

# LANCASTER-DEPEW LEAGUES, INC.

## HOUSE LEAGUE RULES

2022 SEASON



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## SECTION A – GENERAL GAME RULES

1. **Protests** – allowed only on rule interpretations, not judgment calls. Before an official protest is enacted, all efforts should be made to resolve the conflict. To officially enact a protest, the protesting manager must notify the umpires and opposing manager of the intent to protest. At that time the umpire must sign and time the scorebook. League Directors must receive formal written notice of protest within 24 hours.
2. **Game Scores** – managers agree to report all game results as directed by their League Directors.
3. **On Field Personnel** – **New for 2020.** Only the team’s manager (1), coach or scorekeeper (1) (no more than 2 total ) may be in the dugout area during a game. No others are allowed.
4. **Time Limits**
  - a. T-Ball and Intermediate Pitching Machine – 1 hour and 30 minutes
  - b. Pitching Machine, Federal and Major – 2 hours
  - c. Senior/Big League – No official time limit other than darkness as applicable.
  - d. For night games on Offerman and Brickyard, the early game must end at 8:15pm.
5. **Official Game** – to officially begin play, all 12U divisions must field 9 players; Senior/Big League, 8 players.
  - a. A 15-minute grace period will be granted as necessary to field an official game. If an official game cannot be fielded in 15 minutes, the team unable to field the requisite number of players will forfeit. An exhibition game may be pursued if so desired once a forfeit is called.
  - b. Due to insurance liability risks, ALL players must be officially registered in order to play within any age division. Players seeking to join the League after its official registration periods have closed must first obtain the permission of the League’s Board of Directors in total. AN UNREGISTERED PLAYER MAY NOT TAKE THE FIELD UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES. No individual director, manager, coach, volunteer, sponsors or participating family has authority to violate this condition. Anyone caught in violation of this rule is in automatic violation of the League’s Code of Conduct/Zero Tolerance Policy and they along with their team subject to disciplinary action by the League.
6. **Call-Up Rule** – managers may call up players from lower age divisions using the “farm system” approach to address a depleted roster due to illness, injury or personal schedule conflict. Each League Director will make available a list or pool of qualified players (2-3 players from each team) for the upper division to call players up. Managers in need of call up players must call qualified player(s) on the call-up list.

All call ups for 12U games can play infield or outfield and bat last in the order. Call up players cannot Pitch or Catch. There is no such limitation for Senior and Big League.

### 7. **Player Substitutions**

**T-Ball through Majors** – The following substitution rules shall apply for both regular season and playoffs:

- Free substitution IS allowed.
- Managers/coaches are required to exchange player names AND jersey numbers and be recorded in both scorebooks.

8. **Weather** – Play is suspended and all are to vacate the field area for 15 minutes when lightning is seen or thunder is heard.

## **SECTION B – PITCHING GUIDELINES**

1. **Pitchers:**
  - Pitchers may pitch a maximum of 2 innings per game (6 outs) and all innings must be consecutive.
  - 3 Outs constitutes an inning pitched. Pitchers may not re-enter a game as a pitcher once they have been removed.
  - Players may pitch in a maximum of 6 innings per week (**included both house league and travel ball**). This is for protection of a young players arm.
2. **Mound Visits** – a manager or coach may visit the pitcher and catcher on the mound a maximum of 2 times per inning. The pitcher **MUST** be removed from the position after the second visit in an inning. The participation of other players beyond the pitcher and catcher in these discussions shall be managed prudently by team managers/coaches.
3. **Hit Batter Rule** – Any pitcher hitting 2 batters in one inning or 3 times over the course of the game shall be removed from the position immediately upon reaching the hit batter limit.
4. For Federal, Major, and Senior Divisions, pitchers may no longer attempt the fake pickoff throw to 3<sup>rd</sup> and throw back to 1<sup>st</sup> base.

