

Pony (14U) Baseball Rules

(As of 1 March 2026)

I. PLAYING FIELD

A. Base Distance

- The distance between all bases will be **80 feet**
 - In some cases, games may be played at **90 feet**
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B. Pitching Distance

- The pitching distance will be **54 feet**
- In some cases, pitching may be set at **60 feet 6 inches**

II. GAME LENGTH

A. Regulation Game

- Pony games shall be **6 innings in length**
 - No new inning will begin after **2 hours**
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B. Official Game

- A game called due to weather or any other reason is considered official if:
 - The home team is ahead after **3½ innings**, or
 - **4 complete innings** have been played if the visiting team is ahead
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C. Incomplete Game

- If a game is called before reaching official status:
 - It shall be declared a **“No Game”**
 - The game will be **replayed in its entirety**

III. EQUIPMENT

A. Baseballs

- The home team will provide **three new baseballs** for each game
 - The away team will provide **two gently used or new baseballs** for each game
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B. Shoes

- Metal cleats are **NOT allowed** in the Pony division
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C. Protective Headgear

- Required for:
 - All offensive players
 - Any player occupying the **1st or 3rd base coaching boxes**
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D. Athletic Supporters

- Male players are required to wear an **athletic supporter and protective cup**
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E. Bats

- Bats must meet **USA Baseball Bat Guidelines**
- Approved bats include:
 - BBCOR (-3)
 - USA (-5)
 - Wood bats

Rules and Regulations

General Age / Division Guidelines

Division	Base Length	Pitching Distance	Leadoff?	Balks	Metal Cleats
8u	60'	Coach's Decision	No	No	No
10u	60'	46'	No	No	No
12u	70'	50'	Yes	Yes	No
13u-14u	80'	54'	Yes	Yes	No
14u-18u	90'	60' 6"	Yes	Yes	No
14u-18u ATB	90'	60' 6"	Yes	Yes	Yes (On some fields)

IV. PITCHING REGULATIONS

A. League Compliance

- Lakewood Baseball Club, a member of P.O.N.Y., shall be fully compliant with **MLB Pitch Smart guidelines**
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B. Pitch Counts & Required Rest

All pitchers age 14 and below must adhere to the following:

- **66+ pitches** → 4 calendar days rest
 - **51–65 pitches** → 3 calendar days rest
 - **36–50 pitches** → 2 calendar days rest
 - **21–35 pitches** → 1 calendar day rest
 - **1–20 pitches** → No rest required
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C. Maximum Pitch Threshold Exception

- If a pitcher reaches the maximum pitch count threshold (**95+ pitches**) while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until one of the following occurs:
 - The batter reaches base
 - The batter is retired
 - The third out is recorded to complete the half inning
 - The pitcher may finish that at-bat provided:
 - The pitcher is removed from the game, or
 - The game is completed
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D. Extended At-Bat Rule

- If an “epic” at-bat causes a pitcher to surpass a pitch threshold:
 - The pitcher must observe rest for the **next higher threshold**

Example:

- Pitcher begins at 19 pitches
 - Batter is retired on pitch 36
 - Required rest = **2 calendar days**
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E. Maximum Pitch Counts by Age

- 9–10 years old: **75 pitches**
 - 11–12 years old: **85 pitches**
 - 13–14 years old: **95 pitches**
 - Pitchers may complete the current batter even if this exceeds the limit
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F. Pitcher to Catcher Restrictions

1. Any pitcher throwing **more than 40 pitches** in a game:
 - May **not catch** in the same game or on the same day
2. Any player throwing **40 or fewer pitches** AND has caught **3 innings or less**:
 - May catch **one additional inning** after pitching

Note:

- Pitch count refers to total pitches thrown that day
- To remain eligible to catch:
 - The pitcher must be removed at **40 pitches or fewer**, even mid-count

G. Catcher to Pitcher Restrictions

1. Any player catching **more than 3 innings** in a game:
 - Will not be allowed to pitch in the same game or on the same day

Note:

- If a player receives **even one pitch as a catcher**, it counts as a full inning caught
 - If two catchers are used in the same inning, both are credited with **one full inning caught**
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H. Doubleheaders

