

## 2026 DSA Major Division Rules

Official Little League Baseball rulebook rules shall be followed where not defined or altered in this document. None of the rules listed may be altered for any reason.

### GENERAL GAME RULES

1. All major division players must reach the age of eleven (11) or twelve (12), but no more than age twelve (12), before May 1 of the current year (season).
  - A. A younger player from the Minor Division (10U) may play in the Major Division provided the player's coach and league representative believe the player is capable of competing at the Major Division level and it is safe for that player to do so.
  - B. No such player can play in the Major Division (12U) all season and then play in a (10U)Minor Division post season tournament.
  - C. Any player that is moved up from the minor division (10U) to substitute for a team that is short of players may only do so 6 times total for a season.
  - D. 12U players are permitted to substitute in a 15U game if needed and coaches and league reps believe they are capable.
  - E. No 12U player can play in the 15U age division for a full season and then play in a 12U tournament.
  - F. No 12U player is permitted to substitute more than 6 times in a season in the 15U division.
  - G. Teams can only pull players from the age group below when subs are needed. 12U can pull from 10U ONLY.
  - H. These players may only be kids that are are signed up to play baseball. No softball league players may substitute to play DSA baseball games.
  - I. No subs can be taken from other teams in the same town.
  - J. Subs can not be used in games if a team has all rostered players available. If a coach wants to put the player to use as a sub that is allowed. This player may only enter the game if there is an injury to a rostered player.
  - K. If a sub is used from the 10U division, this player can only play the outfield and will bat last in the batting order.

### 2. Game Play

- A. Games will last 6 innings.
- B. In case of a rain-out, 4 completed innings will constitute a complete game. In the event the home team is winning after 3 ½ innings, then 3 ½ innings shall constitute a complete game.
- C. Any suspended regular season game due to weather or any other circumstance will be restarted from the beginning of the game on the reschedule.
- D. During tournament play ONLY, if a game is suspended for weather or any other circumstance. The game will resume from the same point with the same outs, runners on base, count on the batter, and time remaining in the game.
- E. It will be the coaches responsibility to make sure that their entire roster is on

the roster sheet for the tournament games. If a game is suspended and continued on another date during tournament play, the players on the submitted roster for the postponed game will only be permitted to play.

- F. During the regular season, games that are rescheduled, new rosters can be made.
- G. If a team is short players and needs to pull a kid up from the (10U) age division, that will be allowed for both regular season and tournament games.
- H. Kids will be allowed to participate in travel ball leagues as well as the DSA. If a team has a player that is participating on a travel ball team that said player should be noted on the teams roster. That player must participate in 75% of the regular season games to be eligible to play in the postseason tournament.
- I. If a player is in question of their eligibility during the post season the following will need to be done by the team asking the question.
  - a. Check the teams roster to be sure the player was on the team. If the player is found on the roster, it will need to be determined if the player in question played 75% of the games during the season. Then the coach of the player in question will need to produce the scorebook or books for the season. The DSA facilitator and assistant will review the book or books to determine if the player is eligible. If the coach or coaches are unable to produce any scorebooks then the questioned player will be ineligible to play in the tournament.
- J. During tournament play a substituted player will have to fill in for the vacant spot for the entire tournament, unless player being subbed for is on original roster.
- K. During tournament play only. If a game is suspended and has to be resumed and a team is short players, then an out will be taken for the vacated spot.
- L. A team may play with 8 players during regular season or tournament play.
- M. The base line shall be 60 feet.
- N. The distance from the back point of home plate to the front of the pitching rubber shall be 46 feet.

3. No Jewelry of any kind shall be worn. EXCEPTION: Medical ID's are allowed.

4. Mercy rule:

- A. If a team has 15 or more runs than the losing team, and the leading team is the home team, then the game is over after 2 ½ innings. If the leading team is the visiting team, then the game is over after 3 innings.
- B. If the leading team has 10 or more runs than the losing team, and the winning team is the home team, then the game is over after 3 ½ innings. If the winning team is the visiting team, then the game is over after 4 innings.

5. No team may score more than 8 runs in a single offensive 1/2 inning. In the event a team shall score 8 runs in a single 1/2 offensive inning with less than three (3) outs, the 1/2 inning shall immediately end. Regardless of the number of outs the defensive team has achieved. The teams switch from offense to defense, and defense to offense.

6. The game shall last one (1) hour and forty-five (45) minutes, with a hard stop at (2) hours

during the regular season. During tournament play ONLY, time limit is one hour forty five minutes, finish the inning.

