



## Minor League Rules

Updated: 2019

Notable changes in red



### Personal Conduct:

- Umpires are **NOT** to tolerate inappropriate behavior from coaches or fans.
- Coaches, players, or parents are to leave the park if ejected.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> ejection, person is subject to expulsion from the league, pending a review by the board.
- Umpires and coaches are expected to report the name of any ejections to Minor League Commissioner.
- An umpire's call is FINAL. Remind parents that many of the umpires may be teenagers and they are expected to treat them as if their own child were umpiring.
- 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 Minor League Coordinator or the Umpire Coordinator.
- Engagement between coaches and umpires will be limited to introductions prior to the start of each game. Verification of division rules should be communicated with the umpire(s) prior to the start of each game.
- Questioning or arguing call will not be allowed or tolerated from coaches, players and visitors. Visitors in attendance are prohibited from engaging with the umpires directly. This includes, but is not limited to, yelling, questioning calls, arguing, name calling, threats, etc. Violations of these rules could result in a first-time offense of (2) two game suspension.
- All "Personal Conduct" violations are subject to penalty as determined by the current Board of Directors.

### Game Guidelines:

- Games will begin on time. Early in the season, due to limited daylight, be ready to start early if at all possible.
- Daylight and weather permitting, games consist of six (6) innings. **Four** (4) innings must be completed to qualify an official game (3 ½ if the home team is ahead), unless called due to time limit. Games called due to time limit will be considered completed regardless of number of innings completed.
- Game Time Limits:
  - All games will be limited to a two-hour time limit. The game ends immediately ("drop-dead" time) at 2 hours total play time, regardless of the current inning or situation.
  - No inning may start after 1 hour 45 minutes of play has elapsed.
  - If the 6th inning is completed in a tie and the two-hour time limit has not been reached then the game will continue, but in no event shall any inning start after the two-hour time limit. If a winner is not declared, then the game will be ruled



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- a tie.
  - The completion of the prior inning constitutes the start of the next.
- Games may be called at any time 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 Minor League Coordinator.
  - 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 and pitch count. Teams will provide results of games (wins/losses) to the Minor League Coordinator for official record keeping.
- For games called due to weather, darkness or time.
  - If at least 4 innings are complete and a game is called after the top half of an inning with the visiting team leading, the game will be considered complete and the final score will revert to that of the preceding inning.
  - If at least 3 ½ innings are complete and a game is called with the home team winning the game will be official and the home team is declared the winner.
  - If a game is called prior to completing four innings (3 ½ if the home team is winning), the game will be suspended and rescheduled.

### Game Management:

- Unless specified herein, Call Ripken Baseball game rules apply.
- Only 9 players may play the field.
- A team may play with 8 players. If a team does not have 8 players, that team forfeits the game. If known ahead of time, the game will be rescheduled. Otherwise, a loss is recorded to the team that forfeits; a win is recorded for the opposing team.
- An inning consists of three outs or five runs (whichever comes first) during the first four innings of each game. The fifth and sixth innings are limited to three outs or ten runs (whichever comes first).
- If at the end of fourth inning a team is leading by fifteen or more runs, the “mercy rule” is triggered and the game is officially over.
- The “mercy rule” officially ends the game and all official scoring. Teams may



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elect to continue playing “for fun” until the time limit or six innings has been completed.

- No player is permitted to sit a second inning while 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 each week. Coaches do have discretion to only place players in positions they can handle. Teach them to play the more challenging positions. **Communicate this to the parents ahead oftime.**
- If a player arrives after the game has started, they are to be placed at the bottom of the lineup and take their turn batting in accordance to that "revised" batting order.
- Once a player has 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 46 feet from the back point of the plate.
- Bases are set at 60 feet (closest base sleeve to the plate).

