

3RD/4TH Grade Fall Ball BASEBALL RULES

A. General

- The most current issue of the National Federation of State High School Association Playing Rules will prevail except as modified or restated herein. You can find these rules on-line at <http://www.nfhs.org/activities-sports/baseball/>.
- No batting practice or warmups on the infield before games; use the outfield or other open space for all pregame warmups.
- Conducting any sort of batting activity (flip, tee, etc.) into any fence structure is strictly prohibited.
- Pitching plates, spikes, and bases must be put away and base plugs put back into the anchors after the last game on that field that day (except NPD fields, they leave bases out all the time).
- All debris in dugout area and bleacher area must be picked up. Leave the field cleaner than you found it.
- Report immediately any field issues or missing equipment.

B. Field Dimensions

- The diamond will have sixty (60) foot base lines. Second base will be located 84 feet 10 inches from home plate to the back of 2nd base.
- The pitcher's plate will be forty-four (44) feet from home plate.

C. Equipment & Uniforms

- WAA issued team shirts, hats and socks must be worn by all players while on the field. Players must provide their own baseball pants (color to be determined by the coach) to be worn at all times while on the field. Players will only wear WAA supplied hats. Players out of uniform will not be permitted to play.
- Each player must furnish their own glove.
- All male players must wear an athletic supporter and metal fiber or plastic cup.
- Catchers must wear a chest protector, shin guards, and a catcher's helmet with both a mask and throat protector. Catchers under the age of 18 who are warming up pitchers **must** be in full protective gear at all times.
- NOCSA approved batting helmets must be worn by the batter, on deck batter, all base runners, and youth coaches.
- Only shoes with molded cleats are permissible; shoes with metal spikes or cleats are not permitted.
- **Legal bats must comply with the following rules**, to be enforced and managed by coaches and parents alike:
 - a. USA stamped bats up to 2 5/8" in diameter.
 - b. Non-USA stamped bats up to 2 1/4" in diameter.Failure to follow the rules written here-within upon an in-game appeal by opposing coach will result in an immediate out and all players return to their prior positions (first offense in a given game) followed by a game forfeiture (second offense in same game).
- Two (2) regulation sized game balls will be supplied by the home team.
- All bases and pitching plates/spikes will be available in a lock box located at the field and set up by the home team.
- All WAA issued equipment must be returned to the WAA office on a date that will be specified to all coaches via email after the last game of the season.

D. Game

- All games will be played per the schedule. A regulation game consists of six (6) innings unless extended because of a tie score or the umpire calls the game.
- There is a 5-run limit per inning.
- The home team will always occupy the 3rd base side of the field.
- The home team will keep the official score. At the completion of each inning the home team will review the score with the visiting team head coach.
- GAME CONCLUSION:
 - It shall be a complete game if the 1-hour 50-minute time limit has been reached.
 - The 1-hour 50-minute time limit is a hard stop. In the event that the time limit is reached while a batter has an existing count, finish the batter. Game score shall revert back to the last full inning.
 - There will be no mercy-rule due.
 - If a game is called for any reason
 - It shall be a complete game if four (4) innings have been completed, or if the home team is ahead after the completion of the visiting teams at bat in the fourth inning.
 - Before it is a complete game, it shall be considered a suspended game and shall be resumed from the point of curtailment at the time scheduled by the WAA office.
 - In an uncompleted inning, after having reached complete game length and the visiting team ties the score or takes the lead in the uncompleted inning, and the home team is not provided the opportunity to bat in its half of the inning, the score will revert to the prior completed inning.
 - If the prior completed inning equates to a completed game, the game will be considered complete and winner acknowledged based on the resulting score.
 - If the prior completed inning does not equate to a completed game, the game shall be considered a suspended game and shall be continued from the point of curtailment at the time scheduled by the WAA office.
 - All games that are tied once it is a complete game, and time, weather or other circumstances do not allow another inning(s) to be played, the game will be recorded as a tie and will not be completed.
- SUSPENDED GAMES:
 - Rescheduling of suspended games must be arranged through the WAA office. The league will determine the time and place.
 - Suspended games will be resumed from the point of suspension. The only exception is if a game is called with less than one complete inning played. In this case it will be declared no game and all records will be disregarded.
 - In the event of a suspended game, lineup modifications from original game can be made based on player availability.
- TIME LIMITS:
 - ALL games will have a 1-hour 50 minute time limit.
 - No inning of a game may start, for any reason, within 10 minutes of the scheduled starting time of the next game on that field (1-hour 50-minute time limit).
 - No new inning will begin after 8:15pm on a field without lights or after 10:00pm on a field with lights.