- A. If the hard stop is used and the home team has not had a chance to complete its at bat (3 outs), then the score will be used from the previous inning. Whichever team was in the lead at that point will be declared the winner. If the game was tied at that point, then, the game ends in a tie.
  - B. No inning will be counted towards pitchers in the last inning played if the revert back rule is used. That includes an incomplete inning with the home team in the field.
  - C. THE REVERT BACK RULE SHALL NOT APPLY DURING TOURNAMENT PLAY.
  - D. This rule shall not impact the safety of the players and coaches. The umpires shall retain authority to end the game due to weather, lighting conditions or other safety concerns and General Rule (2B) shall apply. Should the game end in this way and there remains a tied score, the game will be over and end in a tie.
  - E. The umpires shall note the games start time after the first pitch in the top of the first inning. In the event that the umpires shall fail to note the time, it is the responsibility of each of the coaches, both home and visiting, to establish the start time by asking the umpires. In the event that there is a failure of the umpires and the coaches to note the start time of the game, then the scheduled start time of the game shall be used as the official start time of the game. For the purposes of this rule, an inning begins (starts) when the final out of the previous inning is made.
7. No steel cleats may be worn in this league.
8. All bats can display the USA Bat stamp, or the USSSA bat stamp. Barrel sizes up to 2- $\frac{3}{4}$ " may be used.
9. It is required that all catchers wear protective cups. It is recommended that all players wear protective cups.
10. No game shall start, or continue, unless each team can and does field and play eight (8) players.
- A. In the event a team fails to have eight (8) available players to start or continue a game, then a forfeiture shall be called. The opposing team shall be declared the winner of the game, recording a score of one (1) to zero (0).
  - B. If a shortage of players occurs for a game. A replacement may be chosen from the Minor Division (See General Game Rules 1A).
  - C. If a team starts a game with 8 players and that team is at bat, when the ninth player at bat is up an out shall be taken during tournament play only. This rule shall not apply during the regular season.
  - D. If a game cannot start at the scheduled start time due to one of the teams having less than eight (8) players available to play the game, there shall be a ten (10) minute waiting period to allow additional eligible players to arrive at the field to play. If no players arrive a forfeiture shall be called and the opposing team shall be declared the winner of the game. Recording a score of one (1) to zero (0).

11. Any player or coach who is ejected from a game will be required to sit out their next scheduled game.

- A. Coaches are responsible for their teams' fans and shall suffer the same penalty for ejection if due to the behavior of those fans as if the behavior was their own.
- B. The rules committee (chairpersons of DSA) shall meet to determine if General Game Rule 11 should be applied as written or modified for a greater or lesser penalty based upon the facts and circumstances of the particular event resulting in game ejection.

12. The coach may deny the right of a player to participate in a game for disciplinary action or unexcused absences from practice.

- A. The coach shall submit a complete roster to the opposing scorekeeper before the game. The coach should then designate players who are being disciplined.

13. All players will play at least 2 innings and bat once or will start the next game and play at least 3 innings.

14. Official scoring will be that of the home team scorekeeper and it is up to the visiting team to confer with the home team between innings.

15. No infield practice before games. EXCEPTION: If both home and visiting head coaches agree and both teams are granted equal access to the field for infield practice and the game can begin at the time originally scheduled.

16. It is requested that the coaches of all teams track the number of innings pitched in each week for their team to protect the arm of the pitcher. If pitchers eligibility is in question. The team in question will provide scorebooks showing amount of innings pitched by pitcher for the week.

17. The post season tournament shall consist of 3 separate single elimination brackets.

- A. The Gold bracket shall be comprised of the top teams from each division based on final records.
- B. In the event of a tie the tie breaker rules (para. I) shall be used.
- C. The number of teams in this first bracket will be dependent on the number of teams registered for the regular season.
- D. The Silver bracket shall be comprised of the next best teams not selected for the gold bracket.
- E. The teams playing in the silver bracket shall be assigned seeds based upon their records within the division.
- F. In the event of a tie , the tie breaker rules (para. I) shall be used.
- G. The Bronze bracket shall be comprised of the remaining teams not selected for the gold or silver brackets. The teams playing in the bronze bracket shall be assigned seeds based upon their records within the division.
- H. In the event of a tie, the tie breaker rules (para. I) shall be used to break the tie.
- I. The tie breaker rules shall be applied in order, until the tie is broken.

- i. Wins
- ii. Losses
- iii. winning percentage overall record
- iv. coin flip, or head to head if teams played in the regular season.

#### THE BATTER

1. The nine players on defense will bat.

- A. Extra hitters may be used.
- B. Substitutes can enter the game as a replacement for one of the starting players at any point in the game (offense or defense) if extra hitters are used.
- C. If extra hitters are not used then normal substitution rules apply. Example: player A subs for player B, those 2 players can only sub in and out of the lineup.
- D. Pinch-hitting is not allowed.

