



2020 Spring Season - Minors Rules at a Glance

- Time Limit:** No new inning shall begin after the prescribed time limit. Inning begins the moment the last out is made (or 5 runs scored) of previous inning.
- 5 Run Rule:** Maximum 5 runs per half inning during the first 3 innings of the game. No run maximum thereafter.
- Mercy Rule:** 10 runs after 3 ½ (home is leading) or 4 (visitor is leading) innings.
- Strike Zone:** Expanded by the width of one baseball higher, lower, inside and outside.
- Player Rotation:**
- No player may sit out defensively more than 1 inning consecutively unless due to injury.
 - A player must sit for an entire inning to be considered as having sat out an inning.
 - From the beginning of preseason games and through 3/20/2020 (6 scheduled games for most teams) no player can sit for 2 innings until everyone on the team has sat 1 inning, and no player may play more than 2 innings at a position.
 - For all games played on or after 3/21/2020, including makeup games, no player may play more than 3 innings at a position (playing a position for even one pitch counts as having played an entire inning at that position) except for pitcher. (See Full Rules for the Pitcher Exception.)
 - All players must play at least 1 full inning in the infield in the first 4 innings of a game.
 - All players must play at least 2 full innings in the infield in a six inning game.
 - Penalties apply for not following playing time rules: See Full Rules
- Int'l Walks:** Not Allowed
- Min. Players:** 9 players are needed to start a game, 7 of which must be from the team. Players may get call-ups from the AAA division (through the Player Agent) to make 10. If at the start of a game, or at any time during a game, either team is unable to place 9 players on the field, the game is officially a forfeit, which will be counted in the standings as a 6-0 result.
- Scorekeeping:** The official scorekeeper and keeper of the pitch count is the home team scorekeeper. If there is a discrepancy in the score, the home plate umpire's score prevails. The visiting team is responsible for designating someone to operate the scoreboard for the entire game.

Pitching

- If a pitcher hits 3 batters in one game, he/she must be removed as a pitcher.
- Limits on Manager Visits to the Mound: See Full Rules
- Pitcher wearing glasses, jewelry, other distractions: See Full Rules

Bats

- All non-wood bats must bear the USA Baseball insignia, or they will not be allowed in the dugout.
- If an illegal bat is used, the manager may either have the batter called out or take the result of the play, as long as he makes the claim of an illegal bat before the next batter steps into the batter's box.
- First violation: offensive team loses an adult base coach for the game. Second violation: Manager ejected.
- If an illegal bat is used in a subsequent game, the manager will be immediately ejected from the game, and may be subject to further discipline by the Executive Board.

Offense

- **Aggressive Base Running** – The following rules are in effect **from the beginning of preseason games and through 3/20/2020 (6 scheduled games for most teams)**:
 - *Delayed Steals*: Not allowed. After a pitch, no runner may attempt a steal if the catcher is clearly in the act of throwing the ball back to the pitcher. The ball is dead when a pitcher receives the ball back from the catcher while the pitcher is on the dirt area of the mound. Runners must return to their bases, and the pitcher may not attempt to pick off a runner.
 - *Fake Steals*: Not allowed. A runner attempting to steal must do so in one continuous run. He may not stop or delay in order to either a) draw a throw to help a different baserunner advance; or b) draw an errant throw to the base to which he is advancing. The runner will either be tagged out or returned to the base he started from.
 - *Errant throws from Catcher to Pitcher after a pitch*: A baserunner may not advance on an errant throwback from the catcher to the pitcher. The runner(s) will either be tagged out or sent back to his base, and no other runner may advance.

For all games played on or after 3/21/20, including makeup games, all “first 6 game restrictions” above are lifted.

- **Runner Leaving Early**: A baserunner attempting to steal a base before the ball has crossed the plate will be sent back to his base and incur a warning from the umpire. Thereafter, any baserunner from the offending team will be called out for the same violation. (The opposing coach may instead choose the result of the play). The same applies to a baserunner illegally leading off.
- **Courtesy Runner: No courtesy runners are allowed (except for injured players).**
- **Sliding**: A runner is out when the runner does not slide or attempt to get legally around a fielder that has the ball, or in the umpire's opinion, about to receive the ball in order to make a tag. No head first sliding unless diving back to a base. No head first sliding unless diving back to a base.
- **Dropped 3rd Strike**: Batter is automatically out.
- **Overrunning First**: A batter who overruns first base and turns into the field of play is not automatically out if tagged – only if ump determines the player was making an attempt to advance to second base.
- **Batter hit on hands**: A batter hit by a pitch on the hands is awarded first base as he would be if it struck any other part of his body. It is only a foul ball if the batter attempts to swing at the pitch or his hands were in the strike zone.
- **Throwing bat**: Batter and the batter's entire team is given a warning but not called out. However, for the remainder of that game, any batter from that same team that throws a bat will be called out.
- **Injured Player**: If a player is injured in the field, and is due up to bat in the following inning, his spot is skipped over without penalty. However, if the injury occurs during that player's at bat, then the player who made the last out will bat for the injured player assuming the count when the original batter was injured. If a player is injured while on the base paths, the player who made the last out replaces the injured player.

Defense

- *Obstruction:* If a defensive player blocks a base or base line without possession of the ball, a delayed dead ball is called, and a runner may be declared safe even if the apparent result of the play was an out. However, a runner will not automatically be awarded an extra base(s) if he did not attempt to take the extra base when the ball was in play.

Manager/Coaches

- No more than 3 coaches on the field/dugout (including Manager).
- There must always be at least one adult in the dugout at all times.
- Only the Manager may talk to the umpires.
- No adult can warm up a pitcher at home plate or in the bullpen.
- Managers must sign the official scorebook and Pitch Count Summary after each game.
- Both managers must submit the final score by e-mail scoresforsoll@gmail.com within 24 hours of the game. The opposing manager should be cc'd.

Dugout / Safety

- Face cages optional
- **No siblings, batboys/girls, etc. allowed in dugouts**
- Catcher's helmets must have dangling throat guard
- No jewelry allowed, including necklaces
- **Only the first batter of each half-inning is allowed outside the dugout between half-innings.**
- No player (including the on-deck hitter) may have a bat in his/her hand unless it is his/her turn to bat.
- Only on-deck hitter may sit in the uncovered area of the dugout, and that player must wear a helmet. All other players must stay under the covered portion of the dugout.
- No gum or food is allowed in dugout or on the field. Water, sports drinks, and sunflower seeds only.

Sportsmanship

- **Players who throw equipment in anger, including bats, helmets and gloves, are subject to warning and/or ejection, at the sole discretion of the umpire. A first offense results in a warning to the entire offending player's team. A second offense, by any player on the warned team, may result in that second offender being ejected from the game.**

Field Maintenance

- Home team chalks the field before game. Visiting team drags and waters after.
- Make sure your dugout and stands are clean for the next game.
- Managers of the day's final game empty in-field trash cans into the main dumpsters, and also lock up field.