

Shrewsbury Little League 2015 U7 Rules

2015 – U7 General Rules

1. General

- a. U7 is for players between the ages of 5 and 7 and it consists of the following 3 divisions:
 - Instructional (5 & 6 year olds)
 - Farm (7 year olds)
- b. These three leagues are intended to provide an opportunity for very young players to develop basic baseball skills
- c. Key goals of U7:
 - Having FUN
 - Team Work and Team Play
 - Knowledge of the Game
 - Basic baseball skills
 1. Catching
 2. Throwing
 3. Fielding
 4. Hitting
- d. All teams will have at least (2) Coaches (all coaches MUST complete a volunteer application form and submit it to the U7 Commissioner prior to the start of the season)
- e. Teams will have no more than 12 players
- f. Practices and Games
 - Each team will have one weekday practice time
 - Games are played on Saturday and Sunday afternoons
- g. Games are played at the Umass fields on South Street
- h. All games **MUST** end at least 10 minutes prior to the next game starting
- i. **Parents:**
 - NO parent will be allowed on the field during a game to instruct their child unless specifically requested by the manager/coach
 - Parents may be asked to help out during practices
 - Only league purchased and or Little League approved (NOCSAE) helmets are permitted (this is a safety issue that cannot be negotiated). NO player may use their own batting helmet if not approved.

	T-Ball	Instructional	Farm
Innings (time)	NA	3*	Max 1 hr, 20 min
Pitching	NA	Tee** / Coach	Coach / Players
Catcher	NA	N	Y***
Max number of batters per inning	NA	Entire Team	3 outs, 4 runs or 9 batters (which ever comes first). All players must bat during the game
Set Batting Order	NA	Y	Y

* 3 innings but game must not be longer than 1 hr.

** A Tee will be used until such time as the coaches feel players are ready to hit live pitches from a coach. This is typically about half way through the season and it will be discussed at a coaches meeting prior to implementing. During games a limit of 5 pitches should be in place so that the game is not extended too long.

*** Catchers MUST wear a protective cup

Approved by the 4/24 Email Vote by SLL Board of Directors.

Instructional League

1. Rules of Game:

- a. Length of game 3 innings (1 hour maximum, but extra inning can be played if time permits).
- b. No score will be kept (there are no winners or losers).
- c. Coaches should have a set batting order to ensure that all players bat during their offensive half of the inning.
- d. Offensive coaches will stand in the first base and third base coach's boxes to instruct the players.
- e. All players will play in the field during their defensive half of the inning.
- f. Players and coaches from each team will shake hands at the end of the game.

2. Pitching:

- a. Managers/Coaches will pitch to their own team. Coaches will pitch from the pitching mound. or may move closer to the batters box if coach feels it's necessary. It is strongly recommended that the coach pitch from his knees. A player should be limited to 5 pitches. If the player does not get a hit they can go to first base (a batting tee may also be used at the coach's discretion).

3. Batting:

- a. Each player must bat during their offensive half the inning.
- b. Players **MUST NOT** throw the bat after hitting the ball, it should be dropped.
- c. Managers/Coaches are to set a batting order to insure that each player bats.
- d. Coaches will either use a tee or will throw 5 pitches and there are no balls and strikes called.
- e. A player may hit off a tee or they may walk to first base if they do not hit the coach's pitches. A child must be given every opportunity to hit the ball into play.
- f. Only one player is allowed to be "on deck" with a bat and helmet - **ALL** other players must remain in the bench area. **(This is a safety issue and MUST be enforced.)**
- g. All players that are batting, on deck or on the bases must be wearing a helmet.

4. Ball in play:

- a. Once ball is hit into play (foul balls don't count in the air or on the ground) the player will run to first base (even if the ball is hit 3 feet out of the batters box).
- b. There will be NO outs even if the player is thrown out at first base.
- c. As each batter hits during the inning players will move up one base at a time. When the last batter comes up and hits the ball that batter and all of the base runners will come home.
- d. There will be no doubles, triples, or home runs regardless of how far the ball is hit.
- e. There is NO stealing or leading.