## **SECTION C – BASERUNNING**

1. **Collision Rule** – No collision rule will be in effect at all age levels. Base runners should make every attempt to avoid collision by preferably sliding or, moving around the opposing fielder. Base runners in violation of this rule will be called out by the umpire(s) and at the umpire's discretion, subject to ejection from the game. Conversely, a runner may be called safe if they attempt to avoid collision and their progress and/or ability to reach a base is impeded by an opposing defensive player.
2. **Sliding Rule** - PM - Majors: Only "feet first" slides are allowed. NO "head first" slides under any circumstances with the sole exception of a runner "diving back" to a base to avoid being picked off.
3. **Leadoffs**
  - PM and Federal Division: NO leadoffs. Base runner must remain on base from the point the pitcher has possession of the ball on the mound to when the ball crosses the plate once pitched (Federal Division) or, is hit into play (PM Division). Warnings will be issued for a first violation in a game (not per inning). An "out" will be called for any subsequent violations during the game.
  - Majors Division, players may take regular lead offs with the exception of third base where the lead is restricted to 6feet.
  - No dancing or taunting by base paths to solicit a throw.
4. **Base Coaches** - Managers, coaches, or players may coach bases. If players coach a base, they must wear a helmet. Base coaches may not come into physical contact with a base runner.
5. **Special Rules**
  - **Dropped third strike and Balk:** Seniors Only
  - **Infield fly:** Majors & Seniors

- **Pinch Runners** may only be utilized to replace an injured player or to pinch run for the catcher with 2 outs in an inning. The last player to record an out shall be utilized as the pinch runner.
- **Catcher Speed up:** This is not a rule but teams are instructed to have dress catchers prior to the start of an inning. Having catchers dressed prior to the start of the inning will help move the game along.

#### **SECTION D – EQUIPMENT**

1. No metal spikes (except for Senior Division)
2. All players must wear a protective cup
3. **Bat Barrel size:** In compliance with Little League, for insurance purposes and for the protection of players, all players from Tball – Majors must use a USA approved bats. Seniors division must use minus 3 (-3) BBCOR bats. Wood bats are allowed at all levels. Any batter who enters the batter's box with a non-approved bat as listed above will be call out.
4. **Two-piece catcher masks are permitted providing ears are covered and protected.**

# T-Ball Specific Rules

1. Dimensions: 45 ft. bases. Pitching rubber 43 ft. from back of home plate.
2. All teams must field players in appropriate positions per the rules of baseball. A team may field up to 10 players with the extra player being a "4<sup>th</sup>" outfielder. All outfielders must be at least 10 feet from the edge of the infield baseline.
3. ALL players MUST be rotated between infield and outfield positions. NO player may sit more than 1 consecutive inning. NO player may play the same position for 2 innings in a row. No catcher at the T-Ball level.
4. Players in the pitcher's position must wear a protective helmet with cage at all times while in play and keep 1 foot on the "pitching rubber" and 1 foot on the grass until the ball is hit from the tee/coach.
5. All players must wear league authorized uniform hats/shirts, protective cup, baseball or gym/sweat pants (no shorts allowed) and rubber cleats or sneakers.
6. Batters and runners must wear protective helmets at all times while in play.
7. A batting tee will be placed at home plate and administered by the "at bat" team.
8. A "fair ball" is defined as one traveling at least 10 feet from the tee & remaining in fair play.
9. No bunting, leadoffs, stealing or sliding allowed.
10. Unless hit beyond the outfielder, only one base will be advanced at a time. There will be no advancing of bases on overthrows.
11. Play is "dead" when the ball is within the 10 ft. circle surrounding the pitcher's mound.
12. 3 to 6 innings should be played during each game within established time limits.
13. No plays at home plate.
14. All teams bat their FULL bench, after which the ½ inning is considered complete.
15. **All teams begin the season hitting off a tee. Depending on factors such as schedule and weather, on the discretion of the league director**, all teams will be required to "coach pitch" for games and practices as follows:
  - a. Pitches should be thrown from a reasonable distance to allow the player a chance to hit.
  - b. Overhand pitching preferred.
  - c. After 4 pitches, if the ball is not hit fair, the tee will be reinstated for that batter.
16. Outs may be called once coach pitch begins. If batter/runner is out on base, Players may either remain on base to continue to develop skills running bases or may come off base to teach them the rules of baseball. Coaches need to agree on rule. Managers/coaches or parents act as "umpires"... There will be no scores, standings or playoffs. All T-Ball teams play on the League's Championship/All Star Day

