Little League Softball Rules – Summary

Note: This is intended to be a helpful guide to know the basic rules of BRHLL Softball for AAA and Major Girls. It does not replace the official Little League rulebook. Any rules listed on this summary that are in conflict with the rulebook will be overridden by the rulebook. Any rules listed in this summary that are in conflict with the rulebook, EXCEPT LOCAL BRHLL RULES APPROVED BY THE BRHLL BOARD OF DIRECTORS, will be overridden by the rulebook. During interleague games or post-season, All-Star tournaments, local BRHLL rules will not apply.

Note: These rules do not necessarily apply to BRHLL “Rookies” or “Minors”.

Safety
1. Only the batter in the batter’s box (or going to/from the dugout to bat) may have a bat in her hand. No players allowed “on deck” and no players in dugout allowed to have bat in their hands.
2. Pitchers warming up must have a catcher with a catcher’s mask and a protector player who is facing the game and wearing a helmet and ball glove.
3. All catchers masks must have a dangling throat protector.
4. Only the first batter of each inning may be outside the dugout with a bat in hand (in front of own dugout only).
5. It is the coaches’ responsibility to ensure team/players are properly equipped.

General
1. No Jewelry of any kind is allowed. Coaches should check before game. Umpires will ask it to be removed.
3. Parents should not be up against or near backstop coaching players during game.
4. Injured, sick or ejected players
   a. If leaving game while on base, the player that made the last out that inning, scored the last run that inning (whichever is more recent) or the last out the previous inning would take the position on base.
   b. If leaving game in the middle of an at-bat; the batter/runner who made the most recent out that inning or who scored the most recent run that inning (whichever happened most recently) would take the batter’s position and would assume the count; if no outs or runs scored that inning, player removed would be replaced by player that made the last out in the prior inning.
   c. For all future at bats, the position is merely skipped over. Not automatic out.
      However, a BRHLL roster must have 8 active players to continue. If roster has 8, an automatic out will be registered for the open player slot in the batting order.
5. BRHLL discourages chanting of all types during games. Players should instead focus their communication on the number of outs, the play to be made, and the encouragement of their fellow players. Softball cheers that are positive and directed towards their own team are acceptable. Any negative chatter will be issued a warning.
Game Rules (Local BRHLL Rules in Italics)

1. Duration: No new inning may begin after 1 hour 45 minutes from the declared start time.
   a. Note: If game is tied, new inning may start after 1:45.
   b. Note: Inning “starts” when last inning ended.
   c. This rule applies to both AAA and Major Girls softball.
      c.i. Note: Major Girls Inter-League play may not start an inning after 2 hours if 4 innings have been completed.
      c.ii. Note: Major Girls Inter-League innings end when 3 outs are made or 7 runs have scored (innings 1-4). Unlimited runs beginning in 5th inning.

2. Little League says games may not be started nor continued with less than nine (9) players on each team and at least one adult manager in the dugout. BRHLL allows 8 players on the field. When the 9th position comes up to bat, it is an automatic out.
   a. If playing the game with 8, a ghost player will be entered in the 9th batting position recording an automatic out during her “at-bat.”
   b. A 9th player that arrives late may be entered into the game but only at the beginning of the half inning.
   c. If a player leaves due to illness or injury, they may be substituted at any time without penalty.
      c.i. If substituted at the plate, the next batter in the order should bat with no penalty or out. If there’s a count, the last batter out should finish the at bat.
      c.ii. If substituting a runner, the last batter out or the last batter to score should replace the injured/ill runner.
   d. If a player leaves due to illness, injury, or ejection and the team has fewer than nine (9) players available, a “ghost” batter will be entered in the batting order where the player was removed and it will be an automatic out.

3. AAA Girls have a maximum 5 run per inning limit except the last inning or later (“last inning” defined as the 6th inning or later)

4. Major Girls have a maximum 7 run per inning rule in the first 4 innings with unlimited runs allowed in the 5th inning or later.

5. AAA Girls inning also ends when the entire batting order batted in a half inning. This does not apply to Major Girls.

6. 10 run mercy rule applies to both AAA and Major Girls games after 3 1/2 innings if home team is leading or after 4 innings whichever team is leading.