- Players who catch **more than 3 innings in Game 1**:
 - Are **ineligible to pitch in Game 2**
 - Players who throw **41 or more combined pitches**:
 - May **not catch in Game 2**
 - Maximum combined pitch counts for both games:
 - 9–10 years old: **75 pitches**
 - 11–12 years old: **85 pitches**
 - 13–14 years old: **95 pitches**
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I. Warm-Up Pitches

- New pitcher: **8 warm-up pitches**
- Between innings (same pitcher): **5 warm-up pitches**
- Injury replacement: **10 warm-up pitches**

J. Intentional Walks

- Allowed but **highly discouraged**
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K. Balks

- Balks are **live balls**
- The offensive team may:
 - Accept the result of the play, or
 - Take the balk and nullify the play

V. PLAYING RULES AND PROCEDURES

A. General Rules

- Official Baseball League Rules are in effect with the exception of the listed variations.

B. Participation Rules

- Coaches will play all players a minimum of **2 defensive innings**.
- Every player must **bat at least one time per game**.

Clarifications:

- This rule does not absolve coaches of participation requirements.
 - If a game is mercy ruled:
 - Each player must play **at least half of the defensive innings (rounded down)**.
 - Every player must have batted once unless:
 - There are fewer plate appearances than players assigned
 - Example: 12 outs recorded in a perfect game with 13 players
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C. Substitutions & Lineups

- **Substitutions:** Unlimited defensive substitutions
 - **Batting Order Options:**
 - 9 players
 - 10 players using an EH (Extra Hitter)
 - Entire lineup
 - If batting 10:
 - All 9 positional players + EH will bat
 - Coaches have free substitution through all defensive spots
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D. Dugout & Player Conduct

- Home team will always take the **3rd base dugout**
 - All players must remain in the dugout except:
 - Batter
 - On-deck batter
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E. Fielding a Team

- A team must start with **at least 8 players** (failure results in forfeit)
 - If a team forfeits:
 - They may play a scrimmage game
 - Max: 3 innings or 1.5 hours
 - Must provide their own umpires
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F. Grace Period

- A **5-minute grace period** is allowed:
 - For the first scheduled game of the day
 - For any single game day
 - Applies to reaching minimum 8 players
 - Failure results in forfeit
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G. Live Ball Situations

- **Dropped Third Strike:**
 - Ball is live and playable
 - Standard baseball rules apply
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H. Mercy Rule

- A **10-run mercy rule** will be in effect after 5 innings
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I. Sliding Rules

- Players must **slide or avoid contact**
 - Running over a player:
 - Result = out
 - Player removed for unsportsmanlike conduct
 - Umpire judgment applies
 - **No head-first sliding when advancing bases** (runner is out)
 - Head-first sliding is allowed when **returning to a base**
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J. Courtesy Runner

- Allowed for **pitcher and catcher at any time**
- Must be a player **not currently in the batting order**
- If:
 - Team has 9 players or fewer
 - OR batting entire lineup

→ The **last out** will be used as courtesy runner

K. Run Limits

- **NO run limit per inning**
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L. Warm-Up Catchers

- Any player warming up a pitcher must wear a **catcher's mask**

VI. ADMINISTRATION OF LEAGUE

A. Game Scheduling

- All scheduled games will be played unless canceled by:
 - ATB Board
 - Director of Baseball Operations
 - Umpire in charge of the game
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B. Standings & Reporting

- Standings will be kept on a **weekly basis**
 - Each coach is responsible for submitting:
 - Final score
 - Pitch counts for every player
 - Reports must be emailed within **24 hours of game completion** to:
Director@lakewoodbaseballclub.org
 - Failure to upload pitch counts or scores may result in a **forfeit of the next win**
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VII. PITCHING RULES & REGULATIONS

A. Pitcher Eligibility

- Once a pitcher is removed from the mound:
 - They are **ineligible to return as a pitcher** in that game
 - This applies even if they remain in the game at another defensive position
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B. Mound Visits

- **1 visit per inning** allowed
 - **2nd visit in the same inning** requires the pitcher to be removed
 - No limit on total visits per game
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C. Balk Enforcement

