



HOW TO KEEP SCORE

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Keeping score in Little League is important, as it helps us not only identify (and be able to accurately recount later) what happened during the game, but it also helps us keep track of who has played which positions and gives you more information to help you manager your team.

There are many different ways to keep a book, and different people may have different notations that work for them. That's fine, as long as you are able to go back later and make sense of what happened during each player's at bat. With that in mind, the following is excerpted from BaseballScorecard.com. Don't worry if you've never done it before and it looks like Greek. Once you do it a few times you'll get the hang of it.

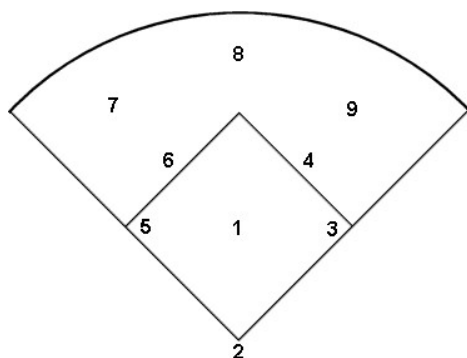
Getting Started

Game Data

Once you've familiarized yourself with the scorecard layout, it is time to start filling it in. Normally at the top you'll find places to log information such as team names, date, and time. Some scorecards also contain spaces for location, temperature, weather, team win-loss records, and several other statistics. Some cards will even provide space for umpire and coach names. Fill in as much as you want, but be sure to fill in the team names, date, and time. If you don't, you won't know what game you were scoring when you find the scorecard in the bottom of a drawer a few months later.

Player Data

Next, find where you'll be entering player data. This will be a grid with inning numbers and other designations running across the top and spaces for the players' names, numbers and positions down the side. Fill these in when the batting order is announced. Before entering the player positions, you should be aware of one standard way of recording them. Instead of alphabetic abbreviations, most people assign numbers to the positions. The standard position numbers are shown below.



- 1 Pitcher
 - 2 Catcher
 - 3 1st Base
 - 4 2nd Base
 - 5 3rd Base
 - 6 Shortstop
 - 7 Left Field
 - 8 Center Field
 - 9 Right Field
- Designated hitter is represented by "DH"

These numbers are easy to remember if you start with the pitcher and then work your way around the bases. The only hitch is the shortstop. You would think that the numbers for shortstop and third base should be reversed. One explanation that I've read was that the shortstop was not originally considered part of the infield. It was originally part of the outfield as a "short fielder." I don't know if this is true or not, but it does explain the number system.

Finally, you'll notice an area where you can register the statistical totals. Some of these, such as runs and hits, are totaled after each half-inning. Others, such as player and team totals, are tallied after the game has been played. We'll discuss this section later.

Scoring

Scorekeeper Shorthand

Scorekeeping is accomplished by a sort of "shorthand," which is basically a combination of position numbers and abbreviations. Refer to the "Scoring Abbreviation" page to see some common numbers and abbreviations used throughout a game.

Batter Up!

Let's see what we need to do as each player has his turn at bat. We'll confine ourselves to the top of the lineup.

#	Player	Pos	1
9	Smith, J.	8	◇
	Sub		
29	Lawson, A.	4	◇
	Sub		
17	Henry, D.	2	◇
	Sub		
33	Jones, T.	9	◇
	Sub		

If you've familiarized yourself with the position numbers, you'll see that the center fielder, second baseman, catcher, and right fielder are the first batters up.

Smith singles to center field. A lot of pre-printed scorecards will have a diamond representing the field in the middle of each box. To mark Smith's single, we'll darken the line from home to first and place a 1B next to it. I also like to draw a line to show where he hit the ball.

9	Smith, J.	8	
	Sub		

Lawson's up next and he strikes out swinging. A "K" is placed in his box to indicate that he struck out. If it was a called strike three, a "Kc" or a backwards "K" would be placed in the box. A circled "1" is also placed in the box to indicate

29	Lawson, A.	4	
	Sub		

that it was out number one.

Henry is batting next, but while he is batting Smith manages to steal second. The line from first to second should be darkened and an "SB" along with a number to indicate who was at bat is written to indicate that Smith stole second during Henry's plate appearance. I like to use the player's jersey number for this. It makes it easier for me to keep track of things. Other people use the player's position number. So, I could have just as easily written "SB2" instead of "SB17".

9	Smith, J.	8	
	Sub		

Henry manages to draw a walk. The line from first to second is darkened and either a "BB" or "W" is written to indicate the walk. I prefer to use BB for "Base

17	Henry, D.	2	
	Sub		

on Balls."

Jones is now at bat and hits it to the short stop who tosses it to the second baseman who tags the bag to get Henry out. The second baseman then throws to first to get Jones out. A classic 6-4-3 double play, which is what is written in Jones' box. Of course, both outs must be recorded. So a line is drawn halfway between first and second in Henry's box and is marked with a '33' to indicate that Jones was the batter. A circled '2' is also entered to indicate that Henry was the second out.

17	Henry, D.	2	
	Sub		

In Jones' box a 6-4-3 is written along with a 'DP' for the double play and a circled '3' to indicate the third out. A 'DP' could also have been entered in Henry's box to indicate that he was caught up in the double play as well. One other method is to draw a line connecting the two boxes.

33	Jones, T.	9	DP 6-4-3 ③
	Sub		

The '6-4-3' above is an example of how all players who were involved in putting the runner out are given credit.

Since this is the third out, a slash is drawn across the lower right-hand corner of Jones' box to indicate the end of the inning. This is what the scorecard should look like after the first half-inning.

#	Player	Pos	1
9	Smith, J.	8	SB17 1B
	Sub		
29	Lawson, A.	4	K ①
	Sub		
17	Henry, D.	2	33 ② BB
	Sub		
33	Jones, T.	9	DP 6-4-3 ③
	Sub		/

Take a Swing

Hopefully, the above examples will give you an idea about how scorekeeping is done. Give it a try next time you go to out to the ballgame. Also, don't be afraid to experiment. What works best for others may not be best for you. I am always open to suggestion and would appreciate any that are offered. So, if you come up with something that works well, I would be glad to hear about it.

Substitutions

Later in the game.....

I've never seen a game where at least one substitution was not made. There are many reasons to replace a starter: pitchers get tired, batters aren't hitting, players get injured, someone's ejected, or the manager makes a strategic move. Whatever the reason, sooner or later you're going to have to mark a substitution on your scorecard.

So, how do you do this? It depends on the substitution.

For batter substitutions, I draw a line between the last scorebox of the previous batter and the first scorebox of the new batter.

#	Player	Pos		8
9	Smith, J.	8	Sub	K
29	Lawson, A.	4	Sub	①
3	Kitt, W.	PH		

If the new batter is a pinch hitter, place "PH" in the position box. If he is taking a position in the field, use the normal position numbers. If players are moved around in the field, you'll want to show that on your scorecard. Usually, I make a note by the player's name indicating the move.

When a substitution is made for the pitcher, place a line under the score box of the last batter the previous pitcher faced.

After the Game

Back in the dugout.....

Now that the game is over, you can tabulate all the data you've compiled. If you haven't been keeping up with it during the game, now is the time to add up the statistics for each inning; runs, hits, errors, passed balls, and men left on base. You can also add up the data for each pitcher; innings pitched, batters faced, strikeouts, walks, hits, runs, earned runs, wild pitches, batter hit, and balks.

Professionally printed scorecards may contain several fields to tally a batter's performance; at bats, runs, hits, singles, doubles, triples, home runs, runs batted in and others. It's up to you to decide how much you want to do.