

I. IN ALL DIVISIONS

In all divisions, CMLL teams and families are responsible for taking care of our fields. If you visit the fields at other Little Leagues in our area, you'll appreciate that we are fortunate to have terrific fields at CMLL. We are responsible for maintaining our fields, and we should take pride in having beautiful, functional fields that our players and families will enjoy for many years to come.

Team managers are ultimately responsible for ensuring that all teams are taking care of our fields. At each team's organizational meeting to start the season, each team should select 2 adults to serve as Field Maintenance volunteers. All other family members and coaches can help with field maintenance too.

- Practices – at practice, each team should make sure that our fields are protected.
 - Sunflower seeds are not allowed at any CMLL field. The shells accumulate in certain locations on the fields and kill the grass. We don't have a machine that can remove the shells, so when people spit shells on our fields, volunteers pick the shells off the fields by hand. Our volunteers would prefer to support our league in other ways.
 - If a mat is available to place on home plate, it should be placed. This protects the batter's boxes, and it should protect the area in front of the plate if a coach hits ground balls.
 - If nets are used for hitting practice, they must be placed outside the outfield fence and not on outfield or infield grass. Hitting stations kill grass. Hitting nets can be used in dirt areas.
 - At the end of practice, make sure the infield dirt is brushed, mound and plate covers are replaced, water the infield as appropriate, store the bases, and clean up the dugouts. Lock the storage container and all gates to the field.
- Games – Home team
 - Remove covers from the pitching mound and home plate. Store them out of play – usually near a storage container. (If you are not the first game of the day, the covers will probably already be removed.)
 - Brush the infield dirt, including the area around home plate. (If you are not the first game of the day, the visiting team of the previous game may brush the dirt.)
 - Water the infield dirt and batters' boxes. Be careful not to get the pitching mound too wet.

- Stripe the batters' boxes and foul lines. Use the box tool and the string for the lines. For Minor C only, paint the pitching circle and halfway marks between bases.
- Place the bases (they may be in place if you are not the first game of the day).
- Provide a maximum of 3 new game baseballs from the shed.
- Provide the scorebook from the shed (Minor B and above). The home team is responsible for keeping score. (In Minor C, the home scorekeeper keeps pitch counts.)
- Set up the American flag from the storage container.
- After the game, the home team ensures that the scorebook is returned to the shed, and the game score is entered in SportsConnect (Minor B and above).
- Games – Away team
 - After the game, brush the infield dirt, including the area around home plate.
 - If you are the last game of the day:
 - Water the infield dirt, batters' boxes, and pitching mound.
 - Put away the bases.
 - Cover the pitching mound and home plate area. Be sure that the cover is not over any grass.
 - Put away the American flag.
 - Lock the storage container and all gates to the field.
- Games – All teams
 - Sunflower seeds are not allowed at any CMLL field.
 - During warmups, if your team is hitting into a net, all nets need to be set up outside the outfield fence and not on outfield or infield grass. (At the National campus, dirt in foul territory can be used.)
 - Bats, batting helmets, and catchers' helmets should be placed outside the dugout fence for inspection 20 minutes before game time for umpire inspection (Minor C and above).
 - During the pregame plate conference, players should be in the dugout. Managers should give 3 copies of their lineup to the umpire – 1 goes to the other team, 1 to the scorekeeper, and the umpire keeps one.
 - Plate conference: littleleague.org/university/articles/tips-for-conducting-an-effective-pregame-plate-conference
 - After the game, all teams are responsible for cleaning up dugouts.
 - Bat rules: <https://www.littleleague.org/playing-rules/bat-rules/#baseball>
 - Rules for pitchers: <https://www.littleleague.org/playing-rules/pitch-count/#baseball>
 - 8/10/15 run rules: <https://www.littleleague.org/university/articles/the-10-run-rule-what-parents-need-to-know/>

II. MAJOR DIVISION

- As noted in CMLL's Local Rules, a Continuous Batting Order (CBO) will be used by all teams in all games.

- As noted in CMLL's Local Rules, all players will play at least 6 defensive outs in the field in each game.
- As noted in CMLL's Local Rules, there is no curfew or time limit. Games will be played to completion per Rule 4. During the preseason and regular season, a game will be called a tie after 8 innings are played. If a preseason or regular season is called due to weather or light conditions, a game that is tied per Rule 4 will not be resumed – it is a tie game as long as Rule 4.10(c) is satisfied. All postseason games are played to completion per Rule 4.
- In accordance with CMLL's Local Rules, Rule 3.04, and Rule 7.14(b), "courtesy runners" are permitted.
- A dropped third strike will be called in accordance with Rule 6.09(b).
- An infield fly ball will be called in accordance with Rule 2.00.
- 8/10/15 run rules:
<https://www.littleleague.org/university/articles/the-10-run-rule-what-parents-need-to-know/>