7. BRHLL has a requirement for AAA and Majors that every player must not play in the field less than 4 innings (4 half-innings on defense).
   a. Umpire interpretation: A half-inning is comprised of 3 outs. Player must be in a defensive position while 12 outs are made.
   b. BRHLL uses continuous batting order. All players on game roster will bat.
   c. Note: Little League official rules requires that substitutes must play a minimum of one “at bat” and 6 consecutive “outs”
      c.i. “At bat” is defined as starting the batting position with no count.
      c.ii. Substitute player may not be removed before she has completed the mandatory minimum play.
d. BRHLL allows free substitution throughout game as long as minimum playing time is maintained. (Note: Pitchers have special substitution rules. See “Pitcher” below).

e. BRHLL minimum play requirement will be the rule during the BRHLL Season including BRHLL tournament play.

f. Penalty if minimum play is not upheld by manager:
   f.i. The player not playing the minimum will start the next game and will play the minimum in the new game PLUS will play the minimum not completed in the previous game
   f.ii. First offense: Manager gets a written warning
   f.iii. Second offense: Manager is suspended one game
   f.iv. Third offense: Manager is suspended for remainder of the season
   f.v. No forfeit is invoked for the disputed game.

8. Regulation game:
   a. 3 1/2 innings if called due to weather or darkness and home team is leading.
   b. 4 innings if called due to weather or darkness and either team is leading.
   c. Games suspended before they become regulation game but after one or more innings will be resumed exactly where left off (all stats still count).
   d. Games suspended after 4 or more innings that are tied at the end of the most recently completed inning will be resumed exactly where left off.
   e. Only the winning run will count toward final score.
      e.i. Exception: All runs scored during a home run to win a game will count.

9. Incomplete innings:
   a. Games suspended before the first inning is complete will resume as if the game had never been played. All stats will be erased.
   b. Games suspended before they become regulation game but after one or more innings will be resumed exactly where left off (all stats still count)
   c. Games suspended after they become a regulation game but in the middle of an inning, score will revert to the end of the previously completed inning when:
      c.i. Visiting team scores one or more runs to tie score or take lead in the incomplete inning and home team does not finish its half of the inning and does not tie score or take lead
      c.ii. As noted above, if previous inning ended in a tie, game will continue exactly where left off.

Examples:
- Score is tied after 4 (regulation game). Top of the 5th, Visitors score 2 runs. Game is suspended. Since game is tied at previous inning completed, game will resume in top of 5th at exactly the point where left off.
- Score is tied after 2 innings (not a regulation game yet). Top of 3rd, Visitors score 2 runs. Game is suspended. Game will resume at exactly where left off.
- Home team is up after 4 innings (regulation game). Top of 5th, Visitors score runs to either tie or take the lead. Game is suspended before Home team has chance to complete its half of the 5th inning. Game reverts to end of 4th inning. Home team wins.
- Visitors are leading after 4 innings. Home team takes the lead in the bottom of the 5th. Game called due to darkness before Home team completes 3 outs. Complete game. Home team wins.
10. Weather
   a. Umpire is the sole judge (with input from Officers of the Day) of whether to suspend a game for weather or darkness
   b. Games may not be called for at least 30 minutes after play has been suspended.
   c. Lightning requires a minimum of 30 minute wait after most recent sighting.
11. Umpires may not forfeit a game due to fans. Controlling fans is the local board’s responsibility.
12. Play is LIVE until umpires call “TIME” or “TIME OUT.” Coaches and players should not assume a timeout is in place without asking an Umpire. Coaches that enter playing field while play is live are at risk of being called for interference.
13. All defensive players, except catcher, must be in fair territory for start of each play.

