

# 2026 East Shore Rookies League Rules

Revised 1/26/2026

## General

1. Evening games will begin at 5:00PM. Games will be scheduled for Friday nights with the exception of Booster games on Saturdays or Sunday. (2022) All games will be 5 innings long. If there is time teams may play extra innings if both teams agree. (2022) Innings will be limited to 3 outs or no more than 12 batters per team. If a team only has 10 players, 2 players may bat 2 times. (2020) All available players will bat in order (see rule 11). (2023) Home team has option to set time limit for no inning to start after a set time.
2. If it rains, an official game is a 4 full innings, 3 ½ if the home team is ahead.
3. Games are to be called off by the home team at least one hour before game time.
4. The home team furnishes both the home plate and base umpires and the game balls. Umpires shall be at least 14 years old.
5. The visiting team shall be allowed to take infield practice 15 minutes before game time.
6. The home team sets the ground rules before the game. This meeting will include coaches and umpires to clarify rules. The umpire is there to track pitches/strikes and make calls in the field and bases. Also to assist in moving the game swiftly along. (2015)
7. Sportsmanship and skill development are to be stressed at all times.
8. Base lengths will be 60 feet. (2020)

## Eligibility/Rosters

9. Any player coming out of second grade is eligible to play. Beginning age is up to the coaches of the individual teams.
10. A player that plays two consecutive games on a Minors team will not be penalized if that Minors team is in need of players. At no time will it be acceptable to bring Rookies players to take positions away from Minors aged players. (2015)
11. The number of players on the roster is unlimited. Team rosters should be sent to the league Vice-President by BEFORE THE 1<sup>st</sup> GAME, showing the players name, age on April 30<sup>th</sup>, grade of player, and Jersey Number. Any players can be added to the roster during the season before they play by contacting the league Vice-President. (2026) Team Roster is required for Tournaments. Players must play at least 3 games before they are eligible for the tournament. *The games played rule may be waived for sick or injured players. Request a waiver with the East Shore League Board. (2021)*

## Administration

12. East Shore League Vice President-Rookies, would be any designated person from the club hosting the Rookies Tournament. The Vice President-Rookies is also responsible for completing the Rookies Schedule *in conjunction with other League Presidents*. This Vice

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President-Rookies, will also serve on the Game Protest Committee for Little League, Minors, & Rookies Leagues. Failure to meet this obligation will result in the forfeiture of their respective tournament and the team next on the list will get to choose if they want to host and fill the position as Vice President. If they pass, the tournament will go down the list until a club accepts. A club that does not wish to host will not lose their spot on the tournament rotation. (2021)

13. Any new club joining the Rookies league will enter the Tournament rotation at the end of the current ten year cycle (2015)
14. Teams' fees will not be charged by the East Shore League for any Rookies Level team. (2015)
15. All votes taken at the Fall and Spring meeting will be done verbally. Any vote too close to call must be publicly disputed immediately. After the results are disputed, a roll call vote will be taken with each club receiving only one vote. Simple majority wins a Roll call vote. In the event of a tie, the East Shore League President (which should be the LL President) will vote to break the tie (the East Shore League President's club gets one vote & the East Shore President gets one vote). (2020)

### Tournament

16. For tournaments, if the host club does not keep an official book it will be the responsibility of the home team to keep the official book. It is encouraged that both teams keep the book. After each inning both teams should compare books or when the visiting team asks. (2015)
17. It is suggested that at a minimum, individual awards are presented to the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and Consolation Champion teams, or 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and Consolation Champion if there is no 3<sup>rd</sup> place game. (2020) Team awards are optional. (2015)
18. Host club will run a Championship/Consolation Bracket Tournament. The host club will randomly draw brackets. (2015)
19. For the end of season tournament, a time limit of 80 minutes minimum may be used (games cannot be less than 80 minutes). If a time limit is used, it is to be checked at the end of the inning. If there is a time limit, it must be communicated to all teams before the tournament starts. Unless there are unique circumstances, there should be no time limit in "place" games. (2020)
20. There will be no (coach hitting at the start of the game) infield practice allowed during the end of season tournament. (2020)
21. No weeknight end of season tournament games shall start earlier than 5:00pm. (2020)
22. For the end of season tournament, if a game ends in a "tie", the host club has the option to use the traditional "extra inning" format or use the CALIFORNIA RULE extra inning tie-breaker format to determine the winner. California rule explanation: The extra innings will begin with the "away" team placing the runner who made the last out of the last inning on 2nd base. The inning will begin with (1) out. Extra innings will continue in this format until

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there is a winner. The "home" team will always get their last at bat. The host club must communicate to all coaches which format will be used during the tournament (2020).