III. MINOR A DIVISION

- Per Rule 5.07, the five-run rule is in effect. A side is retired when three outs are recorded, all players have batted in the half-inning, or five runs score. Per CMLL's Local Rules, the five-run rule is suspended in the last half-inning for either team ("open inning" – ends when 3 outs are recorded or every batter in the lineup has batted once, whichever happens first). The 8/10/15 run rules noted above apply.
- As noted in CMLL's Local Rules, all players will play at least 9 defensive outs in the field in each game.
- In accordance with CMLL's Local Rules, Rule 3.04, and Rule 7.14(b), "courtesy runners" are permitted.
- In accordance with Rule 6.09(b), a third strike is an out regardless of whether it is dropped (the "dropped third strike rule" is Major Division only).
- An infield fly ball will be called in accordance with Rule 2.00. Note that the rule states that an infield fly should be called when a fly ball "can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort". This decision is a judgment call by the umpire.
- In accordance with CMLL's Local Rules, no new inning will start after two hours have passed since the official game time (as set by the umpire). A new inning begins when the last out of the previous inning occurs.

IV. MINOR B DIVISION

- Per Rule 5.07, the five-run rule is in effect. A side is retired when three outs are recorded, all players have batted in the half-inning, or five runs score. Per CMLL's Local Rules, the five-run rule is suspended in the last half-inning for either team ("open inning" – ends when 3 outs are recorded or every batter in the lineup has batted once, whichever happens first). The 8/10/15 run rules noted above apply.
- As noted in CMLL's Local Rules, all players will play at least 9 defensive outs in the field in each game.
- In accordance with CMLL's Local Rules, Rule 3.04, and Rule 7.14(b), "courtesy runners" are permitted.
- An infield fly ball will be called in accordance with Rule 2.00. Note that the rule states that an infield fly should be called when a fly ball "can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort". This decision is a judgment call by the umpire. The purpose of the infield fly rule is to protect the offense – an infielder can intentionally drop a fly ball in an attempt to record multiple outs. In practice, automatic outs on infield fly balls are not called in CMLL Minor B because we don't

anticipate players at this level intentionally dropping fly balls (to keep our practice in line with LL Rule 2.00 – there is no fly ball that can be caught by a Minor B infielder with ordinary effort).

- Home plate is “closed” until the final 6 games of the regular season and playoffs. If a player has advanced to third base at the conclusion of a play, the player can only advance home on a ball put into play by the batter, a bases-loaded walk, or a bases-loaded hit-by-pitch. If a catcher back-picks a runner at third, the runner can’t score (even in the case of an overthrow), and a runner at third can’t score if the catcher throws to second on a first-and-third attempted steal (even in the case of an overthrow).
- In accordance with CMLL’s Local Rules, no new inning will start after one hour and fifty minutes have passed since the official game time (as set by the umpire). A new inning begins when the last out of the previous inning occurs.

V. MINOR C DIVISION

- Per Rule 5.07, the five-run rule is in effect. A side is retired when three outs are recorded, all players have batted in the half-inning, or five runs score. Per CMLL’s Local Rules, the five-run rule is suspended in the last half-inning for either team (“open inning” – ends when 3 outs are recorded or every batter in the lineup has batted once, whichever happens first). The 8/10/15 run rules noted above apply.
- As noted in CMLL’s Local Rules, all players will play at least 9 defensive outs in the field in each game.
- In accordance with CMLL’s Local Rules, Rule 3.04, and Rule 7.14(b), “courtesy runners” are permitted.
- An infield fly ball will be called in accordance with Rule 2.00. Note that the rule states that an infield fly should be called when a fly ball “can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort”. This decision is a judgment call by the umpire. The purpose of the infield fly rule is to protect the offense – an infielder can intentionally drop a fly ball in an attempt to record multiple outs. In practice, automatic outs on infield fly balls are not called in CMLL Minor C because we don’t anticipate players at this level intentionally dropping fly balls (to keep our practice in line with LL Rule 2.00 – there is no fly ball that can be caught by a Minor C infielder with ordinary effort).
- When the ball in play is returned to the pitcher or any other defensive player, the play ends when that player has possession of the ball and places one or both feet into the pitcher’s circle. (The player must have possession and control of the ball – throwing the ball through “the cylinder” of the pitching circle does not stop play.)
 - Any offensive player who has advanced past the halfway point to the next base when play ends advances to the next base without liability to be put out.
 - Any offensive player who has not advanced past the halfway point to the next base when play ends returns to the last attained base without liability to be put out.
 - The umpire(s) determine the position of runners when play ends. This is a judgment call and is not subject to appeal.
 - On a grass infield, the dirt circle that encompasses the entirety of the pitching mound is the pitcher’s circle. On a dirt infield, the pitcher’s circle should be painted.
- Four coaches are allowed in the dugout in Minor C. On offense, one coach must remain in the dugout at all times. Two coaches can serve as base coaches. One coach can pitch after a batter takes 4 balls. This coach can stand near the batter’s box to assist the batter and may also assist the catcher with passed balls. Defensive coaches are not allowed to be on the playing field.
- Pitching:
 - Teams must maintain an accurate pitching affidavit.
 - Players that are league age nine must not pitch.