2. Drop Third Strike Rule: When the catcher fails to catch the third strike or when the catcher catches a bounced third strike (the pitch strikes the ground before being caught by the catcher), with less than 2 outs & 1st base is unoccupied or anytime there are 2 outs. The ball becomes a live ball and is in play. The batter becomes a batter/runner with liability to be put out.

- A. If a batter takes 2 steps toward his team's dugout with no intention to go to 1st base - batter is out (umpire judgment call on the steps toward player's dugout, and intention).

3. A batter may not throw the bat.

- A. If a batter throws the bat, the team for which the batter is playing for receives a warning. Any other player from the same team who later throws a bat shall immediately be called out.
- B. If the infraction occurs after the ball is batted fair and is in play and the batter is called out, the play proceeds normally for any other players who are on base, with the exception of force plays. With the batter being called out, there is no longer a force play at other bases and advancing runners must be tagged before reaching base safely to be out.

4. Re-entry Rule: A player in the starting line-up who has been removed for a substitute may re-enter the game, but only once, in any position in the field but must occupy the same position in the batting order.

- A. This is allowable only if the substitute whom the original starter is now replacing has played six (6) defensive outs and has completed one (1) at-bat. EXCEPTION: A pitcher may not re-enter a game as the pitcher.

5. Slash bunting is prohibited.

- A. A slash bunt is defined as a batter squaring and showing bunt after the pitcher has his foot on the pitching rubber, pulling back the bat, and then swinging at the pitch.

- B. A violation of this rule results in a dead ball, the batter is out and any base runners may not advance regardless of whether the batter made contact with the pitch.
6. USA or USSSA bats may be used.
- A. Barrel diameter may be up to 2- $\frac{3}{4}$ ".
  - B. There is no limit on drop number.

#### THE RUNNER

1. A base runner may not lead off the bag, nor leave the bag after the pitcher has touched his foot to the pitching rubber before the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
2. A runner may steal any base after the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.
3. The first time a runner leaves a base early, the team for which the runner plays shall receive a warning and the runner shall return to the base from which the runner had left too early. If any runner from the same team so warned leaves the base too early, the violating runner shall be immediately called out.
4. All runners must avoid contact at all bases.
  - A. Violation of this rule shall result in an out (umpire discretion), and no warning is necessary. 'Avoiding Contact' is defined as sliding, going around defensive player or giving yourself up. From a Coaching standpoint, it is best to instruct players to slide in all situations where contact is possible.
5. No appeal is needed on missed bases. The umpire shall call the out, if viewed, after the play is dead.
6. Courtesy Runner Rule: A team may use a substitute runner for that team's catcher when there are (2) outs in the inning and the catcher is on base (runner).
  - A. A team may not use a substitute runner for any other position player.
  - B. If a runner is injured while running the bases, a substitute runner may be used.
  - C. If a courtesy runner is used for an injured player, the injured player may not return to the game until after one (1) complete inning of sitting out, starting from the point of the substitution and injury, and lasting through the next half inning's three (3) outs. (An Inning in this situation is defined as the remainder of the inning in which the injury and substitution took place, plus the 3 successive outs in the next one-half inning.)
7. No head first sliding is permitted. Runner will be called out immediately for "sliding" head first. A player is permitted to dive back to a base head first only.

#### THE PITCHER

1. A pitcher may have no more than four (4) pitches to warm up, on the mound, between innings.  
EXCEPTION: A pitcher entering the game as pitcher for the first time shall have eight (8) pitches.
2. A player may pitch a maximum of 3 innings per game.
  - A. If a pitcher throws a single pitch in an inning, that inning is counted as one inning against the game maximum for that pitcher.
  - B. There is no limit on how many innings a pitcher may pitch in a week.
3. The pitcher must be in contact with the rubber while delivering the pitch.
4. The pitcher shall be pulled from the pitcher's position after a coach (head or assistant coach) has made two (2) trips to the mound in the same inning.
5. A pitcher must be relieved by a different eligible pitcher following the striking of a batter or any combination of batters by a pitched ball for the third time in a single game.

#### DEFENSE

1. Infield Fly Rule: With runners occupying 1st and 2nd or 1st, 2nd and 3rd with less than two outs – if the ball is hit into fair territory in the air and in the infield, and in the umpires' judgment, the batted ball should be caught by an infielder, the batter is immediately called out. This rule shall not apply to foul balls.
2. Bunt Fielding: The first and third basemen may not charge to field a bunted ball past the pitcher's mound until the batter makes contact with the pitch. See also THE BATTER Rule 5.