Coaching
1. Two base coaches are allowed – one at first base and one at third base
2. There must be one adult manager/coach in the dugout at all times
3. One base coach may be a player in uniform with helmet on
4. Base coaches must remain in coaches’ box. Leaving box could be called, “interference.”
5. Coaches ejected from a game must leave game site and are also ineligible to coach at the next game.
6. No more than three (3) adults in the dugout during the game.
7. Coaches/Adults are not allowed to warm up pitchers between innings

Pitcher
1. Substitution. A pitcher remaining in the game but moving to another defensive position can re-enter as pitcher anytime, but only one re-entry per inning. (Note: If, however, pitcher sits out on defense, even for one out, even if there is a continuous batting order, this player may not re-enter as pitcher.). Can only re-enter if she’s never taken out on defense.
2. May not wear sweat bands on arm, or wrist.
3. May wear a batting glove under ball glove but it may not be white, gray, or optic yellow.
4. Ball glove may not be a white or very light color that could be deemed distracting to batter.
5. Pitchers that intentionally damage a ball will be removed from the pitching position immediately.
6. Only players may warm-up pitchers.
7. Warm-up time: 8 pitches or one-minute, whichever happens first.
8. A dropped ball by the pitcher on the plate before or during the pitch is considered a “ball” and AAA girls on base may run once ball hits the ground (Major girls can leave on the release).
9. BRHLL Rule: AAA Girls. After four balls, offensive team coach may pitch up to three pitches. After the third pitch, the batter is “out” unless pitch is fouled off or hit into fair territory. [This rule may be changed back to Little League rules later in the season]
10. BRHLL Rule: AAA Girls. Little League has no rule regarding pitch height. BRHLL has decided to limit pitches to a 6 foot arc or less. This is an umpire’s judgment call. Balls
over 6 feet high, not swung at, will be called a “ball.” This pitch is not an illegal pitch and pitch is live. Batter may swing at pitch resulting in a strike, foul ball, foul tip, or hit. Umpire should not call the pitch until after ball has reached the batter.

11. Pitcher on the pitcher’s plate may only throw to home plate.

12. Illegal pitches. Illegal pitches are “Ball’s;” play is still live. Offensive team may accept play if ball is batted. Examples:
   a. A crow hop is an illegal pitch.
   b. Pivot foot not on the rubber is an illegal pitch
   c. A quick return pitch is an illegal pitch (not allowing batter to set up).
   d. A double arm swing windmill is an illegal pitch.

13. A backward step may be taken before or simultaneously with bringing the hands together.
   a. Bringing the hands together before stepping back is an illegal pitch (“ball”).

14. During the back step, the foot on the pitching plate may not come up.
   a. This is a rocking motion and is an illegal pitch (“ball”).

15. After bringing hands together in front of body, pitcher may not remove one hand to initiate the pitch and then bring the hands back together in front of the body again.
   a. Doing so is an illegal pitch (“ball”)

16. Pitcher may not make two or more rotations of the pitching arm in a windmill motion during the pitch.
   a. This is an illegal pitch (“ball”)

17. The pitcher may only push off the pitcher’s plate with the pivot foot.
   a. (“Crow Hop” is the act of establishing a second pivot point off the pitcher’s plate. (“Ball”)

18. Pitchers have 20 seconds to release pitch once umpire yells “Play” and catcher is in position.

Pitch Limits/Rules

1. Majors Maximum: 9 innings per game; 18 innings per calendar week
2. Minors/AAA Maximum: 6 innings per game; 6 innings per calendar week
3. Note: A calendar week is defined as Sunday through Saturday
   a. Example: If pitcher pitches 6 innings on Saturday, technically she could pitch 6 innings on Monday (one calendar day of rest between), but none the rest of that calendar week.
4. Not more than five (5) pitchers per team may be used in a game
   a. Exception: In case of injury or illness to the 5th pitcher, a 6th pitcher may be entered.
5. Innings pitched in games suspended after less than one inning shall not count against pitcher’s innings count.
6. Pitchers may pitch in a double header as long as they do not exceed daily and weekly inning limits.
7. Any AAA pitcher that pitches at least one inning (one pitch is considered one inning) must rest for one calendar day before pitching again. For Major Girls, one day of rest is required if she pitched more than one inning in a day.