# Intermediate Pitching Machine

1. Dimensions: 60 ft. bases. Pitching rubber 46 ft. from back of home plate.
2. All teams must field players in appropriate positions per the rules of baseball. A team may field up to 10 players with the extra player being a "4th" outfielder. All outfielders must be at least 10 feet from the edge of the infield baseline.
3. ALL players MUST be rotated between infield and outfield positions. NO player may sit more than 1 consecutive inning. NO player may play the same position for 2 innings in a row. No catcher at the IPM Level. .
4. Players in the pitcher's position must wear a protective helmet at all times while in play and keep 1 foot on the grass and 1 foot in the dirt of the pitcher's mound until the ball is hit from the coach/machine.
5. All players must wear league authorized uniform hat, shirts, protective cup, baseball or gym/sweat pants (no shorts allowed) and rubber cleats or sneakers.
6. Batters and runners must wear protective helmets at all times while in play.
7. A "fair ball" is defined as one traveling at least 10 feet from the tee & remaining in fair play.
8. No bunting or leadoffs. No base stealing or sliding allowed.
9. Unless hit beyond the outfielder, only one base will be advanced at a time. There will be no advancing of bases on overthrows.
10. Play is "dead" when the ball is within the 10 ft. circle surrounding the pitcher's mound.
11. 3 to 6 innings should be played during each game within established time limits. There will be no scores, standings or playoffs.
12. No plays at home plate.
13. For the **FIRST HALF OF THE SEASON**, all teams will be required to 'COACH PITCH' for games and practices as follows:
  - i. Pitches should be thrown from a reasonable distance to allow the player a chance to hit.
  - ii. Overhand pitching preferred.
  - iii. After 4 pitches, if the ball is not hit fair, the tee will be reinstated for that batter.
  - iv. Outs may be called.
14. **At the HALF WAY MARK OF THE SEASON**, designated by the League Director, a pitching machine will be used. If for some reason the machine is malfunctioning and/or unavailable, a "coach pitch format will be used.
  - a.) Each batter has a 5 pitch maximum. There are no called "balls and strikes". A swing and a miss and/or foul balls at the first AND second strike will be recorded as strikes. A batter "fouling off" the last pitch remains at bat. Upon 3 strikes or upon not hitting the 5<sup>th</sup> pitch, the batter is called out.
  - b.) No batter can walk.

## Intermediate Pitching Machine Specific (continued)

- c.) A pitch from the machine deemed “unhittable” by the coach due to malfunction of the machine will be called “no pitch” and does not count toward the 5 pitch maximum. Only managers may call a “no pitch”.
  - d.) Play is officially “dead” when a player or ball (either directly hit or deflected off a player) comes in contact with the machine. The batter and base runners are awarded 1 base.
  - e.) Pitching machine adjustments are made by the Managers only.
  - f.) Once the pitching machine is used, outs should count and 3 outs end the inning. If batter / runner is out at a base, runner(s) are to come off field to teach them the rules of baseball.
15. An inning is concluded after 3 outs or 5 run rule (once the machine is used) or, a team has: batted the bench”. Note: for batting purposes, a bench will equal the team with the MOST numbers of players available. Managers/coaches of the team at bat must notify the opposing coach of the last batter in “bat the bench” situations.
16. Players in the pitchers position must wear a protective helmet with cage while on the field and be positioned “on the mound” near the machine while the opposition is at bat. Pitchers must remain on the mound until the ball is hit in to play.
- 1. Pitching machine set-up and takedown is the responsibility of the “home team” as noted on the schedule. \*Note – There will be no Park employees and home team coach will need to retrieve/return machine from storage shed. Contact League Director for code to unlock shed.
17. Managers/coaches or parents act as “umpires”. Scores will be kept beginning at the half-season mark but not reported. There will be no standings or playoffs.
18. All IPM teams play on the League’s Championship/All Star Day



