

## Serra Little League Levels of Play

---

### Overview of Divisions

Serra Little League has 8 divisions: Challenger, T-Ball, Pioneer, Farm, Minors, Majors, Juniors and Seniors. The Divisions are aligned by age as follows. Your Little League age is your age on April 30<sup>th</sup> of the current year.

Division	Primarily for Ages	My also Include Ages
Challenger	4-18	Up to 22
T-Ball	4-5	
Pioneer	6-7	8
Farm	7-9	
Minors	9-10	8, 11
Majors	11-12	10
Juniors	13-14	
Seniors	15-16	14

Challenger is a new division at Serra, and is offered to enable boys and girls with physical and mental challenges, ages 4-18, or up to age 22 if still enrolled in high school, to enjoy the game of baseball.

Players not in the Challenger division play in their primary age division. For placement in Majors and Minors, a draft process ultimately determines which players play at which level. If you feel strongly that you belong in another division than your primary age division, please contact the Player Representative.

<b>4 Year Olds</b>	All 4 year olds play in T-Ball
<b>5 Year Olds</b>	All 5 year olds play in T-Ball
<b>6 Year Olds</b>	All 6 year olds play in Pioneer
<b>7 Year Olds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most 7 year olds will play in Pioneer</li> <li>Some skilled 7 year olds may play-up to Farm</li> </ul>
<b>8 Year Olds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most 8 year olds will play in Farm</li> <li>A few skilled 8 year olds may try out for Minors</li> <li>8 year olds who are still developing skills may play in Pioneer, at parent request</li> </ul>
<b>9 Year Olds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9 year olds will be split between Minors and Farm divisions</li> <li>9 year olds who wish to play in Minors must try-out</li> <li>The draft process will determine which players are placed in the Farm or Minors divisions. Note that in accordance with Little League rules, all 10, 11, and 12 year olds must be placed in Minor or Major Divisions, unless a parent requests a lower division. This means 8 year olds and 9 year olds will only be placed in Minors, regardless of ability, if space allows.</li> </ul>
<b>10 Year Olds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most 10 year olds will play in Minors</li> <li>A few skilled 10 year olds may try out for Majors</li> <li>Parents of 10's who wish to have their child removed from consideration for Majors should indicate that at the tryout check in by writing "minors only" when they sign in.</li> </ul>

<b>11 Year Olds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most 11 year olds will play in Majors</li> <li>• A few 11 year olds who are still developing their skills may play in Minors</li> </ul>
<b>12 Year Olds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most 12 year olds will play in the Majors division</li> <li>• A 12 year old may only play in Minors at parent request and league decision.</li> </ul>
<b>13-14 Year Olds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All 13 and 14 year olds play in Juniors or Seniors</li> </ul>
<b>15-16 Year Olds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All 15 and 16 year olds play in Seniors</li> </ul>

A quick summary of the differences between the different divisions is provided below

	<b>Pitching</b>	<b>Hitting</b>	<b>Defense</b>	<b>Games</b>	<b>Practices</b>
<b>T-Ball</b>	Fixed Tee,  No strikeouts,  No walks	Every player bats once every inning	All players play defense, and rotate through all positions	1 per week  3 innings, about 1 hour	1 per week (about 1 hour)
<b>Pioneer</b>	Coach  No strikeouts,  No walks	Every player bats once every inning	All players play defense, and rotate through all positions	1 per week  3 innings, about 1 hour	1 per week (about 1 hour)
<b>Farm</b>	Player/Coach Strikeouts, No walks	Continuous order – every player bats	All players play defense, Infield / outfield play balanced ~50/50	1 or 2 per week Up to 6 innings, about 1.5 hours	1 or 2 per week (only 1, if there were 2 games)
<b>Minors</b>	Player pitch Strikeouts and Walks	Continuous order	9 players on defense, No player sits out more than 2 innings per game	Usually 2 per week Up to 6 innings, about 1 hr 45 min.	About 2 per week (1.5 to 2 hours)
<b>Majors</b>	Player pitch Strikeouts and Walks	Continuous or Substitution, depending on local rules	9 players on defense, Minimum play 6 outs, try to play defense at least half the game.	Usually 2 per week Up to 6 innings, about 2 hours.	Usually 2 per week (about 2 hours)
<b>Juniors</b>	Player pitch Strikeouts and Walks	Substitution per the LL Green Book; minimum one at bat	9 players on defense, Minimum play 6 outs	Usually 2 games per week with one on Saturday; 7 innings; no time limit	Depends on coach, but up to 3-4 practices per week
<b>Seniors</b>	Player pitch Strikeouts and Walks	Substitution per the LL Green Book; minimum one at bat	9 players on defense, Minimum play 6 outs	Usually 2 games per week with one on Saturday; 7 innings; no time limit	Depends on coach, but up to 3-4 practices per week

More detail on rules of play and expectations are in the following sections.

