

2025 LWF 9U Division Game Rules

PETS ARE PERMITTED AT ALL LWF FIELDS BUT MUST BE ON LEASH AT ALL TIMES. BE THOUGHTFUL TO OTHERS, PLEASE CLEAN UP AFTER YOUR PET!!!

While we do keep score in the 9U Division and there are winners and losers of games the **emphasis here should not be in the winning or losing of a game but in the development of attitude, good sportsmanship, and skill development.** There should never be a reported run differential of more than 10 runs.

Team Selections – Coaches

1. A positive coach/leader will teach kids to have fun despite the outcome. This level is where kids (and coaches) learn how to react to winning or losing a game, to making mistakes, what it means to be on a TEAM and how to love the GAME, not the score. Be a positive leader! Most important rule of all ...for everyone (players, coaches, and parents) to have fun!
2. To promote mentorship and development of players and coaches in the LWF Hardball Association a shared field time for two teams to practice will be used. Most experienced Coaches will be encouraged to join with less experienced. Parity between teams should be balanced in skill focusing on pitching, fielding, and hitting ability of the players. Teams will be assigned a practise time during Team selection night.
3. All Players and Coaches are to attend a House league evaluation session. Following the session Coaches will attend a team selection.
4. Team Snap is provided as part of registration to make tracking availability and scheduling easier. If your team needs players please use the evening before your games communicate with other coaches/players who are not playing the same night to join your team.
5. Coaches may call other players from other LWF 9U teams or Rally Cap Year 2 as a substitute player if availability is low from their players on TeamSnap. These players shall hit at the bottom of the batting order and shall not play catcher or pitching position.

Game Time – Innings and Runs

1. All players to arrive by 5:50pm. All games are to start by 6:00 PM unless otherwise scheduled.
2. There is a maximum of **3 runs per inning**. Last inning is always played, both teams will bat, regardless of the score. The last inning at bat all players can bat (if 3 outs are not recorded) until all players have hit once.
3. Games at the 9U level are **5 innings**. There will be no forfeits. Teams shall assist each other if one team is short players (lend a player for the game).

Pitching Machine, Tee, and Pitching Rules

1. Offensive Team shall provide a home plate coach to set up tee and throw passed balls back to catcher/pitcher who is pitching to speed up game. The offensive coach is to move the tee from home plate once the ball is in play and it safe to do so. The tee encourages good hitting mechanics and will get the catcher involved in infield play. Home plate is consider fair territory and if a ball lands and stays on home plate it is in play.
2. All games will use the pitching machine to pitch to the batter for the first 3 innings. A coach will feed the balls into the machine. The umpire will be in position to call the game.
3. With pitching machine each batter gets **5 HITTABLE PITCHES** to hit. Occasionally the machine will throw a pitch that is not hittable, when this occurs the umpire simply calls "no pitch" and it does not count as one of the five.
4. If a ball hits the pitching machine it is considered a "dead play." Players are not permitted to feed the machine or come within 4 feet of the machine.
5. If the player doesn't hit any of the 5 from the Machine - a tee will be set up on home plate, and the batter will have the opportunity to put the ball in play. A foul ball on the last pitch of the machine or tee the batter gets another opportunity to hit. **No strike outs** when pitching machine is used. **Players who hit from the tee along with baserunners are only allowed to advance 2 bases.** The purpose of this is to encourage players to hit off of pitchers and/or the machine.
6. We have found that the approximate best distance to give all the hitters the best chance to hit is about 45 feet from home plate behind the pitching rubber for the machine and the speed about 5 and a half. This is not a rule; find the best speed where the hitters can hit as that's what it's all about.

Defense – Field Rules

1. While on defence, two coaches shall be permitted on the field to assist in positioning and player decision making.
2. Defensive team is allowed one extra outfielder for a total of 10 players on the field at a time; there is free substitution for all fielders at any time. 4 outfielders and 6 infield positions to be filled. If defensive team has 9 players or less, offense team can supply their last outs as an outfielder.
3. The distance between bases should be 60 feet. The pitching rubber is 38 feet.
4. All infield plays are to be one play only. Example a hit ball to the second baseman and second baseman makes an over throw to first the runner cannot advance.

5. If a ball is hit to the outfield the runner can advance until either an infielder has the ball or it is thrown back into the infield.
6. Protective cups must be worn by all players. Jills are optional for girls. Double earflap helmets with chinstraps must be worn at bat, on deck and on bases.

Offensive & Pitching Rules

1. Players will pitch for the last 2 innings of the 5-inning game. A player can pitch 1 inning in a game and 3 innings in a day. One pitch counts as an inning. Once a pitcher is removed from pitching they cannot return to pitch in that game. The pitcher is to stand on the pitching rubber when the tee is used.
2. No Walk Rule: The rule is designed so that there will be no walks during games. Normal pitchers pitch to a batter until the batter gets to a 4 ball count or the batter is called out on strikes.
3. When the player swings at the tee they can **strike out**. If ball is hit foul, player continues until they put the ball in play or are called out.
4. If a batter reaches four balls, a tee will be set up on home plate, and the batter will have the opportunity to put the ball in play. **Batters and baserunners are only allowed to advance 2 bases when the ball is hit off the tee.**
5. No leadoffs, no base stealing. Free runner substitution and courtesy runner for the upcoming defensive catcher when there are two outs.
6. If a batter throws their bat, the umpire will stop the game and the team will be warned – if this happens a second time the batter will be called out.

RULE CLARIFICATION - ATTN 9U COACHES AND UMPIRES

DEAD BALL RULE (NO ADVANCEMENT OF RUNNERS)

Just to remind coaches and umpires, when a batted ball hit into the outfield is thrown back to the infield, baserunners **cannot** continue to advance on the base paths when the ball **touches** the **infield dirt**. This is a rule just for Rookie ball only and is to prevent infielders throwing the ball all over the place.