Pitcher Rest Requirements

1. If pitcher pitches more than one inning, one calendar day of rest is required.
2. One pitch is considered pitching an inning.
   a. One pitch in two separate innings would be considered pitching in two innings

Bats
1. May not exceed 33 inches in length
2. May not exceed 2 1/4 inches in diameter
3. Must meet Little League specifications
4. May say “Approved for Little League Tee-ball”
5. Non-wood bats must have a 1.20 BPF Rating permanently embossed on bat
6. Illegal bats are removed from play immediately upon identification; play continues; no protest.
7. Illegal Bat Penalties:
   a. Bat is immediately removed from play upon discovery.
   b. If batter enters batter’s box with one or both feet entirely on the ground with an illegal bat or is discovered to have used an illegal bat prior to next player entering the batter’s box:
      b.i. Batter is “out”;
      b.ii. Defensive manager may advise plate umpire to accept penalty or decline penalty and accept result of play (must be made immediately at end of play);
      b.iii. First violation: offensive team loses one eligible adult base coach for remainder of game;
      b.iv. Second violation: manager of violating team is ejected;
   c. Subsequent violations: substitute manager is ejected.

Batter
1. Home plate is in fair territory
2. The “foul” pole is in fair territory
3. The “foul” line is a fair ball
4. A batted ball hitting the batter outside the batter’s box in fair territory is an “out.”
5. If the third out is made while batter is at bat, that same batter will be lead-off batter the following inning with a fresh count of 0 balls and 0 strikes.
6. Batting out of turn:
   a. The proper batter may take a position in the batter’s box at anytime prior to the improper batter becoming a runner, or being put out. Proper batter inherits the improper batter’s count.
   b. If improper batter becomes a runner or is put out and the defensive team successfully appeals to the umpire before next pitch is thrown, the proper batter is called “out,” and the next proper batter is the batter that followed the proper batter called out – even if it is the batter that was the improper batter.
      b.i. Example: If batter #4 bats in #3’s place,
         b.i.1. Batter #3 can come in before at bat is completed and inherits the count
         b.i.2. If batter #4 gets a hit, defense may appeal. Batter #3 is “out” and batter #4 comes to the plate again.
b.i.3. If batter #4 gets an out, defense can accept out (batter #5 becomes the next batter) or defense can appeal (batter #3 is out) and batter #4 bats again.

c. When improper batter becomes a runner or is put out and a pitch is made to next batter, the improper batter thereby becomes legal. And the next proper batter is the batter that followed the improper batter in the order.
d. Note: runners advancing on a stolen base or illegal pitch - such advances are legal.

7. Local BRHLL pitching rules for AAA Girls: If pitcher has thrown 4 called “balls,” batter will remain at bat and manager or coach of batting team will enter game as pitcher. Coach may make up to three pitches until batter hits ball or strikes out. If three pitches are reached, batter is automatically out on strikes. Exception: If batter fouls off third pitch, she may continue at bat until the next non-foul ball pitch is achieved.

8. Batter will receive a warning the first time a bat is thrown. She will be called “out” every time thereafter in the game.

9. Batter is awarded first base for “hit by pitch” when pitched ball strikes any part of batter’s body or clothing.
   a. This includes bounced pitches
   b. This includes pitches that brush the jersey or pants
   c. Hands are part of the body (not the bat).
   d. Exceptions:
      d.i. If batter swings and ball hits batter, it’s a “strike”
      d.ii. If pitch hits batter but pitch was in the strike zone, it’s a “strike”
      d.iii. If batter makes no attempt to get out of the way, it’s simply a “ball”

10. Dropped 3rd Strike is a live ball. Batter must be tagged or a play made at 1st base (or home plate if bases are loaded when batter was at plate. This rule applies to Major Girls only.

**Runner**

1. Each runner, including batter/runner is entitled to three bases if fielder removes cap or uniform article to touch a fair batted ball.

2. Each runner is entitled to three bases if fielder touches a fair batted ball with a thrown glove.

3. In both 1 and 2, ball is live and batter may advance to home plate at her own peril.

4. Each runner is entitled to two bases if fielder touches thrown ball with a thrown glove or with a removed cap or other uniform article

5. Runner is entitled to two bases on a wild throw that goes out of play. The two-base award is based upon where the runner/batter-runner was at the time of the pitch.
   a. The award would be 2nd base for a batter

6. Runner is entitled to one base on a thrown ball from the pitcher on the mound that goes out of play (this could be a pick-off throw or a pitch).