# Pitching Machine Specific Rules

1. Teams will utilize 10 defensive players – 6 infielders and 4 outfielders. The ‘catchers’ position is considered an infield position.
2. Outfielders need to be a minimum of 10 feet from the edge of the grass separating the infield/outfield.
3. Free substitution - All players must experience 2 innings in the infield and 1 inning of outfield. Player may not sit 2 innings until every other player has sat 1 inning.
4. Defensive Stoppage of Play
  - a. Any defensive player (infield, outfield, pitcher or catcher) may make an assisted or unassisted out on an offensive player (defined as any runner or batter). Play will be stopped once the ball is in the possession of any defensive player located in the “Pitchers Circle” as determined by the umpire.
  - b. Offensive players running bases will be awarded the next base if the umpire determines the offensive player was half way or further to the next unoccupied base when the play was stopped. If offensive runners occupy the same base when play is stopped, the trailing runner will be returned to the previous base. The lead runner will only move forward if the trailing runner can’t be moved backward to the previous base. If more than 1 offensive player is on base, each runner will be treated separately in determining their base position after stoppage of play.
  - c. If an offensive player is “forced” to advance (meaning at the time the ball is batted into play they are the batter, or are an offensive player where all bases are occupied behind that given offensive player) and the defense decides to hold the ball in the Pitchers Circle and not attempt to make outs before the offensive player(s) reach the half-way point, the offensive player(s) will be awarded the next base (the base in front of where they started before the ball was batted in play). Offensive players not “forced” to advance are treated under the half way rule noted above.
  - d. Play is ended when the ball enters the infield.
5. Halfway rule is measured when ball reaches the infield; defensive team can make a baseball play on runner.

Example:  
Ball is thrown in from outfield to infield. Base runner is between 2nd & 3rd base. Defensive team can make a baseball play on the runner that may result in an out. The out counts regardless of whether the base runner was halfway or not when the ball reached the infield. If base runner successfully makes it to 3rd base the umpire may send the runner back to 2nd base if he believes that the runner was not yet halfway to 3rd when the ball reached the infield.
6. A pitching machine will be used and the umpire will be responsible for feeding balls into the machine. If for some reason the machine is malfunctioning and/or unavailable, a “coach pitch” format will be used.
7. Pitcher must start each pitch with 1 foot on the grass and 1 foot in the dirt of the pitcher’s mound. Pitcher must wear a protective helmet with cage.
8. Play is officially “dead” when a player or ball (either directly hit or deflected off a player) comes in contact with the machine. The batter and base runners are awarded 1 base.

9. Pitching machine adjustments are made by the umpire only. At the umpire's discretion, if input from managers/coaches is required, a representative of both teams will be called to the mound.

## **Pitching Machine Specific Rules** (continued)

10. The batter

- a. There are no called "balls and strikes". A swing and a miss and/or foul balls at the first AND second strike will be recorded as strikes. Upon 3 strikes, the batter is called out.
- b. No batter can walk. Each batter has a 5 pitch maximum. At the 5<sup>th</sup> pitch, umpires will advise the batter accordingly. On the last pitch, the batter must either hit the ball into fair play or, if it's missed or taken (no swing), is an out. A batter "fouling off" the last pitch remains at bat.
- c. A pitch from the machine deemed "unhittable" by the umpire due to malfunction of the machine will be called "no pitch" and does not count toward the 5 pitch maximum. Only umpires may call a "no pitch".
- d. No bunting allowed.

11. No base stealing is allowed.

12. An inning is concluded after 3 outs, batted the bench or team reaches the 6 runs (no continuation of play) except for the final inning when 3 outs must be recorded to end an inning.

13. Mercy rule is 15 runs differential at the end of the 5th inning. The team ahead by 15 or more runs at the end of the 5th inning is declared the winner.

14. Players in the pitchers position must wear a protective helmet while on the field and be positioned "on the mound" near the machine while the opposition is at bat. Pitchers must remain on the mound until the ball is hit in to play.

15. Catchers must be in full catcher's gear (including protective cup) and be positioned in a "catchers crouch" within 5 feet of home plate on all pitches.

16. Pitching machine set-up and takedown is the responsibility of the "home team" as noted on the schedule. \*Note – There will be no Park employees and home team coach will need to retrieve/return machine from storage shed. See League Director for code to unlock shed.