- Balks follow **official baseball rules (“big book”)**
 - Balks are **live balls** until the conclusion of the play
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D. Third to First Move

- The **third-to-first move is illegal**
 - Penalty: **Balk**
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E. Pitch Count Tracking & Protests

- **GameChanger** will be the official system of record for all pitch count protests
 - The Director will review GameChanger records to determine violations
 - If the questioned team does NOT use GameChanger:
 - The opponent’s GameChanger data will be used
 - If neither team uses GameChanger:
 - The **home scorebook** will be reviewed
 - If no records exist:
 - The pitch count protest **will not be upheld**
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F. Player Safety Emphasis

- Each team is **Expected and required** to prioritize:
 - Player health
 - Player safety
 - Responsible pitching decisions

VIII. Lineup and Substitution Rules

A. Lineup

- The batting lineup may consist of:
 - 9 players
 - 10 players with an Extra Hitter (EH)
 - The entire roster
 - A copy of each team's lineup must be provided to the umpires at the **plate meeting**
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B. Lineup Example

- If a team has 13 players, they may choose to bat:
 - 9 players
 - 10 players (with EH or EH & DH)
 - 13 players
 - Teams may **not** choose to bat 11 or 12 players
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C. Extra Hitter (EH) Rules

- When batting 10 players or the entire roster:
 - All players not currently playing in the field are considered **Extra Hitters (EH)**
 - The EH:
 - Is an additional player in the batting order
 - May move freely into and out of defensive positions
 - Functions as a **10th (11th, 12th, etc.) defensive position**
 - Use of the EH:
 - Is optional
 - Must be declared on the official lineup card prior to the game
 - If a team starts with EH(s):
 - They must **finish the game with those EH(s)**
 - If a player is removed from the lineup (injury, etc.):
 - That spot in the batting order becomes an **automatic out**
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D. Designated Hitter (DH)

- When batting 9 or 10 players, teams may also use a **Designated Hitter (DH)**
 - LBC follows **High School (NFHS) rules**:
 - A DH may hit for any player in the lineup
 - If the DH enters the field defensively:
 - The player they were hitting for is **removed from the lineup**
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E. Substitution Rules

- When batting 9 or 10 players:
 - **High school substitution rules apply**
 - Starters may **re-enter one time** in their original batting position
 - Regardless of lineup format:
 - Teams have **free defensive substitutions** at all times
 - A player may enter defensively without entering the batting lineup
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F. Reporting Substitutes

- A player only needs to report as an eligible substitute when:
 - Replacing another player in the batting order (applies to 9 or 10 player lineups)
- This is **not required by Official Baseball Rules**, but:
 - Is a courtesy to the umpires and opposing team

IX. Conduct

A. Expected Conduct

- All players, coaches, and fans are expected to conduct themselves in a **sportsmanlike manner at all times**
 - The following behaviors will not be tolerated:
 - Razzing
 - Heckling
 - Taunting
 - Disparaging remarks toward opponents or umpires
 - **Swearing by players or coaches**
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B. Disciplinary Action

- Any player, coach, or fan whose conduct is:
 - Unbecoming
 - Malicious
 - Abusive
 - Will, at a minimum, be **removed from the premises** at the discretion of:
 - Director
 - Umpire-in-Chief
 - Game umpires
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C. Coach Communication with Umpires

- Only the coach who attends the **pre-game plate meeting** may:
 - Discuss game situations
 - Ask questions to umpires on the field
 - Any individual who did not attend the plate meeting:
 - Must **not enter the field to address umpires**
 - Violation may result in **ejection from the game**
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D. Applicability

- This rule applies to:
 - Assistant coaches
 - Program directors
 - Any other personnel who did not attend the plate meeting

X. FACILITY RULES

A. Alcohol Policy

- Alcohol is **not permitted** within the complex at any LBC or ATB event
 - Violation will result in:
 - **Immediate removal from the complex**
 - Application of **fan ejection policies**
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B. Field Restriction Violations

- All turf fields have the following restrictions:
 - **No sunflower seeds**
 - **No metal cleats**
- Failure to comply may result in:
 - Fines
 - Ejection of players and/or coaches
- Coaches are responsible for ensuring compliance with the rules of each complex