7. Runners are entitled to one base (batter to first base only) on a called fourth “ball” that passes the catcher and lodges in the umpire’s mask or equipment (This is a rule – and it happened Sunday 4/15/2012).
8. **Head first slides** when advancing is an automatic out. May only head-first slide when returning to a base. Make sure that it was an intentional head-first slide an not a trip.

9. Batter/runner cannot be tagged out when overrunning first base if batter/runner immediately returns to the base and is not making an attempt for 2nd base. (Umpire judgment call).

10. AAA Girls: Runners leaving a base before pitched ball crosses plate
   a. Runner is out

11. Major Girls: Runners leaving a base before pitched ball leaves pitcher’s hand:
   a. Runner is out

12. If pitcher has possession of the ball inside the 8 foot pitchers circle, runners off the base must either immediately advance to next base or return to previous base.
   a. If runners don’t immediately advance or return to base, they may be called “Out” and it is a dead ball.
   b. This is a judgment call. But if the runner takes more than a second or two, or if she is trying to egg on the pitcher to make her throw the ball, the runner should be called “out.”

13. Runners may advance on a dropped pitch at their own risk.
   a. This would include mis-thrown pitches that never reach the plate. This rule only applies to softball.

14. Courtesy runners are not allowed; a player on the roster may not substitute as a runner for another player on the bases (unless runner is injured or ill).

15. Runner who misses a base may return to touch that base before touching the next base. She may not return to the previous base once she has touched the next base. If caught on appeal, she will be “out.”
   a. Note: Umpire does not make any call if runner misses a base or home plate. Defensive team must appeal the play while play is live.
   b. Defensive team must call “Appeal – we don’t think player touched base or plate.” Catcher can tag runner or touch home plate. Pitcher must return to mound and from the pitcher’s plate, throw the ball to the base and defensive player should tag the base.

**Calls at the Plate**

(Generally the plate ump will have all fly ball calls, fair and foul, and balls and strikes plus calls at home plate. The base umps will have the calls on all the bases unless called off by the plate ump).

- You may ask for clarification. But the umpires’ calls will stand. Under no circumstances should a coach or parent or player argue with one of the kid umps.
- You cannot protest umpires’ judgment. You cannot protest the use of illegal equipment.

1. The following calls by umpires in indisputable and may not be challenged:
   a. “Safe” and “Out”
   b. “Fair” and “Foul”
   c. “Ball” and “Strike”
2. **Strike Zone**: Three dimensional space over home plate from the players armpits to the top of the knees. If pitch crosses this area over the plate it is a strike.
   a. *Often to speed the game, umpires will widen the strike zone to approximately one ball width inside and one ball width outside the plate. For AAA Girls, Knees to the Neck.*
3. A batted ball hitting home plate before entering fair territory is fair ball.
4. The “foul” pole is in fair territory.
5. The “foul” line is a fair ball.
6. A batted ball hitting the batter outside the batter’s box in fair territory is an “out.”
7. A batted ball hitting the batter with at least one foot inside the batter’s box is a “foul” ball.
8. **Hit by Pitch** – player is awarded first base. Play is dead.
   a. Hand is NOT part of the bat. If hand is hit, it’s a “hit by pitch” (Unless the batter is swinging the bat. Then it is a “strike.”)
   b. Bounced pitches that hit the batter is a “hit by pitch”
   c. Exception: If a pitch hits the batter in the strike zone, it’s a “strike”
   d. Exception: Batter must make attempt to get out of the way. If he does not, it will be simply called a “ball” (This is an umpire’s judgment). (UIC Interpretation: you will get young players that freeze. Award the hit by pitch the first time, but advise the runner and her coach that next time, if they don’t make any attempt to get out of the way, it will be called a “ball” not a “hit by pitch.”)
9. **Bunt “strike”** – The mere holding of the bat in the strike zone is considered an attempted bunt in softball. Batter must withdraw the bat backwards away from the ball to avoid it being considered a bunt attempt. This is different in baseball.
   a. A foul ball on a bunt with 2 strikes is an automatic out.
10. **Caught Ball “Out”** - Plate umpire has the call whether any ball is caught or dropped – NOT the base ump. If the ball is dropped in the act of throwing (umpire judgment), this is still a catch. If the ball is juggled by one or more players and is caught before the ball hits the ground, this is an “out.”
11. **“Foul Ball” vs. “Foul Tip”**
   a. Foul ball – ball that settles in foul territory.
      e.i. A line drive that passes inside or over 1st or 3rd base but lands foul is a foul ball.
      e.ii. A caught foul ball is an out – regardless of how many strikes the batter has
      e.iii. Generally a caught foul ball must be a ball that is either a line drive or pop fly caught by a fielder or a batted ball over the batter’s head caught by the catcher.
   b. Foul Tip – a batted ball that goes sharply and directly from the bat to the catcher’s mitt and is legally caught. Play is live.
      a.i. It is not a “catch” if the ball first rebounds off the catcher, unless the ball hit the mitt first.
      a.ii. A foul tip caught with less than 2 strikes is simply a “strike” (runners may advance at their own risk; ball is live).
      a.iii. A foul tip that first strikes the catcher’s mitt or hand and is juggled and caught is considered a catch (according to Central Region).
a.iv. A foul tip that strikes any other part of the catcher and is juggled and caught is simply a “foul ball” and not an out – even if this occurred with 2 strikes on the batter.

