

Objective

The objective of this league is to promote a greater understanding of baseball to all boys who participate. This should include reinforcing the basic rules of baseball while introducing more complex rules such as pitching, balls versus strikes, and base stealing. All players should be encouraged to develop to their full potential.

Conduct

- All managers are responsible for themselves, assistant coaches, players and fans of their team. Any unruly manager, coach, player or fan will be required to leave the field. Failure to leave will result in a forfeit for that team.
- “Working” of the umpires will not be tolerated. Judgment calls are not subject to dispute.
- Coaches will correct obvious missed calls in their favor. For example, on a play at the plate, the umpire calls a runner out but doesn’t notice that the catcher dropped the ball. The catcher’s manager is obligated to correct the call. Managers, coaches, fans, etc., are not permitted to influence an umpire’s call for their team’s benefit.
- Any reports of managers or coaches using profanity, tobacco products, or being under the influence of alcohol, in front of the children, should be reported to the Minor League Commissioner or to a Board member. The Commissioner, with the BOD, will determine the appropriate disciplinary action, including the possible termination of that coach from the league.
- No coach will intimidate or make negative comments about a player from the opposing team. After one warning, the opposing coach should ask the plate umpire to remove the offending coach from the game. Bats, gloves, helmets or other equipment will never be thrown for any reason. If this behavior is observed the player will receive a warning and sit-out an inning. A second occurrence in a game will result in the player sitting out the remainder of the game.

Rules for Game Play

- Minor League bases are set at 60 feet apart. Pitching distance is 46 feet.
- (Typical) Games are 6 innings long.
- The “home” team will occupy the first base-side dugout; visitors will take third base-side dugout.
- The “home” team keeps the official book; this is important in case a discrepancy cannot be resolved from collective memories of those present. Both teams’ books should be reconciled regularly throughout the game to prevent potential controversies.
- A new inning on a non-lighted field may not begin after sunset, unless both head coaches and the umpires agree the amount of daylight is suitable and safe for play. On a lighted field, a new inning will not begin after 10:15 pm.
- A maximum of five runs can be scored in innings 1 through 5, but runs are unlimited in any innings thereafter and the defensive team must get three outs to end the inning.
- There will be no infield fly rule. The maximum number of players allowed on the field is 10. The outfield will consist of four players in an arch shape, positioned on the grass, and without a “rover”. The infield will consist of four players in their respective positions. There will also be a pitcher and a catcher.
- The batting order will run continuously throughout the game. Additional players who arrive after the start of a game must be inserted at the end of the batting order.
- Every player (except call-ups) must play an infield defensive position for a minimum of two innings each, and must play an outfield defensive position for a minimum of one inning each in a six-inning game. Exceptions are permitted if that player is removed from the game due to injury or arrives too late in the game to satisfy the requirements.
- A maximum of 9 innings will be played in the event of continued tied extra innings. If still tied after 9 complete innings, it will be recorded as a tie.
- If conditions prevent continuing the game, it will be considered “complete” after four innings, or if the visiting team completes its half of the fourth inning and the home team is ahead. If not complete, the game will resume from the exact point at its make-up time. All pitch counts and substitutions will remain in effect when the game is resumed.
- In the event of a rainout, the home team manager must notify the scheduled umpires and commissioner, so the game can be rescheduled on the first available date. The home team manager will then contact the visiting team’s manager to inform them of the rescheduled game.
- Eight players must be present to start a game, and that must be within 15 minutes of the scheduled start time. Less than eight players, whether to begin the game, or continue it after injury, will result in a forfeit.
- As a game continues play with fewer players than it started with, the missing batter’s “at bat” will not count as an automatic out unless the player was ejected for misconduct.
- “Time out” will not be granted until the umpire acknowledges the request and calls time.
- When a ball rolls under the fence (or behind a sign) after having been in fair territory, a player must raise their hands to indicate this to the umpire. It is a ground-rule double.
- Only players, up to four coaches, and a scorekeeper are allowed to be on the team bench. All other “fans” need to stay outside of the dugout/backstop area.
- Adults or older teens may act as base coaches. No players are permitted to base coach.

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Rules for Batters

- Batting out of order will result in the correct batter being inserted, inherit the count and the pitch count stands.
- Only one on-deck batter is permitted. No other player will be permitted to take swings while there is a player on deck.
- Bunting is permitted (sacrifice and drag only). Players are not permitted to fake bunt and swing away; if he does so, the batter is automatically out, and no base runners may advance.
- Throwing of a bat-A team warning will be issued for the first offense. An out will be recorded and base runners will not advance for any further infractions.
- A pitched ball hitting the batter will advance to first, only if there was an attempt by the batter to get out of the way. A few reminders: (a) a pitch that hits the ground first then hits the batter is still considered a hit batter (so long as they tried to get out of the way), (b) a pitch that hits the batter's hands during a swing is a foul ball, as the hands are considered an extension of the bat, (c) a batter illegally having part of their body in the strike zone that gets hit by a pitch, is a strike.
- On the third strike, the batter is out. The catcher does not have to catch the pitch, nor throw a dropped ball down to first base.

Equipment

- No metal cleats are permitted to be worn by the players. Only plastic or rubber spikes are permitted.
- Catchers must wear all protective gear-mask, chest protector, throat guard, leg guards, etc. All catchers must wear a cup at all times when catching.
- All players should wear a protective cup during practice and games.
- All batters and base runners must wear a helmet with a protective face shield or mask.
- Players must have a game shirt on to be able to play in that game.
- No "big-barrel" bats are permitted in Minor League.

