

Lowes Creek Baseball Rules

(revised 4/1/2025)

Rules apply to all levels of play unless otherwise noted.

Game play will default to Cal Ripken rules if not defined by Lowes Creek Baseball.

Game Prep

- Home dugout is on the third base line. Visitor dugout is on the first base line. These are labeled. Games will not start without volunteers in place.
- **Majors/Minors/Rookies**
 - o Home team is responsible for field prep (raking, lining) and the scoreboard.
 - o Visiting team is responsible for field raking and tarps after the game.

Innings and Times

- **Majors/Minors/Rookies**
 - o Games are 4 innings long. If time allows, continue playing additional innings. The 4th and subsequent innings will not have a 5-run rule.
 - o All games will start promptly at 4:45pm and 6:30pm.
 - o No new inning can start after 75 minutes. If a new inning starts, it must be completed unless the home team is leading. A hard stop will be used at 90 minutes (6:15pm or 8:00pm), meaning the game is called. If a hard stop is called in the middle of an at-bat, the completion of the current batter is allowed. If the home team is in the lead at this time, the score is finalized. If the visiting team is ahead and the inning hasn't been completed in full, the score will revert back to the last full inning played.
- **T-ball**
 - o Practice first 45 minutes followed by a 2-inning game.

Weather Delays/Cancellations

- Detailed weather safety guidelines can be found in Lowes Creek Safety Manual. A hard copy is kept in the concession stand.
- **Majors/Minors/Rookies**
 - o A game may be considered complete if 4 innings are played. If a game isn't able to meet the "completed" status, the coaches will agree upon next steps and report to a board member.
 1. Game is called complete and the score reverts to the last full inning completed
 2. Game is completed at an agreed upon time, outside of normal league play. Game will resume exactly where play was suspended (score, count, etc.).

Maximum Runs Per Inning

- **Majors/Minors/Rookies**
 - o Each team can score a maximum of 5 runs per inning, except for the 4th and subsequent innings, which are unlimited.
- **T-Ball**
 - o Each team will have every T-ball player bat every inning regardless of outs and runs scored.

Maximum Runs Per Game

- **Majors/Minors**
 - o If after 3 ½ innings the home team is ahead by 10 runs or more, the manager shall concede the victory to the opponent. If the visiting team has a lead of ten runs or more, the home team must bat in its half of the inning.
- **Rookies/T-Ball** - None

League Standings - will be posted weekly for **Majors/Minors/Rookies**

Equipment

- No metal cleats
- **Majors/Minors/Rookies** - Bats must be USA approved with a barrel diameter not to exceed 2-5/8". Wood 2-1/4" barrel bats are allowed.

Playing Time

- Each player must play an infield position a minimum of 1 inning (to include pitching) within the first 4 innings of each game
 - Coaches must alert the LCB Coach Coordinator if there is a safety concern for a player to play infield OR a player does not want to play an infield position.
- No player may sit out more than two (2) consecutive innings and must play at least two (2) defensive innings unless a game is shortened for any reason.

Batting

- All players present on each team will be included in the continuous batting order.
- There is no dropped 3rd strike rule. The batter is out.
- No practice swings outside of the on-deck circle.
- Any batter who throws their bat will receive one warning. After that, the batter will be called out.
- Purposeful throwing of any equipment will result in the player being benched for the next full inning, no warning.
- Digging into the batter's box is prohibited.
- **Majors/Minors**
 - Bunting is allowed.
- **Rookies/T-Ball**
 - Batters cannot be walked, but they can strike out. (**Rookies only**)
 - The ball must travel a minimum of 8 feet or will be deemed a foul ball. No bunting.

Running

- No leading off base until the ball crosses home plate. One warning per team per game. Additional infractions will result in an automatic out.
- **Majors/Minors:**
 - Stealing any base is allowed all season.
 - **Minors Only Exceptions:** no stealing of home or advancing on a throw back to the pitcher through the first two weeks of the season. Maximum of 2 times successfully stealing home per half-inning.
 - Players must slide to home on a close play. Failure to do so results in one warning per team per game. Subsequent failure will be an automatic out.
 - If no catcher is at home, there is no requirement to slide.
 - No head first sliding, unless returning to base. One warning per team per game.
 - There will be NO warning for head first sliding into home; this will result in an automatic out.
 - On a play at the plate (meaning if the ball is thrown home), the runner must slide. If the runner does not slide on a play at the plate they will be called out. When a runner "takes out" or flagrantly runs into the catcher without attempting to slide, they will be immediately ejected from the game. For safety reasons we request you encourage players to slide, even on marginal plays.
 - Catchers may only block the plate if they either have the ball in their possession or if they are in the process of catching the ball. If the catcher blocks the plate without the ball, the runner is automatically safe.
 - All runners may advance at their own risk.
 - An overthrow out of the field of play results in the base the runner was going to, plus one extra base. If the overthrow occurred on a pitched ball, the runner only gets the next base.
 - After a pitched ball, base runners will be held to the nearest base once the ball is returned to the pitcher on the mound and the ball is under control.
- **Rookies/T-Ball**
 - Stealing is not allowed.
 - Regardless if there is a play or not, when a runner is coming home, the runner must slide.
 - Catchers may not block the plate.
 - All runners are only allowed one base at a time.
 - **Rookies only exception:** If the ball lands on the fly in the outfield grass, the runner may advance one extra base at their own risk
 - Runners may not advance on overthrows.