a.v. If the batted ball is not caught, it is a “foul ball” not a “foul tip” and play is dead.

12. Checked Swing. If plate umpire is blocked, he/she may ask base ump for clarification. A catcher may signal to the base umpire. But the base umpire’s call will only take effect if the plate umpire has asked for assistance.

13. Intentional dropped ball by infielder with runners on 1st, 1st and 2nd, 1st and 3rd, or bases loaded:
   a. Batter is out.
   b. Automatic dead ball.
   c. Runners may not advance
   d. Exception: If infielder allows ball to drop untouched, batter is not out automatically unless “Infield Fly” applies.

General Calls:

1. On any Interference call, except umpire interference which is delayed dead ball, the play is immediately DEAD.

2. Interference by the Catcher – If batter in a normal swing, hits the catcher’s mitt. Batter is awarded first base and play is dead.

3. Interference by the Coach – If coach holds a runner back or pushes runners forward. Play is dead. Runner is called “out.” All other runners must return to the last base legally touched (umpire judgment).
   a. Note: “High Five’s” during a home run walk off is not “interference”

4. Interference by the Runner – If runner runs into fielder in the act of fielding the ball; runner is “out.”
   a. Note: If batted ball touches runner before fielder fields the ball, runner is “out.”
   b. Note: If batted ball touches runner after fielder mishandles the ball, this is incidental contact and play is live; runner is not automatically out.
   c. Note: If runner runs into fielder with the ball, and causes fielder to drop the ball, the runner is “out.” (Runner must either slide or try to avoid fielder with ball – within 3 feet of base path. If runner avoids tag but goes outside 3 foot line, runner is “out”)
   d. Note: Runner may NOT be called for interference if remaining on a base when a batted ball is hit at him and is in the way of the fielder.

5. Interference by the Runner on a thrown ball – intentionally blocking a thrown ball – runner is “out.”
   a. If runner intentionally tries to break up double play by interfering with fielder or with the throw, both the runner and the batter will be out.

6. Interference by the Batter on a play at home:
   a. If batter interferes with catcher’s throw or plate at the plate, batter is out.
   b. Exception: Batter is not out if runners attempting to advance are thrown out or put out at home.

7. Obstruction is the act of a fielder without the ball, impeding the progress of any runner.
a. This is a judgment call by the umpire. Awarding of additional bases based on whether umpire believes obstruction caused an “out” or prevented advancement.

8. **Obstruction** by the Fielder/Catcher – If fielder/catcher (without the ball) impedes progress of runner (runner runs into fielder/catcher without ball or has to slow down or has to avoid fielder/catcher without ball), this is “obstruction” on the fielder/catcher and runner will be awarded the next base or plate safely. Fielder/Catcher must have possession of the ball or it is “obstruction.” If play is being made on the obstructed runner, play is DEAD. If play is not being made on obstructed runner, it is a delayed dead ball.
   a. Note: If runner intentionally tries to run into fielder/catcher without the ball, the appropriate call must still be made (“safe” or “out”), but the runner will be ejected from the game for unsportsmanlike conduct. (Even if called “safe”)
   b. Note: If fielder is attempting to field a throw or a deflected batted ball and runs into runner, this is incidental contact – neither obstruction nor interference.
   c. Obstruction at a base or at home plate is a delayed dead ball.
   d. Obstruction of a batter/runner going to first base is a dead ball and all other runners are entitled to the next base based on umpire’s judgment.
   e. Award only what you think obstructed runner was prevented from achieving had he not been obstructed. [Runner may be awarded multiple bases if obstructed on a multiple base hit. Umpire judgment call.]
   f. Fielders must give runners access to the base.

