

ULLL Pre-Game Routines / Warm-ups Expectations

Updated: March 2024

Every year, managers, coaches and spectators ask the ULLL Board about our expectations on warm-ups, field prep, etc. To standardize things, here's ULLL's policy on pre-game routines and warm-up expectations:

The Home Team is responsible for lining / preparing the field before the Away team's time for taking the field (i.e., at least 60 mins before Kid Pitch games, 35 mins before CP / T-Ball games). Field prep means:

- At minimum, baselines / batters boxes / pitchers mounds should be raked and the field should be lined
- Additionally, fields with tractors should be chain dragged prior to play, please do NOT drive over mounds. Mounds should only be raked and never dragged. Please also be mindful of dragging over home plate.
- For Kid Pitch Division Games (Spring Season: Majors / AAA / AA; Fall Season: Fall Majors / Fall Minors/Fall Single A), the Away Team can take the field 60 mins before the game starts; For CP / TB division games, the Away Team can take the field 35 mins before game starts.

Home Teams will always occupy the 1st Base Dugout (regardless of field), and Away Teams will always occupy the 3rd Base Dugout.

For fields with batting cages, field warm-up will be as follows:

- Each team will have ~25 mins to use the batting cage:
 - The home team will have access to the batting cage from ~60 mins before game time until ~35 mins before game time
 - The away team will have access to the batting cage from ~35 mins before game time to ~10 mins before game time
 - Note: It is expected that teams will start to use the batting cage ~60 mins before game time, even if there is an on-going game at the field so as to not delay the follow-on games. Additionally, with the exception of the teams playing in the follow-on game, teams not playing at the field should not use the batting cages at the field without the expressed permission of the two team's playing at that field.

For Infield time, for Kid Pitch Divisions (Spring: Majors / AAA / AA; Fall: Fall Majors / Fall Minors/Fall Single A):

- Each team will have the field for ~25 mins before the game:
 - The away team will have access to the field from ~60 mins before game time to ~35 mins before game time
 - The home team will have access to the field from ~35 mins before game time until ~10 mins before game time
- ~10 mins before the game both teams must exit the field so that the pre-game plate meeting can occur and ensure that the game starts on time.
- The Plate Meeting will occur just after teams exit the field, and the Home Team can start its infield warm-up for the first inning 5 mins before game start

For Infield time, for CP / TB (both Spring / Fall) Divisions:

- Each team will have the field for ~15 mins before the game:
 - The away team will have access to the field from ~35 mins before game time to ~20 mins before game time
 - The home team will have access to the field from ~20 mins before game time until ~5 mins before game time
- ~5 mins before the game both teams must exit the field so that the game starts on time.
- The Home Team can start its infield warm-up for the first inning 5 mins before game start.

Lastly, if there are back-to-back games...

- First, recognize whether there are follow-on games after your team's game...
- **All** teams at the field (to include those playing in the preceding game and those playing in the follow-on game) should provide volunteers to help prepare the field where there are back-to-back games at a field.
- Likewise, teams in preceding games should **immediately** clear the dugouts and conduct their post-game meetings outside the field / fence line so the incoming teams can set-up and prepare for their game
- Lastly, if teams aren't using the outfield for warmups, let both teams warm up in the outfield throwing, etc. in this scenario.

Two additional notes:

- 1) We encourage **all** teams to start games a little earlier when possible, especially on Saturdays when there are back-to-back games.
- 2) Routine field maintenance is mandatory for all teams – so, after each game (and practice), teams should rake base paths / batters boxes / pitchers mounds (and dragged for fields with tractors) in preparation for follow-on teams / field use.

Again, these expectations are being provided to all ULLL teams to ensure that everyone understands the league's warm-up policies to ensure that there is an orderly process before game start. If you have questions, please ask.

The ULLL Board thanks you for your consideration and adherence to this policy.