

Baseball versus Fastpitch Differences

There are a few rule differences between Little League Baseball and FastPitch. The differences are pitching, what runners are allowed to do when the pitcher has the ball in the 8 Foot Circle, and bunting.

Pitching

1. The pitcher must present the ball in front for 1 to 10 seconds.
2. Both feet must be within the width of the pitchers plate. The non-pivot foot can be on or behind the pitchers plate. The pivot foot can drag forward as the pitch is being delivered. Hopping or lifting the pivot foot before the release is illegal.
3. Once the pitching motion begins, it cannot be paused. Once the hands separate, they cannot be brought back together again (in such a way that the ball cannot be seen). The ball can pass the hip once going away from the plate. The ball can pass the hip either once going forward or twice if the pitcher is using a windmill motion.
4. Fastpitch must be delivered underhand with the hand below or closer to the body than the elbow.
5. Any breaking of the pitch rules is called an **Illegal Pitch**. An illegal pitch is called a ball. If the batter hits an illegal pitch, the offense may choose to accept the play and ignore the illegal pitch. If the batter and all runners advance one or more bases, the illegal pitch is ignored.

What runners can do when the pitcher has the ball in the 8 Foot Circle

When the pitcher obtains possession of the ball within the circle, all runners off of a base must continue in the same direction or immediately (within 1 or 2 seconds) change direction and then continue in the new direction to reach a base. If the pitcher makes a play on the runner (starting a throwing motion), then the runner is free to stop, continue, change direction, or any combination. Runners on a base must stay on the base. Allow runners to change which foot is in contact with the base.

Examples:

- A batter draws a walk. The ball is returned to the pitcher in the circle. The batter/runner reaches first and without stopping may continue on towards second base. If the runner stops between first and second, the runner is out. If the runner pauses within a step of first and then returns to first base, ignore the violation. Just like in baseball, runners may overrun first after a walk.
- A runner is stopped between bases when the ball is returned to the pitcher in the circle. The runner has one to two seconds to decide which direction to go and once in motion, may not stop until reaching a base.
- A runner is between second and third when the ball is returned to the pitcher in the circle. Another runner is on third. The runner between second and third begins to advance towards third and then changes direction to return to second. This runner would be out.

Any runner leaving early (before the pitch reaches the plate in minors, before leaving the pitchers hand in majors and above) is out. **Time! No Pitch!** is called. The runner that left early is out.

Bunting

Bunting has one simple difference: If the batter does not pull the bat away before the pitch reaches the plate, it is a strike.

For minors only

When the bases are loaded and a batter reaches a count with 4 balls, the batting team's coach replaces the pitcher. The strike count continues. Each pitch from the coach is a strike unless fouled when there are two strikes. So, if the batter reaches a count of four balls and one strike, the coach will pitch up to two pitches to the batter (unless the last pitch is hit foul).