9. **Infield Fly** (see more details below) – this is NOT a dead ball. Play is live.
   a. Runners may advance at their risk. They must tag up, however, if the ball is caught.
   b. A dropped “infield fly” in foul territory is simply a “foul ball” and batter is not out (Umpire should yell: “Infield fly if fair!”)
   c. An infield fly that goes untouched and rolls foul is a “foul ball” and batter is not out.
   d. An infield fly that goes untouched and lands in foul territory but rolls fair before 1st and 3rd base, is an infield fly and batter is “out.”
   e. You cannot have an infield fly off a bunt

10. “Catch” is a secure possession in the hand or glove of a ball in flight.
    a. It is not a legal “catch” if ball falls to the ground as a result of a collision of two fielders or the fielder falling down.
    b. It is not a legal “catch” if the fielder touches the ball in flight, then ball touches an offensive player or umpire, then is caught in flight.

11. “Foul” ball is determined by where the ball is when it is touched by an infielder (not where the fielder is standing), whether it crosses the inside plane of first or third base before going into the outfield, or where the ball finishes when it comes to a stop (untouched) before reaching first or third base.

12. “Tag” must be made with ball (in hand or securely in glove).

13. Appeal plays resulting in an out where a force out would have taken place will be treated as a force out for determining whether runs scored. For example, if bases are loaded with two (2) outs, and runner on first misses second base on a base hit; defensive team properly appeals with throw to 2nd base; third out is a force out and no runs will have scored from that base hit.

14. “Out of Play”
a. Runner is entitled to two bases on a wild throw on a batted ball that goes out of play. The two-base award is based upon where the runner/batter-runner was at the time of the pitch.
   a.i. The award would be 2nd base for a batter
b. Runner is entitled to one base on a thrown ball from the pitcher on the pitcher’s plate that goes out of play...this could be a pick-off throw (older leagues) or a pitch.
   b.i. Pitcher throwing the ball from off the pitcher’s plate would be considered a two-base award.
c. Remember the rule of thumb: “One from the pitcher’s plate and two from the field” (How many bases they get depends on where throw was initiated).
d. Runners are entitled to one base (batter to first base only) on a called fourth “ball” that passes the catcher and lodges in the umpire’s mask or equipment.

Infield Fly
If any rule will cause problems, it's the Infield Fly Rule. There are so many wrong interpretations, misunderstandings, etc. with this rule. In the first place, the only place to check the definition of the rule is in the Little League Rule book. Chat rooms, Wikipedia, etc. can all be crazy with their interpretations. OK, here we go......

If there are runners on first and second, or first, second and third with less than two out, there is an infield fly possibility.
If the batter then hits a fair fly ball (not a line drive or bunt) that COULD be caught by a defensive player stationed in the infield with ORDINARY EFFORT, an Infield Fly should be called. Keep in mind, “ordinary effort” can be very different between a 9-year-old and an 18-year-old. One way to think of it is, “Is the fielder comfortable under the ball?” If so, you’ve got ordinary effort. (Jim Evans gets the credit for that one!)

The umpire must watch the ball and the fielders, and decide if the batted ball qualifies as an infield fly. If so, when the ball reaches the apex of its flight, in other words, its highest point, the umpire should point at the ball, and holler, "Infield fly, the batter's out!" If the ball is close to the foul line, say "Infield fly, if fair!" (Either/any umpire can call it.) The umpires have to watch the ball, watch the reaction of the fielders, back and forth until the ball is at the apex, then make a decision.