### **Challenger**

- This is a new division at Serra and is offered to enable boys and girls with physical and mental challenges, ages 4-18, or up to age 22 if still enrolled in high school, to enjoy the game of baseball.
- Structure of this division is flexible and will be created based on the number and ability of the players.
- Teams will likely be set up according to abilities, rather than age.
- Games can be played as tee ball games, coach pitch, player pitch, or a combination of the three.

### **T-Ball**

- Primary Ages: 4-5
- Introduction to proper mechanics for throwing, catching, fielding and batting.
- T-ball Low-Compression "Level 1" Game Baseball with flexiball® Core
- Players hit off a stationary tee.
- Game consists of 3 innings and is usually completed within 1 hour.
- No score is kept.
- Each player bats once each inning.
- No outs and all batters reach base.
- Players will rotate through all positions.
- Games are 3 innings or about one hour
- 2 "baseball sessions" and may consist of two practices or one practice and one game (e.g. 1 practice during week and game on Saturday).
- Practices are usually 1 hour.

### **Pioneer**

- Primary Ages: 6-7; May include 8 year olds per parent request
- Emphasis on development of proper mechanics for throwing, catching, fielding and batting.
- T-ball Low-Compression "Level 1" Game Baseball with flexiball® Core used
- Game consists of 3 innings and usually is completed within 1 hour.
- Coach pitches in game and there are no strikeouts and no walks. A tee may be used if player is struggling to hit.
- No score is kept.
- Each player bats once each inning.
- No outs and all batters reach base.
- Players will rotate through all positions they can safely play.
- Two baseball sessions and may consist of two practices or one practice and one game (e.g. 1 practice during week and game on Saturday).
- Practices are usually 1 hour.

### **Farm**

- Primary Ages: 7-9
- No tryouts
- Continued emphasis player development and proper mechanics.
- Players learn offensive and defensive situations.
- Players begin playing pitcher and catcher positions.
- Athletic protectors required for catchers and recommended for all players.
- Baseball is low-Compression "Level 5" Medium-Firm Game Baseball with flexiball® Core
- Games will have scores kept and are played on Little League 60 foot diamond.

- Games usually reach the 1.5 hour time limit before reaching the maximum 6 innings. Games may go over 1.5 hour time limit to complete an inning already started prior to time limit.
- 10 players on defense
- Wins and losses are not recorded and no standings.
- Coach pitch before Spring break and player pitch introduced thereafter. Pitch count rules apply.
- Continuous batting order.
- Strikes are called and batter is out on strike 3.
- No walks. If player pitcher throws 4 balls, coach is brought in to pitch until ball is put into play or an out is made.
- No stealing and no bunting.
- Players will practice all positions during the season. Playing time may be weighted to put players into positions in which they can succeed or can safely play position. Infield/outfield playing time shall be equal over the season, except where there are safety considerations.
- 3 “baseball sessions” (games + practices) per week, typically either 2 mid-week practices and 1 game on Saturday or 1 mid-week practice, 1 mid-week game and 1 game on Saturday. Some teams add a 4<sup>th</sup> baseball session such as batting cage practice.
- Practices are usually 1 hour and 30 minutes.

### **Minors**

- Primary age: 9-10, 8-9 year old based on tryouts and available slots. 8 year also requires a parental waiver.
- Teams of 12 players are formed by draft, based on tryouts.
- Focus is on readying players to play in Majors. Player development continues to emphasize proper mechanics, along with introducing more advanced offensive/defensive team strategies and skills. A stronger emphasis is placed on developing pitching and catching skills.
- Athletic protectors required for all players.
- All games are played on Little League 60 foot diamond. Games usually reach the 1 hour 45 minute time limit before reaching the maximum 6 innings. Games may go over 1 hour 45 minute time limit to complete an inning already started prior to time limit.
- Only players pitch. Walks are allowed, and pitch count rules apply.
- Stealing is allowed (after the ball crosses the plate). Steals of first (dropped third strike) are not allowed. Bunting is allowed
- Continuous batting order. All players bat.
- Only 9 players play defense every inning. Defensive playing time may not be equal, but all players must meet the minimum defensive play rule; No player shall sit in the dugout for more than two innings per game on defense, and these innings should not be consecutive.
- 3-4 “baseball sessions” (games + practices) per week.
- Practices are usually 1 hour and 30 minutes.
- Scores and Win-Loss records are kept
- End of season tournament determines the Minor Division Champion that advances to District 44 Tournament of Champions. Tournament seeding is based on random draw – regular-season Won-Loss records are not used.