17. Umpires must sign and print their name on the home team's scorebook upon receipt of payment from the manager/coach.

# Federal League Specific Rules

1. Infield fly rule does not apply.
2. Teams will utilize 10 defensive players – 6 infielders and 4 outfielders. The 'catchers' position is considered an infield position.
3. Free substitution - All players must experience 2 innings in the infield and 1 inning of outfield. Player may not sit 2 innings until every other player has sat 1 inning. Catcher is considered an infield position.
4. Runners may not lead off until the ball is pitched and crosses home plate. If a runner "leaves the base early", an umpire warning will be given on the first instance with an out called for any subsequent instances.
5. Base stealing is allowed of second and third base following the rule outlined in number 4 above. However, runners may not steal home on the pitch, passed balls or an overthrow from the catcher while stealing.
6. An inning is concluded after 3 outs, batted the bench or, a team has scored 5 runs (no continuation of play) except for the final inning when 3 outs must be recorded to end an inning.
7. A mercy rule is in effect - 15 runs differential at the end of the 5th inning. The team ahead by 15 or more runs at the end of the 5th inning, is declared the winner.
8. At least 6 outs or 2 innings (with an inning being defined as either 3 outs or the bench being batted or reaching the max run limit) must be pitched by a 9 year old or younger player(s) per game. This allows for player development as well as fairness of play between all teams.
  - a. 9 year old pitcher must pitch 2 inning by the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning. Any discrepancies or disputes shall be directed to the League Directors.
9. Umpires must sign and print their name on the home team's scorebook upon receipt of payment from the manager/coach.

# Major Specific Rules

1. Infield fly rule does apply.
2. There is no dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike advancement.
3. Runners may take normal lead offs with the exception of 3<sup>rd</sup> base where they may only take a 6 foot lead. No secondary leads allowed.
4. Base stealing is allowed for all bases including home. Runner must wait until pitcher makes a move towards a base/home plate before attempting to steal a base.
5. The "balk" rule does not apply but the pitcher will be warned and informed prior. "Dead ball" will be called when there is a "balk".
6. Free substitution - All players must experience 2 innings infield and 1 inning of outfield. Player may not sit 2 innings until every other player has sat 1 inning. Catcher is considered an infield position and may catch more than 2 innings in a game providing the player plays 1 inning in the outfield and adheres to the rule above.
7. An inning is concluded after 3 outs,, batted the bench or a team has scored 6 runs (no continuation of play) except for the final inning when 3 outs must be recorded to end an inning.
8. Any non-travel player must record 6 outs or 2 innings (with an inning being defined as either 3 outs or the bench being batted or reaching the max run limit) by the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning. This may include an 11 or 12-year-old player. This allows for player development as well as fairness of play between all teams.
9. There is a 2-inning pitch limit or total of 6 innings (including travel) in a week.
10. Mercy rule is in effect - 15 runs after 5<sup>th</sup> inning. The team ahead by 15 or more runs at the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> inning is declared the winner.
11. Teams will be allowed to start a game with 8 players and increase that number to 9; if/when another player becomes available. Also, a team will be allowed to complete the game with only 8 players in an attempt not to penalize the remaining player on the team.
12. Umpires must sign and print their name on the home team's scorebook upon receipt of payment from the manager/coach.

# Seniors Specific Rules

1. 7 inning games with a time limit that no inning shall start after 2 hours and 30 minutes. Note, there is a 2 hour and 15 minute time limit for games that are scheduled before a night game and the game will end at 8:15pm even if it is in the middle of an inning.
2. To start an official game each team must have at least 8 players.
3. All call up players must be registered players in the Lancaster/Depew Major League.
4. These players may play any defensive position except pitcher and bat last in the batting order
5. Senior travel players may not play in the Senior house league as a call-up.
6. Free substitutions are allowed. No players may switch positions once the inning or 1/2 inning has started.
7. American League baseball rules apply. Dropped third strike, infield fly rule, balks, leadoffs and stealing are in effect.
8. 10 run rule is in effect after the 5th inning.
9. Players may not sit 2 consecutive innings. All players present will bat the entire game and all players must play a minimum of 1 inning in the infield.
10. Pitchers may pitch 7 innings maximum per week from Monday to Sunday. They may pitch a maximum of 4 innings in one game. Hit batter rule- 2 in one inning or 3 for the game and the pitcher must come out.
11. Head first sliding is allowed using proper technique.
12. No collision rule is in effect for base runners and fielders.
13. Bat limit- 2 3/4" barrel up to a minus 3. (.50 BB Core)
14. Metal spikes are allowed.
15. Speed up rule for catchers is encouraged. With 2 outs pinch run for your catcher. It is not mandatory. If your catcher stays on the bases with 2 outs he is expected to hustle between innings to not delay the game.