As soon as the umpire says “Infield fly”, the batter is out AND THE FORCE IS REMOVED FROM THE RUNNERS. Of course, that's the purpose of the rule, to keep the defense from getting a cheap double play. THE RUNNERS DO NOT HAVE TO RUN if the umpire says "Infield fly, the batter's out!"

Now, the call of "Infield fly" only affects the batter-runner....the batter-runner is immediately out which removes the force, REGARDLESS of whether the ball is caught or not. The other runners are subject to the rules regarding tagging up just as if the ball had been hit into the outfield. If it's caught, they must tag up before they advance. But if it's not caught, they do not have to tag.

Don't think of the "Infield fly" call as a "catch" because it's not. The ball has just been
ruled an Infield Fly which makes the batter-runner out instantly, but the ball may or may not be caught. Whether it’s caught or not does NOT affect the Infield Fly call. Check Rule 2.00, Catch definition. This applies to an infield fly situation, too.

Also remember a few other things:

**The ball stays alive during an Infield Fly play. It's not dead, so runners off base may be tagged, etc.**

An infield fly is a fair fly ball which CAN be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort. That doesn't mean it HAS to be caught by an infielder. Imagine a shortstop playing deep, backing up into the outfield grass to catch a fly with, in the ump's judgment, ordinary effort. The umpire points up and calls "Infield fly, the batter is out!" But the left fielder charges in, and calls her off and catches the ball.......or doesn't catch it, either way. That is **STILL** an infield fly, by definition.

If the umpire calls "Infield fly, the batter's out!", or "Infield fly, if fair!" and the ball drops **untouched and rolls foul**; it is NOT an infield fly....just a foul ball. If it lands **untouched** foul, and **rolls fair**, it's an infield fly.

Last but not least, don't get confused with Rule 6.05k, the intentional drop. If you read that rule, you will see the differences between it and an infield fly. The infield fly rule always takes precedence. (Besides, you'll almost never see these kids intentionally drop a fly ball, they have a hard enough time catching them!!)

**Dropped Third Strike**

When a third strike is called, or is swung at and missed and the catcher does not make a legal catch (cannot bounce off the glove or body and then be caught – must be a clean catch – this is different than a flyout which can be juggled and caught for the out), the batter may attempt to reach first base if it is unoccupied when there are less than 2 outs, or even when it is occupied when there are 2 outs. Occupied means it was occupied at the time of the pitch. The fact that the runner attempts to steal does not make the base unoccupied. Time of pitch is defined as the moment the pitcher starts her windup or commits to a pitch to the plate.

To be **legally caught** the ball must be caught in-flight. This means if the catcher catches the ball cleanly on a bounce it is **NOT** a legal catch. Rule 2.00 BALL casebook.

Rule 6.09(b) Comment: A batter who does not realize her situation on a third strike not caught, and who is not in the process of running to first base, shall be declared out once he leaves the dirt circle surrounding home plate.

If the bases are loaded with 2 out and the catcher does not make a legal catch of a third strike, a force play goes into effect because the batter has now become a runner. The catcher may step on home plate to force out the runner from third or tag the batter or throw to any other base.

In Little League® Majors and Minors (9 - 12) the batter is out on any third strike and may not
attempt first base.

Rule 6.09(b)

For purposes of BRHLL, umpires will declare a batter as having abandoned the play:
   a) Once they have walked more than 10 feet from batter’s box
   b) Once the on-deck batter has passed the previous batter on deck
   c) Note: Batter/runners leaving the box to the third base side of the batter’s box must retrace their steps through the batter’s box on their way to first base or they will be called “out” for leaving the base path (and must run on the foul side of the first base line).

Unique Plays/Rules

When we come across a unique rule, we will bring it to your attention. This could be from a BRHLL game or from major leagues.

1) Runners on 1st and 2nd, no outs. Batter squares to bunt. Pitch is thrown at batter’s head. The pitch strikes the bat, lands foul, but rolls fair. Catcher picks up ball in fair territory, throws to third who throws to 2nd who throws to 1st. Call: Triple Play. (This happened the weekend of 4/15/2012 in a Dodgers/Padres game).

2) Runner tags up on a fly ball. Runner leaves base after ball touches fielder’s glove, but fielder juggles ball before it is legally caught. Runner’s advance was legal.