### Equipment:

- Bats must be 2 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> or 2 <sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in diameter with either the USSSA Bat or 1.15 BPF label. All bats must be properly marked.
- Protective cups are strongly encouraged for all players. Protective cups are MANDATORY for catchers. Any player not wearing a cup may not catch in either practice or games.
- All base coaches under the age of 18 shall be required to wear a protective helmet.

### Pitching:

- No balks.
- Pitchers are limited to 3 consecutive innings per game or 60 pitches total and a maximum of 9 innings per week (Starting Monday through Sunday).
- Both coaches must communicate pitch count to each other so as to not go over the 60-pitch rule.
- Pitchers require the following rest between outings as follows:



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- If a player pitches 36-60 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest between outings must be observed. For example, a pitcher falling into this category who pitches on Monday may not pitch again until Thursday.
- If a player pitches 21-35 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar days of rest must be observed. For example, a pitcher falling into this category who pitches on Monday may not pitch again until Wednesday.
- If a player pitches 1-20 pitches in a day, no (0) calendar day of rest is required. For example, a pitcher falling into this category who pitches on Monday may pitch again on Tuesday.

- If a pitcher hits three batters during the course of the game, he must be removed.
- A ball that hits ground then the batter constitutes a hit batter.
- A pitcher who reaches the 60-pitch limit during an at-bat may finish the batter they are facing before being removed.
- Each team is allowed a maximum of 2 mound visits per pitcher per inning. Each team is allowed a maximum of 3 mound visits per pitcher for the entire game.
- A pitcher is removed when manager makes 2<sup>nd</sup> trip to the same pitcher in the same inning.
- A “Mound Visit” is charged whenever a coach or team representative signals “for time” to speak with the pitcher on the mound. Conferences at the mound amongst players without a timeout or between innings do not count.
- Any pitch in an inning by a pitcher constitutes a full inning for that pitcher.
- Once a pitcher is removed from a game, they can NOT re-enter the game as a pitcher.

### Batting:

- **All** players available are in the batting order.
- Bunting is permitted.
- A bunt foul with 2 strikes is a 3<sup>rd</sup> 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:

- No dropped 3<sup>rd</sup> strike.
- With two outs, a courtesy runner is encouraged for the pitcher and catcher to help speed up the game. 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 pitcher or catcher in the following inning.

### Fielding (Infield/Outfield):



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- Infield fly rule is in effect.
- When the ball is hit or thrown, play continues until the ball is returned to the infield and controlled by the pitcher near the mound. **If not, runners may advance.** Base coaches use discretion and common sense here, as to not take advantage of the situation.

### Base Running (Stealing/Leading):

- Advancing home on a wild pitch, passed ball, or overthrow back to the pitcher is allowed. However, once the pitcher controls the ball near the mound play is dead.
- No per batter limit on the number of bases a runner may advance when stealing or on a passed ball
- Runners may advance home on a passed ball or overthrow back to the pitcher. No straight steals of home are allowed.
- No stealing or advancing on a passed ball when the batting team is leading by 10 or more runs
- Once the pitcher is in possession of the ball near the mound the play is considered dead, until the next pitch is delivered.
- Unless stated above runners may advance at their own risk.
- Above all else, use discretion and common sense on the base paths. Remember this is 9 – 10 year old baseball and players have differing levels of ability and understanding of the game.
- Runners may not leave the base until the pitch crosses home plate and leading off is NOT permitted.
- After a base on balls (Walk) is issued, runners may advance only to first base. No runner may advance beyond first base on a walk (including the batter / runner or any other forced runners).

### Base Running (Sliding):

- Must slide rule is in effect, which means the runner must slide on close play to avoid contact.
- Umpire's judgement on must slide is final.
- NO head first sliding, however 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.
- Plays at Home- Blocking of home plate while not in the act of fielding the ball is prohibited. If any fielder 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:

- All runners will be awarded two bases (the base they are going to at the time of the throw plus 1 additional base) on an overthrow, which is ruled out of play.



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### Trophies:

- Both Tournament champions and runner-up will receive a trophy.



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