Rules for Base Runners

- Leading off is not permitted in Minor League baseball. Runners cannot leave the base until the pitched ball has crossed the plate. The following consequences will be enforced, if witnessed by either umpire: (a) if a runner leaves early, all runners will return to the last base occupied, (b) if a runner leaves early and an out occurs, the out stands and the remaining runners will return to the last base earned, (c) if a runner leaves early and either a walk or a hit occurs, all runners will advance only to the next forced base.
- A runner may only steal the base he is stealing and may not additionally advance on an over throw of the base.
- There is no stealing home, for any reason. Also, the base runner on third base cannot steal home on a pick-off attempt to any base by the defense.
- No delayed steals are permitted in Minor League (such as when balls are being returned to the pitcher).
- Runners may tag on a caught fly ball (fair or foul) from any base.
- A walked batter cannot advance beyond first base.
- A courtesy runner may be used for the catcher with two outs to speed-up readiness. The player who made the last out will be used.
- In the event of a defensive injury, the runner will get the base they are advancing to (if earned) and play will stop.
- In the event that a base runner is hurt, the person who made the last out will be used as the pinch runner (or last in the batting order if the game is in the first inning and no outs have been recorded yet).
- All base runners are required to slide feet-first into the base when played on. Base runners sliding head-first will be called out (no warnings).
- All players must avoid contact if possible. A runner who collides with a fielder in the act of fielding the ball or catching a throw will be called out, unless properly sliding into a base. If a fielder not making a play obstructs or collides with a runner, that runner will be awarded the base he is going to and all preceding runners will advance accordingly. Umpires/coaches shall award an extra base if, in their judgment, the runner had a reasonable chance of making that base safely. The manager of the offending player should make the award if the umpire fails to notice. Fielders should not be positioned in the base lines, and they should not be standing on any base without the ball. An intentional infraction may result in the player being ejected as well, in the judgment of the umpire.
- FAKING A TAG OUT without the ball at any time is NOT permitted. If a player fakes a tag and is witnessed by an umpire, the runner will be allowed to advance to the next base. All forced runners will also advance.
- Base coaches are not permitted to physically assist or restrain a base runner. If interference is witnessed by an umpire, the runner will be out, and the play immediately "dead" at that time. Any other base runners will return to last base earned prior to the interference.

Rules for Pitching

- The strike zone is from the armpits to the bottom of the knee caps of the batter, and one (1) ball width on each side of the plate.

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- Umpires will make sure that the area behind the backstop is clear of spectators. Managers are to follow the following guidelines in determining how far into a game a pitcher can pitch and how much rest a pitcher will need based on a day's pitch count.

Age 10 and younger: 75 pitches max per day

Required rest based on pitch count:

- 1-20 pitches (0 full days of rest)
- 21-40 pitches (1 full day of rest)
- 41-60 pitches (2 full days of rest)
- 61-75 pitches (3 full days of rest)
- Pitchers cannot pitch more than two innings per game.
- An appearance in an inning is considered a full inning for that pitcher, if at least one pitch is thrown.
- A pitcher cannot return as a pitcher once he has been removed from pitching, in a game.
- Coaches are allowed two trips to the mound per inning. Upon making a third trip to the mound in the same inning, the pitcher must be replaced. Between innings, conversation at the mound does not count as a visit.
- There are no "balks" in Minor League.
- A pitcher must be removed if he hits two batters in an inning.
- Managers must keep a record in their scorebook of the number of innings and number of pitches all players pitch in each game. A manager can request to see the opponents pitching stats from the prior game.
- Pitchers are not permitted to wear wrist bands, jewelry, batting gloves, white fielding gloves, a white long-sleeve shirt below the elbow, or other items distracting to a batter.
- 9-year-old pitchers must be used for a minimum of six outs in every Minor League game. An inning giving up the five run maximum from all 9-year-old pitching will count as three outs. There is no limit to the number of pitchers that can be used in one inning, or the number of batters any pitcher can face. The 9-year-old pitching rule applies to rain-shortened games and darkness shortened games. Any team completing a game without utilizing the minimum 9-year-old pitching will forfeit that game.
- A teammate or coach must protect a pitcher when he is warming up along the sideline not protected by a fence.
- Pitchers are allowed five warm-up pitches between innings. A pitcher brought in to replace an injured pitcher is entitled to as many warm-up pitches as needed.

Rules for Call-Ups

- All call-ups must be registered players in SVNAA and must come from the older age group (8-year-old players) from the prior league, as recommended by that league's commissioner.
- Call-ups must bat last, unless a player shows up late and is added below the call-up.
- Call-ups can play one (1) defensive inning in the infield, and all other innings in the outfield. Infield play is at the discretion of the coach.
- A call-up may NEVER pitch.
- If a rostered player arrives late, the call-up will finish playing the game.

Rules for Appeals

- Managers are the only team representatives allowed to request clarification of an umpire's call or ruling.
- If a head coach wishes to appeal a call of an umpire, the head coach must first call and receive "time out" prior to the next pitch being thrown. He will then request a conversation with the opposing team's head coach as to the appeal he wishes to make. The umpires will then be brought into the conversation and briefed as to the appeal that the head coaches would like to be considered. Once presented, it is then up to the two umpires to discuss the matter, and uphold or change the original call. Only the head coach from each team can appeal through the above process.

Other Miscellaneous Guidelines

- The home team is responsible for preparing the field before the game.
- The visiting team can take the field for pregame warm-ups 30 minutes prior to the beginning of the game. The home team will take the field one hour prior to the start of the game until that time.
- All managers should help maintain the fields to provide a safe playing environment for the kids.
- Both teams must clean up the area of the ball field after each game or practice.