



Major League Rules

(Updated: 2016)



Personal Conduct:

- Umpires are NOT to tolerate inappropriate behavior.
- Coaches, players, or parents are to leave the park if ejected.
- 2nd ejection, that person is expelled from the league.
- Umpires and coaches are expected to report the name of any ejections to Major League Commissioner.
- An umpire's call is **FINAL**.
- No one is permitted to argue balls and strikes.
- **COACHES** are responsible for the conduct of themselves, their players, and fans/parents supporting their team. Talk to them before the season. Neither the league nor they want to be a story in the Times.
- If there is a problem with an umpire, please contact the Major League Coordinator or the Umpire Coordinator.

Game Guidelines:

- Games will begin on time.
- Daylight and weather permitting, games consist of 6 innings. Four innings must be completed to qualify an official game.
- Mercy Rule- The game will end in the event a team is leading by 15 runs after four (4) innings (3 ½ if the home team is ahead).
- Games may be called at anytime by the umpire, depending on the conditions.
 - The decision to call a game due to darkness is the umpires call. The decision is final and will not be debated.
 - During the first sign of lightning or sound of thunder, all players will be removed from the field immediately until it is safe to return **30 minutes** following the last sighting of lightning/sound of thunder.
 - The decision to return lies with the two head coaches and the umpire. If anyone of those three objects to continuing or starting the game, the game will be cancelled and rescheduled at a later date.
 - The rescheduled game will be determined by both coaches, in coordination with the Major League Coordinator.
 - Field conditions following weather- The decision to **START** a game after a weather event will be decided collectively between the Umpire and the Head Coaches. If any two of the three agree that the field is suitable for play then the game will proceed.
- Home teams have the responsibility of maintaining the official game score. Teams will provide results of games (wins/losses) to the Major League Coordinator for official record keeping.
- Coaches are highly encouraged to keep their team portions of the Major League web page updated and current.

On-field Rules:

- Unless specified herein, otherwise, Major League Baseball game rules apply.

Game Management:



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- If available, 9 players must play in the field (3 outfielders).
A team may play with 7 players. If a team does not have 7 players, that team forfeits the game. A loss is recorded for the team that forfeits, a win is recorded for the opposing team.
- No player is permitted to sit a second (any part of a 2nd) inning while team is on defense until all players have sat out one full inning of defense.
- All players are to be inserted in the lineup. All players are to hit during their turn in that lineup. This applies even if they did not play in the field during that inning.
- Coaches are strongly encouraged to provide all players the opportunity to pitch and play other popular positions during the course of the season. Coaches do have discretion to only place players in positions they can handle. **Communicate this to the parents ahead of time.**
- Players who arrive late will be added to the lineup. If their place in the order has been passed, they are added to the end of the batting order.
- Once a player has either played in the field or taken a turn at the plate, they must continue batting in the order as originally placed.
- A player who leaves early will be skipped in the order with no penalty. Please remember this is a rec. league and we are here to allow kids to play ball. Communication between coaches and scorers regarding late arrivals, or players leaving early is vital.

Base Paths and Pitching Distances:

- Pitching mound is 48 feet from the back point of the plate.
- Bases are set at 70 feet (farthest base sleeve from the plate).

Equipment:

- Bat sizes are limited to nothing larger than 2-5/8" diameter. There are no weight restrictions. (updated 2/7/12)
- All players are required to wear a batting helmet containing a mask. This only applies to Finksburg Players.
- Athletic protection is recommended for all players. Athletic protection is **mandatory** for all catchers.
- All base coaches under the age of 18 shall be required to wear a protective helmet.

Pitching :

- Balks will be called. EACH PITCHER will be given two warnings by the umpire.
- Pitchers are limited to 3 **innings per game (has to be consecutive) or 75 pitches total and a maximum of 9 innings** per week (Starting Monday through Sunday).
- Pitchers must be removed if two (2) batters are hit by a pitch in the same inning.
- A ball that hits ground then the batter constitutes a hit batter.
- A pitcher is removed when manager makes 2nd trip to the same pitcher in the same inning. An injury timeout with a trip to the mound does not count toward this rule.
- Any pitch in an inning by a player constitutes an inning for that pitcher.



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- Once a pitcher is removed from a game, he/she **CAN NOT** re-enter that same game as a pitcher. **Reminder – both coaches must communicate pitch count to each other so as to not go over the 75 pitch rule.**

Batting:

- **All** players available are in the batting order.
Bunting is permitted.
- A bunt foul with 2 strikes is a 3rd strike.
- **Strike Zone** is batter's armpit to batter's knees, 2 inches inside and outside of plate. This is the zone instructed to the umpires during their training.

Catching:

- If the catcher drops or catches the 3rd strike, the batter is **OUT**.
- A courtesy runner may be used for the catcher to help speed up the game. The runner can be inserted for the catcher only with 2 outs. The runner **MUST** be the player who made the last out (either at bat or on the bases). The runner replaced on the bases **MUST** be the catcher in the following inning.

Fielding (Infield/Outfield):

- Infield fly rule is in effect.

Base Running (Stealing/Leading):

- Leading off is permitted on all bases except 3rd base.
- Stealing home is permitted; however, a player may not steal home on the pitch. The ball must have passed the plate before leaving third. Since there is no leading from 3rd, it will be the umpire's discretion as to whether a runner has left the base prior to the ball reaching the plate. A first violation will result in the runner be sent back to third. A second violation will result in the runner be called out.
- No stealing if the batting team is leading the game by 10 or more runs. Stealing may resume if the lead falls below ten (10) runs.

Base Running (Sliding):

- Must slide rule is not in effect.
- Runners are not required to slide. Legal sliding, does however, negate the possibility that a runner is called out or ejected from the game for accidental contact.
- A runner is out when he/she does not slide and his not sliding causes illegal contact and/or illegally alters the actions of a fielder in the immediate act of making a play, or on a force play, does not slide in a direct line between the bases. This is true even when the runner did not intend to cause contact.
- **NO** head first sliding or diving while running the bases; runners may go back into a base head first. Runners are declared out if they perform a head first slide while advancing to a base.
- Umpire's rule is final.



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- Plays at Home- Blocking of home plate while not in the act of fielding the ball is prohibited. If any field blocks home plate the runner shall avoid contact and be declared safe. The intent of this rule is to avoid contact at home plate. Umpires decision is final and will not be argued.

Overthrows:

- On an overthrow from the field that goes out of play, the base runner is entitled to 2 bases - the one they are going to plus one. Note that the position of the runner is made when the throw is made, not when the ball goes out of play.....this is the umpire's judgment as to the position of the runners when the throw is made.
Base runners are entitled to one base on a pickoff throw that goes out of play from the pitcher while ON the rubber. If the pitcher is off the rubber, or steps off the rubber he becomes an infielder and the runner would be entitled to two bases.
- If an overthrow occurs during a steal, the runners may advance at their own risk. This applies to runners on other bases as well.

NOTE: There are very few out of play overthrows in our leagues since the field is enclosed, so most overthrows will remain in play.

Trophies:

- Season champs (1st place only) will receive a large trophy.
- Tournament champs will receive a large trophy. The 2nd place team in the tournament will receive a trophy as well.