Fielding

- Infield Fly rule will apply at the discretion of the umpire for **Majors/Minors (N/A for Rookies/T-Ball)**
- The catcher must retrieve all passed balls. **(N/A in T-Ball)**
- **Majors** - 9 Players take the field: 4 Infielders, 3 Outfielders, 1 Catcher, 1 Pitcher
- **Minors** - 10 players take the field: 4 Infielders, 4 Outfielders, 1 Catcher, 1 Pitcher
- **Rookies** - 10 players take the field: 4 Infielders, 4 Outfielders, 1 Catcher, 1 Pitcher (must be within 6 feet of the rubber)
- **T-Ball** - All players play the field. Only traditional infield players are allowed in front of outfield grass. All others play in the outfield.

Pitching

- **Majors/Minors**
 - Digging into the area around the pitching rubber is prohibited.
 - Pitchers may have up to 5 warmup pitches.
 - Pitch limits will apply to Lowes Creek Baseball League play only. Pitchers may pitch a maximum of 3 innings per game, and a maximum of 6 innings per week based on pitch count/rest rules.
 - **Majors** Max pitches per day: 85
 - Pitches 66+ = 4 Days Rest
 - Pitches 51-65 = 3 Days Rest
 - Pitches 36-50 = 2 Days Rest
 - Pitches 21-35 = 1 Days Rest
 - Pitches 1-20 = 0 Days Rest
 - **Minors** Max pitches per day: 75
 - Pitches 66+ = 4 Days Rest
 - Pitches 51-65 = 3 Days Rest
 - Pitches 36-50 = 2 Days Rest
 - Pitches 21-35 = 1 Day Rest
 - Pitches 1-20 = 0 Days Rest
 - After each inning, coaches keeping the scorebook will confer and agree on the number of pitches thrown. This will be reported on the score sheet by the umpire. At the end of each game coaches agree on total pitches per player, complete pitcher eligibility form and have umpire sign form to verify. It is up to both coaches to track pitches and inform the umpire if a player reaches his daily maximum pitches during an inning.
 - Pitchers who reach their daily maximum pitches while facing a batter are allowed to finish pitching to that batter before being removed from the mound.
 - The pitcher must be in contact with the rubber at all times during their delivery, but may come off in the process of delivering the pitch in one continuous motion.
 - Pitchers who have thrown 40 or less pitches shall be allowed to catch within that same game. Any player, who has played the position of catcher in four (4) or more innings in a game, is not eligible to pitch on that calendar day.
 - No speed pitching. Batter must be set in the box and make eye contact with the pitcher. Pitcher/Coach will be provided one warning per team per game. Next infraction will result in an automatic ball added to the current pitch count.
 - No breaking pitches. One warning per team per game. Then, the pitcher will be removed from play.
- **Rookies**
 - Coaches get 5 pitches per player unless the batter fouls off the fifth pitch. In that case, the batter gets one more pitch. If the batter continues to foul off the final pitch, the at bat will continue until they strike out or put the ball in play (max of 10 pitches).
 - Coaches must pitch from 33 feet (12 feet in front of the pitcher's rubber at 45 feet).

Umpires

- All umpires will wear all the safety equipment provided!
- All umpires will wear the required uniform colors.
- It is the field umpire's duty to inform the coaches of the start time at the beginning of the game and keep track of the time. The start time of the game will be recorded on the umpire scoresheet.
- The home plate umpire will fill out a score sheet with the score of each inning. After the game, both managers and both umpires will sign the scoresheet and the Pitch Count Log. Once the score sheets and pitch log are signed, the results are final. The scoresheet will inform the accountant of which umpires worked the game and will also be used to update the standings.