XI. EJECTION POLICY

A. Player & Coach Ejections

- Any player or coach ejection will result in a **one-game suspension**, to be served in the next game
- Player ejection:
 - Player must **remain in the dugout**
- Coach ejection:
 - Coach must **leave the complex immediately**

- Must remain **out of sight from game officials**
 - Failure to comply will result in **forfeiture of the game**
 - Second ejection (same player or coach):
 - Suspension for the **remainder of the week**
 - Ineligible to return until **reinstated**
 - Third ejection:
 - Suspension for the **remainder of the current season**
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B. Fan / Parent Ejections

- First ejection:
 - Individual(s) removed from the complex
 - Not allowed to return for the **remainder of the season until reinstated**
- If an ejected fan attempts to return:
 - The team may be subject to **forfeiture of games**
- Second ejection involving the same team:
 - Head Coach will also be **ejected**
 - Head Coach will serve an **additional one-game suspension**
- Any fan or parent ejection:
 - Results in removal from the complex
 - Individual is not permitted to return for the **remainder of the season until reinstated**
- Second fan/parent ejection for the same team:
 - **ALL FANS** for that team will be removed
 - Fan ban remains in effect for the **remainder of the current event**

C. Reinstatement Policy

- Any player, coach, or fan who has been ejected and is subject to suspension or removal must complete a **reinstatement process** before returning to any LBC or ATB event.
- Reinstatement will require a **formal meeting with LBC and/or ATB Board members**.
- Participation in games, practices, or events will not be permitted until reinstatement has been officially granted.

D. Misconduct

- Any player, coach, or spectator ejected from a game by an umpire will be:
 - Suspended for the **next scheduled game**
 - The Commissioner of Baseball and/or Director of Baseball Operations reserves the right to:
 - Assess additional penalties
 - Including **league expulsion**
 - The ejected individual:
 - May not return to any team events
 - Must complete the **reinstatement process**, including meeting with the board, before returning
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E. Ejections – Additional Enforcement

- Player ejection:
 - Player will **not be allowed to remain in the dugout**, unless a parent or guardian is not present at the field

- Coach or spectator ejection:
 - Must **leave the playing premises immediately**
- Repeat ejections:
 - Any player, coach, or spectator ejected **twice during the season** will be:
 - Suspended for **one (1) year** from the date of the second ejection

XII. PROTESTS, RESCHEDULING & CONFLICT RESOLUTION

A. Pitch Count Protests

- All pitch count protests must:
 - Occur **during the game**
 - Apply only to the **current pitcher**
 - No protests will be considered:
 - After the game has concluded
 - For pitchers who have already been removed
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B. Pitch Count Protest Procedure

1. The coach must:
 - Request time
 - Notify the umpire that a pitch count protest is being filed
 2. A **\$100 cash fee** is required:
 - Refunded if the protest is upheld
 - Non-refundable if denied
 3. Umpires will:
 - Contact the **Director**
 - Notify them of the protest
 4. If a violation is confirmed:
 - The pitcher must be **IMMEDIATELY removed**
 - The pitcher and head coach will be **ejected**
 - The head coach will be **suspended for the next game**
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C. General Protests

- Protests are allowed on:
 - **Rule interpretations only**
 - Protests are NOT allowed on:
 - Judgment calls
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D. General Protest Procedure

- All protests must occur:
 - **Before the next pitch is thrown**
 - Once play resumes, the protest opportunity is lost

- To initiate a protest:
 - Coach must calmly request time
 - Notify the umpire of intent to protest
 - At that point:
 - Play will stop
 - A **Director will be contacted** to resolve the protest
 - A **\$100 cash fee** is required:
 - Refunded if upheld
 - Non-refundable if denied
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E. Game Rescheduling

- Once schedules are released:
 - Game reschedules are at the discretion of:
 - **Lakewood Baseball Club (LBC)**
 - **All Things Baseball (ATB)**
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F. Conflict Resolution

- LBC and ATB Directors will resolve conflicts with the goal of being:
 1. **Fair to all teams involved**
 2. **In the best interest of the league as a whole**