E. Positions & Playing Time

- A legal team can be represented by a minimum of 8 players.
- If a team knows it will only have 8 players, they can request a 9th player as a sub from another fall ball team. Subs approved by the Fall Baseball Director allow for legal game to be played. Rules for playing subs are outlined in section K.
- If either team has less than 8 players present at the field at the originally scheduled start time for the game, it will be an automatic forfeit. A practice game can be played at that point.
- A maximum of 9 players can be on the field at a time.
- Each player must play a minimum of four (4) innings in the field.
- Each player must bat as scheduled within the line-up prepared before the game.
- Except for the catcher, no player may play more than three (3) innings at the same position.
- Pitchers may only pitch two innings. They must be consecutive.

F. Batting

- Each player on the team will be given a position in the batting order (as prepared in the lineup prior to the game) and must bat in that position.
- Bunting is allowed.
- Fake bunting and then attempting a full swing at a pitch is NOT allowed.
 - a. First offense is a warning for the team; second offense is an automatic out.
- There will be one thrown bat warning per team per game. The next batter determined to have thrown his/her bat will be declared out. The umpire's decision is final.
- The dropped 3rd strike rule is NOT in effect.
- Only 2 players should have a bat in their hand: the batter and the on-deck hitter. The on-deck hitter will position himself to the BACK of the batter.
- Intentional walks are not allowed.

G. Base Running

- A ball is considered dead when:
 - It is in the pitchers' hand, on the mound and all runners are on base.
 - When it is hit or thrown out of play.
 - When the umpire has called time.
- The infield fly rule WILL be in effect.
- STEALING:
 - Runners can steal second and third base; runners at third base are only allowed to steal home if a play is made to attempt to pick the runner off third.
 - Base runners will not leave their base until a pitched ball has crossed home plate. A runner (team) will receive one warning for leaving early during a stealing attempt, resulting in a dead ball and the runner returning to the original base. This warning applies to the team as a whole; each player does not get one warning. All subsequent infractions will result in the ball being declared dead and the runner will be called out.
- ADVANCING BASES:
 - Runners may not advance to home on an errant throw to third on a steal attempt of third.
 - Runners may continue to advance on wild throws resulting from a batted ball that stay within play in fair or foul territory.
 - The ways a runner may advance to home are:
 - Bases Loaded Walk or Hit by Pitch
 - Catcher to Fielder pickoff attempts (risk/reward play for both teams)
 - Runner on 3B takes extended lead after pitch crosses home plate. Catcher attempts a throw to 3B to pick off runner. Runner can advance home at his own risk.
 - Any play that involves a live ball put in play by the batter, including errant throws at 3B (whether in or out of play) on batted balls. Examples:
 - Runners on 1B and 2B. Ground ball to pitcher. Attempted force at 3B. Ball gets away (still in play, but down LF line). Runner can attempt to

score at own risk.

- Alternatively, same situation. Ground ball to pitcher. Attempted force at 3B. Ball is overthrown and goes out of play. Runner is awarded home.
- COURTESY RUNNERS:
 - A courtesy runner should be used to run in place of the catcher or of a player who will be pitching the next inning at any time those players are base runners.
 - The runner shall be the player who made the most recent out of the current inning or last out of the prior inning.
 - Other than an injury, these are the only circumstances in which a courtesy runner may be used during a game.