- If a batter takes ball 4, an offensive coach comes to the mound to pitch and must pitch from inside the pitching circle.
 - The batter retains the strike count.
 - If strike 3 is called, the batter is out (swing or call).
 - If there are 2 strikes when the coach comes out, the coach might only throw 1 pitch for a strikeout. (The count does not reset when a coach comes out.)
 - If the coach comes out to pitch with no count to the batter, and no strikes were recorded, then the maximum number of pitches will be 6 unless the 6th or subsequent pitches are fouled off.
 - Pitches 1,2 & 3 if not called strikes by the umpire and or offered at by the batter will be called balls.
 - Pitches 4,5 & 6 regardless of the pitch location will automatically be called strikes, even if the batter does not offer/swing at the pitch (there are no walks).
 - Any pitches thrown in excess of 6 due to the batter fouling off the pitch will automatically be a strike regardless if the batter offers at the pitch or not.
- If a player is hit by a player pitch (not a coach pitch), the batter can elect to take first base or continue batting.
- Base runners stay on the base until the ball is hit – there is no base stealing on wild pitches or passed balls.
- Runners must advance only one base on an overthrow.
- In accordance with CMLL's Local Rules, no new inning will start after one hour and forty minutes have passed since the official game time. A new inning begins when the last out of the previous inning occurs.

VI. FARM DIVISION

- Per Rule 5.07, the five-run rule is in effect. A side is retired when three outs are recorded, all players have batted in the half-inning, or five runs score. Per CMLL's Local Rules, the five-run rule is suspended in the last half-inning for either team.
- Five coaches are allowed in the dugout. On offense, one coach must remain in the dugout at all times. Two coaches can serve as base coaches. The only coach allowed on the playing field is the coach feeding the pitching machine. This coach serves as the umpire during plays if there is no umpire.
- Batters receive a maximum of 6 pitches from a pitching machine (a foul ball earns an extra pitch). Three swinging strikes is a strikeout. Seeing 6 pitches is an out. If a batted ball hits the pitching machine, it is a dead-ball single. If a thrown ball hits the pitching machine, the ball is dead and all runners advance 1 base.
- When the "pitcher" controls the ball in the vicinity of the mound, base runners cannot begin an attempt to advance.
- There is no advancing on overthrows in Farm. We want to encourage players to try to record outs. Advancing on overthrows is introduced in Minor C.
- There is no bunting or stealing.
- There is a pitcher on defense, positioned to the left or right of the pitching machine.
- Games end after 6 innings or 90 minutes are played, whichever comes first. A game can be ended earlier if both managers agree.

- No scores or standings are kept.

VII. COACH PITCH DIVISION

- All batters present will bat in every half-inning. There is no five-run rule.
- Five coaches are allowed in the dugout. On offense, one coach must remain in the dugout at all times. Two coaches can serve as base coaches. One coach throws pitches and one coach is the catcher. On defense, two coaches are allowed in the outfield for instructional purposes, one in right field and one in left field. Coaches should not touch balls in play.
- An offensive coach throws no more than 5 pitches to each batter. After 5 pitches, if no ball has been hit fair, a tee is used. Foul balls don't result in additional pitches. There are no strikeouts.
- When an infielder controls the ball, base runners cannot begin an attempt to advance.
- There is no advancing on overthrows in Coach Pitch.
- There is no stealing – runners may not leave a base until the ball is hit.
- There is a pitcher on defense, positioned to the left or right of the coach pitching or on the mound if the tee is in use.
- A tenth fielder may be used as a fourth outfielder.
- Games end after 6 innings or 90 minutes are played, whichever comes first.
- No scores or standings are kept.

VIII. TEE BALL DIVISION

- All batters present will bat in every half-inning. There is no five-run rule.
- Five coaches are allowed in the dugout. On offense, one coach must remain in the dugout at all times. Two coaches can serve as base coaches. On defense, two coaches are allowed in the outfield for instructional purposes, one in right field and one in left field. Coaches should not touch balls in play.
- There are no strikeouts. When an infielder controls the ball, base runners cannot begin an attempt to advance. There is no stealing – runners may not leave a base until the ball is hit.
- There is a pitcher on defense, positioned on the mound.
- A tenth fielder may be used as a fourth outfielder.
- During the last 1/3 of the season, games will be played using Coach Pitch rules above.
- No scores or standings are kept.