

D10 Fall Ball Registration Interlock Guidelines

Purpose

Fall Ball is designed to emphasize **player development** and provide athletes with a **preview of the next level of play** in a more instructional environment.

The primary goals are:

- Building **balanced teams** rather than stacking rosters to dominate.
 - Encouraging **confidence and growth** through game play—especially for younger players moving up divisions.
 - Fostering a fun, developmental, and inclusive experience.
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Game Scheduling

Games shall only be scheduled on Saturdays for all divisions. Due to the short season and rapid decline in daylight, there will be no planned makeup games so coaches should be encouraged to play every scheduled game as weather and safety permits. If field capacity becomes an issue, and you have a field with lights, games can be scheduled for Friday nights if required, but Saturdays should be the priority.

League Age Determination

For Fall Ball, players' **league age is based on the following spring season** (next year's league age).

- **Example:** A player who is League Age 8 in the current spring is considered League Age 9 for fall.

Note: (Only applies if you open registration prior to sports connect releasing the news season)

Little League and Sports Connect typically does not release the next season's league age chart until July. Therefore:

- In **Sports Connect** registration, you must select the same season played that spring and **manually adjust the birth year by 1** year to reflect the next league year.
- This adjustment ensures players are slotted into the correct age groups for Fall Ball purposes.

Report Limitation: (Only applies if you open registration prior to sports connect releasing the news season)

Since the prior season will be selected, reports in Sports Connect will not calculate the little league age correctly.

Team Formation

Recommended Methods:

- **Random Assignment Method** (Preferred Method)
Younger divisions should use random assignments to create fair and fun experiences.

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- To help with distributing pitchers with this method, it is recommended a question is added in registration asking about pitching experience. Responses should then be utilized to distribute pitchers across all teams
- **Evaluation Method** (Not Preferred)
If evaluation method is utilized, Teams should be formed using a combination of **player age and evaluation scores** to distribute players across teams ensuring a balance of skill and age across all teams
- When there are not enough players to form a complete team within the correct division age ranges, you should prioritize moving those players up a level and not move players down while equally distributing the younger players
 - If the younger players would pose a safety risk, consider combining with local leagues or chose not to build the team

Discouraged Practices:

- **Avoid using the draft method or reforming Spring teams** in Fall Ball.
- Avoid signing up an entire select team. (Juniors and Seniors would be the exception)
- The goal is to give players exposure to new teammates and coaching styles while promoting development throughout the district.

Recommended League Age Groupings by Division (for Interlocking Play)

To promote **player safety** and reduce wide age gaps, especially during division transitions, use the following guidelines:

Baseball:

- Tee Ball: Ages 4–6
- Single A (Coach Pitch): Ages 6–7
- AA (Player Pitch Intro): Ages 8–9
- AAA: Ages 10–11
- Majors: Ages 11–12
- 50/70 Intermediate: Ages 12–13
- *Juniors: Ages 13–14
- Seniors: Ages 15–16

Softball:

- Tee Ball: Ages 4–6
- Minors B (Coach Pitch): Ages 6–8
- Minors A (Player Pitch): Ages 8–11
- Majors: Ages 11–12
- *Juniors: Ages 13–14
- Seniors: Ages 15–16

***Special note:** a 15 year old may play down on a juniors team with no special waiver; however, that player will be unable to pitch. Each team should limit the number of 15 year olds to a maximum of (2)