H. Pitching

- A player, once removed as a pitcher, may not pitch again in the same game.
- Pitchers must be replaced if they hit 3 batters in an inning or 4 batters in a game.
- Balks will only be called if a pitcher stops his motion when a batter squares around to bunt with runners on base. Any runners will be awarded a base. If no runners are on base, a ball will be awarded to the batter.
- Pitchers are not allowed to throw curve balls or sliders. Concerned coaches should approach the umpire and ask for his oversight moving forward, but only the umpire will deem a ball a breaking pitch.
 - a. First team offense: warning
 - b. Second team offense: batter awarded first base and runners advance if forced
 - c. Third team offense: batter awarded first base, runners advance if forced, and the pitcher will be removed from the mound.
 - d. Fourth team offense: game is forfeited by offending team (game may continue at the umpires discretion as an exhibition game)
- Pitch counts will be used for determining how long a pitcher may pitch in a game, as well as determining the amount of rest they will need prior to pitching in another game.
- Pitch Counts for a game:
 - Maximum number of pitches a player can throw in one game is 60
 - A pitcher will be allowed to complete pitching to a batter if they reach their pitch count during that batter's existing at bat.
 - Opposing coaches should cross check pitch counts after each inning of play to help avoid any potential conflicts. Mandatory recovery time:
 - Up to 20 pitches = No Rest Required
 - 21 to 35 pitches = 1 Days Rest
 - 36-50 pitches = 2 Days Rest
 - 51-60 pitches = 3 Days Rest
 - Mandatory recovery time is in CALENDAR DAYS. The day the player pitches does NOT start the clock. Example - Player throws 36 pitches on Thursday; player can pitch again on Sunday. Friday and Saturday represent two (2) calendar days.
 - A pitcher who delivers 40 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that game. Similarly, a catcher who has caught 4 innings cannot pitch for the remainder of that game.
 - Abusing pitch count and/or recovery time rules will result in forfeiture of game in which offense occurred and the ineligibility of that pitcher in their next pitching eligible game once rest required is achieved.
 - For any double headers, pitchers can pitch a maximum of 60 pitches in a day and may pitch in both games provided he/she does not meet the maximum number of pitches in game one.
 - For suspended games, pitching rules will remain in force under all situations.
 - A pitcher that reached their pitch limit in the originally scheduled game - before it was suspended - will not be allowed to pitch in the continuation of the suspended

- game when it is re-scheduled.
- If a pitcher was in the game at time of game suspension, that pitcher is only eligible to pitch a maximum of 60 pitches (which includes his/her pitching record from the first game).

I. Coaching

- The batting team is allowed the following coaches first base coach, and third base coach. All coaches are responsible for maintaining order on the sideline and keeping equipment and players in the dugout.
- Only the head coach may speak with the umpire
- All coaching must be positive and instructional, not vulgar, critical or demeaning. Coaches who are abusive to players must be reported to the Competitive Baseball Director and the WAA Office. Continued abusive behavior will not be tolerated.
- Coaches are not permitted to smoke or chew tobacco products during games or practices.
- ALL Coaches must abide by the WAA Coaches Code of Conduct or jeopardize your position as a coach. This is very important to the organization and violations will be dealt with accordingly, including possible dismissal from your position as a coach. We appreciate your taking the time to volunteer as a coach and we want to make sure that all the children have a safe and supportive environment in which to participate in our programs.

J. Umpire

- One umpire will be scheduled and provided by the league.
- All umpire decisions which involves judgment are final.
- If there is a reasonable doubt that the umpire's decision may conflict with the rules, a coach may appeal the decision to the umpire in a professional manner and ask that a correct ruling be made.
- The umpire's decision is final. THERE WILL BE NO PROTESTS.
- If league umpire is not present, each team will furnish one adult umpire. The field and plate umpire will alternate position after three full innings. In this situation the plate umpire will call balls and strikes from behind the pitcher.

K. Substitute Players

- If a team knows they will only have 8 or fewer players, they will contact the Fall Baseball Director, preferably 48 hours in advance of the scheduled game (NOTE: having 9 players does not constitute the need for a substitute - you play with 9). A substitute must be currently playing fall ball within WAA and cannot be a travel baseball player.
- The rules for using subs for a game are:
 - They bat last in the batting order.
 - They cannot pitch or play catcher.
 - The player must wear his existing team uniform.
 - All other playing time rules apply.
 - The game is a legal and sanctioned regular season game.
- In the event a substitute player is no longer needed to play, the coach will contact the Fall Baseball Director immediately to inform him, so the substitute player can be notified. If the substitute player arrives at the game after failing to be informed they are no longer needed, they will be allowed to play in the game regardless of the number of players present for the team that originally requested the substitute player.