### **Majors**

- Primary Age: 11-12, 9-10 year old based on tryouts and available slots. 8 year also requires a parental waiver.
- Teams of 12 players are formed draft, based on tryouts.

- Player development focuses on advanced individual skills and advanced team offensive/defensive strategies
- Athletic protectors required for all players.
- Games are played on Little League 60 foot diamond. Games are 6 innings and take about 2 hours to complete.
- Pitch count rules apply to protect arms of pitchers.
- Stealing is allowed (after the ball crosses the plate). Steals of first are allowed on a dropped third strike. Bunting is allowed.
- Batting order may be continuous or limited to 9 with substitutions, depending on local rules.
- Players should not expect equal playing time on defense. Defensive play depends on local rules. Where possible, Serra attempts to have every player play at least half the game on defense. Minimum defensive play is 6 consecutive outs (e.g. two innings, per game).
- 4 or more “baseball sessions” (games + practices) per week.
- Practices are usually 2 hours.
- End of season tournament determines the Majors Division Champion that advances to District 44 Tournament of Champions. Tournament seeding is based on regular-season Won-Loss records.

### **Juniors**

- Primary Age: 13-14 based on tryouts and available slots.
- Teams of approximately 13 players are formed by tryout and draft.
- Player development and learning situations continue to compete at the Junior Level.
- Athletic protectors required for all players.
- Games will have scores kept and are played on 90 foot diamond.
- Games are 7 innings and take about 2 hours to complete, but there is no time limit.
- Scores are kept, wins and losses are recorded, and standings posted.
- Scheduling and posting of results is done at the District Level.
- Pitch count rules apply to protect arms of pitchers.
- Lead offs and stealing allowed and drop third strike rule applies.
- Batting order is limited to 9 with substitutions per the LL Rule Book for Regular Season Play.
- Mandatory play consists of – minimum of 6 consecutive outs on defense AND one at bat.
- Positions played will not be equal. Some positions played will be based on demonstration of necessary skills required for that position.
- 5-6 “baseball sessions” (games + practices) per week.
- Practices are usually 2 hours.
- Since the schedule and standings are managed by the District, the District 44 Tournament of Champions consists of the top 8 teams finishing within the District (so more than one team from a given league can qualify for the TOC).

### **Seniors**

- Primary Age: 15-16 based on tryouts and available slots. A 14 year may play at this level based on skill.
- Teams of approximately 13 players are formed by tryout and draft.
- Player development and learning situations continue to compete at the Senior Level.
- Athletic protectors required for all players.
- Games will have scores kept and are played on 90 foot diamond.
- Games are 7 innings and take about 2 hours to complete, but there is no time limit.
- Scores are kept, wins and losses are recorded, and standings posted.
- Scheduling, and posting of results is done at the District Level.

- Pitch count rules apply to protect arms of pitchers.
- Lead offs and stealing allowed and drop third strike rule applies.
- Batting order is limited to 9 with substitutions per the LL Rule Book for Regular Season Play.
- Mandatory play consists of – minimum of 6 consecutive outs on defense AND one at bat.
- Positions played will not be equal. Some positions played will be based on demonstration of necessary skills required for that position.
- 5-6 “baseball sessions” (games + practices) per week.
- Practices are usually 2 hours.
- The number of teams in the TOC will be determined by the number of teams participating within the Seniors Division. Hence, the District 44 Tournament of Champions will consist of the top X teams finishing within the District (more than one team from a given league can qualify for the TOC, but X will be determined by the District once it is determined how many Seniors teams are participating).

**Contacts for more information**

Division	Email
Challenger, T-Ball, Pioneer, Farm	playeragent.lower@serralittleleague.com
Minor and Major	playeragent.upper@serralittleleague.com
Junior and Senior	playeragent.juniors@serralittleleague.com