## **Equipment**

23. Batters and runners must wear full helmets. Face masks are optional. Chin straps not required. Caged helmets are allowed (2015)
24. Metal Cleats are not allowed.
25. Bat rule; Little League of America Certified bats including 2 1/4", 2 3/8" 2 1/2" and 2 5/8" bats allowed as long as they are stamped with USA Baseball certification. Penalty for using anything other than a USA certified bat: first time the bat is used the player is called out. Second time the bat appears the player is out of the game. (2019)
26. Catchers must wear complete outfits at all times while catching.
27. A pitcher's helper is allowed to wear a pitching helmet. All defensive players may wear defensive head gear. (2015)
28. The use of the orange safety base at first base will be used as one big base. The defense or runner can use either base. For safety reasons, it is suggested that the runner use the orange base when running "thru" the base. (2020)

## **Game Play**

29. Every player shall play at least 2 innings on defense during the game.
30. Every player will bat in order on offense.
31. The defensive team will field a regulation infield and up seven outfielders.
32. RE-ENTRY RULE: A player who leaves the game may re-enter at any time, in any defense position due to the entire roster batting (see rule 11).
33. A ball, which is hit sharply and hits the pitching coach will result in a no pitch dead ball. No runners are to advance and the at bat will resume as it was. (2025)
34. There is no infield fly rule.
35. There are no walks. The emphasis is on hitting. Each batter will be allowed 10 pitches or 5 strikes, whichever comes first, before being called out. An at bat cannot end on a foul ball that isn't caught. If a foul ball is caught, the batter is out. (2015)
36. A strike is defined as any pitch swung at and missed, or fouled off. (2016)
37. Bunting is not allowed.
38. One Coach is allowed in the outfield during the Regular Season. No Coaches allowed in the outfield during the Tournament. (2015)
39. During the Regular Season, the scoreboard during the game should be run. Score should be turned off or frozen should one team take a 12 run advantage. (2022)
40. The pitcher's helper must be standing 4 feet from the pitcher's rubber at the start of each pitch. (2016)

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41. A team does not have to start with (at least) 9 players but does have to take an out for each player short of 9 batters. In the event a player shows up after the game has already started, they can be inserted on defense immediately and be placed in an open spot in the batting order. (2020) Rookies players cannot play on other Rookies teams you must pull up appropriate T-ball players. (2026)
42. A coach may attend to an injured player while the ball is live and play will continue. (2018)

### **Baserunning**

43. Sliding is permitted. *Sliding head first is allowed.* (2021)
44. A player is not out for turning the wrong way at first base. If the player breaks for second base, he can be put out.
45. Base runners must stay on their bases until the pitched ball has been batted or crosses the plate. If a runner leaves a base ahead of time, the runner will be called out after one prior warning per game.
46. A runner may be tagged out if off the base.
47. On a missed base, no appeal is to be made. The base coach is to tell the umpire who in turn calls the runner out.
48. A player may advance and score after tagging up on a caught fly ball.
49. If a ball is overthrown (2023) to a base from the infield or outfield, whether in fair or foul territory, the runner or runners cannot advance. (2018-rule deleted)(Reinstated for 2019) (2023) Supercedes rule #50
50. Runners can no longer advance once a ball thrown from the outfield crosses the infield base lines and is possessed by an infielder. Runners already in the process of advancing to the next base prior to this happening may still advance, but are doing so at risk of being out. Runners can attempt to score on a ground ball hit in the infield. (2018)
51. There are no automatic outs. If two runners are on the same base they must be tagged to be out.
52. A runner cannot advance home on an overthrow and can only score after a hit ball. A play does not end until the ball is dead. (2018 deleted)(Reinstated for 2019)
53. No player may intentionally run over the catcher at the plate. If this occurs the runner will be called out. If the play is at home plate, it is up to the catcher to clear the base path and the runner must slide (discretion of the umpire). (2018)
54. A run that scores after the hitter makes first base counts if it is scored before the hitter is put out.