5. Fielding

- a. Coaches should stand in the field with their team in order to provide fielding instructions.
- b. Rotate players around to different positions at the start of every inning (coach's decision). Players should be at a position where the coach is confident that the player will not get hurt. **Example:** Do not put a player on first base if that player cannot catch well. Rotate players at first base so that every player that can catch has an opportunity. Do not keep players at the same position for every inning of a game.
- c. Before every pitch is thrown have players get into their ready positions with hand and glove ready and watching the batter.
- d. The focus of fielding at this level should be on catching the ball and making **accurate** throws to first base in very a **timely** manner in order to make an out.
- e. As the season progresses coaches should be teaching fielders to make plays at all bases.

6. Mid Point of season (Determined by U7 commissioner)

- a. Tee should no longer be used
- b. Mid way thru the season simulated games should be played.
 - Everyone still remains in the batting order
 - Coach still pitches. As outlined above.
 - Outs will be enforced. When a player is thrown out at a base they will return to the bench.
 - In this format every batter will still bat no matter how many outs are recorded.

Approved by the 4/24 Email Vote by SLL Board of Directors.

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Farm League

1. Rules of Game:

- a. Length of game - as many innings as can be played in 1 hour 20 minutes (remember that games **MUST** end 10 minutes before the next game starts).
- b. No score will be kept and there are no winners or losers.
- c. Innings will last until there are 3 outs or until 4 runs are scored. The maximum number of players that can bat per inning is 9.
- d. Coaches will have a set batting order to ensure that all players are given an opportunity to bat at least twice during a game.
- e. Offensive coaches will stand in the first base and third base coach's box to instruct the players.
- f. All players will play in the field during their defensive half of the inning. Defensive coaches will provide instructions from the bench. (Try not to have any coaches on the field.)
- g. Play complete innings to ensure that each team gets the same number of at bats. If time is running short end the game rather than starting the first half of an inning.
- h. Players and coaches from each team will shake hands at the end of the game.

2. Pitching:

- a. To start the season coaches will pitch.
- b. At mid season (**date to be approved by the U7 Commissioner**) coaches may start using pitchers. Prior to this time coaches may start working with the players during practices to determine which players can reach home plate.
 - Players will pitch from either 46'-0" or 36'-0" (Coaches discretion).
 - **NOTE:** Only players that are able to reach the plate will be selected to pitch during games.
 - Players will pitch 1 inning
 - The key objective is to develop a pitchers ability to reach the plate and to allow batters to get used to non-coach pitching
- c. The offensive coach will stand behind the pitcher (safety reasons).
- d. The player will throw a maximum of 3 pitches to each batter. If the batter has not hit within the 3 pitches the offensive coach will step in and pitch to the batter.

3. Batting:

- a. Each player must bat at least twice during a game.
- b. Players **MUST NOT** throw the bat after hitting the ball, it should be dropped.
- c. Managers/Coaches are to set a batting order to ensure that each player bats.
- d. Players cannot strike out or walk.
- e. Only one player is allowed to be "on deck" with a bat and helmet - **ALL** other players must remain in the bench area. **(This is a safety issue and MUST be enforced.)**
- f. All players that are batting, on deck or on the bases must be wearing a helmet.

4. Ball in play:

- a. Players can hit singles, doubles, triples or home runs. Players will be limited to one base on an overthrow at first base. No runner will advance at this time.
- b. First and third base coaches will provide base running instructions.
- c. When a player is thrown out at a base they will return to the bench.
- d. All outs, fair and foul ball calls will be agreed to by the coaches of both teams.
- e. Players cannot steal or lead.

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5. Fielding

- a. A catcher will be used during all games. The catcher **MUST** be wearing catching equipment and a protective cup. A coach may stand in the area behind the catcher in order to catch passed balls (**must be at a safe distance that will ensure that foul balls and bats will not hit them**). All players play in the field.
- b. Positions played will be the following:
 - Limit to 7 players playing the infield
 1. Catcher
 2. First base
 3. Between first and second base
 4. Second base
 5. Short stop
 6. Between short stop and third base
 7. Third base
 - Pitcher (only one) - Do not have two players playing around the pitchers mound.
 - 5 outfielders
- b. Before every pitch is thrown have players get into their ready positions with hand and glove ready and watching the batter.
- c. The focus of fielding at this level should be on catching the ball and making **accurate** and **timely** throws in order to make outs at the appropriate base. Coaches should be providing instruction on where to make plays and should begin to help players develop an understanding of how these decision are made (i.e.: closest base, force plays, etc).