

NORTH HILLS ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

Instructional League Rules

As of 4/9/2026

1. MISCELLANEOUS RULES:

- A. The Instructional League age limit is 7 & 8 years old.
- B. There will be no six (6) year olds permitted to play in the Instructional League unless he/she has played for at least one (1) year at the Beginner's Level. Approval is then required by the Instructional League Commissioner, as well as the Director of Baseball and Association President. There will be no five (5) year olds permitted to play in the Instructional League.
- C. Nine (9) year olds will not be permitted to play down at the Instructional Level.
- D. Rosters will be kept at ten (10) players whenever possible.
- E. A dugout or bench coach is required when each team is batting.

2. ROSTER SELECTION:

- A. CURRENT: The League Commissioner's discretion, a formal draft will be conducted by league's coaches; OR players will be assigned by League Commissioner to ensure parity throughout the league. All parent requests will be considered during the draft but are not guaranteed.

3. THE GAME:

- A. The length of game will be six (6) innings.
- B. A game will become official after four (4) complete innings.
- C. There will be no forfeits or protests permitted.
- D. The coaches will serve as the official umpires.
- E. Rainouts: Both Managers shall evaluate the field conditions prior to the start of the game and decide if the game shall be played or not. Once the game begins, both Managers will decide if the game shall continue. In the event of a rainout, the Home Team Manager will notify the League Commissioner. All rainouts are to be rescheduled by both Managers and, for field scheduling purposes, cleared by the League Commissioner. A game should be called if there is any doubt about the players' safety due to poor playing conditions. NOTE: A playable infield does not always insure the well-being of the outfielders.
- F. Unsportsmanlike conduct **will not** be tolerated. Violations of this rule are grounds for immediate dismissal from the League.

4. THE FIELD:

- A. The bases will be sixty (60) feet apart.
- B. The pitching rubber will be forty-six (46) feet from home plate.
- C. There will be a ten (10) foot diameter circle around the pitching rubber with a five (5) foot radius from the center of the pitching rubber. This will be known as "THE PITCHERS CIRCLE".
- D. There will be an ARC extending from foul line to foul line on a 10-foot radius from back of home plate. This will be known as "The Batter's Arc". A batted ball must pass this arc to be considered in play.

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- E. A batter's box should be placed on each side of the plate, and players should be instructed to stay within the box when swinging.

5. GENERAL PLAYING RULES:

- A. Any decision or dispute relative to the game is to be resolved between the two Managers only. Instructional League rules must be strictly adhered to at all times. Judgment calls by umpires are not subject to dispute. Any discussion will occur in foul territory, away from the players and spectators.
- B. Protests are not allowed.
- C. An inning consists of each team batting through its entire lineup, five (5) runs scored by the offensive team, or three (3) outs recorded by the defensive team. Whichever comes first.
- D. A late player is permitted to enter the game at the time of arrival. However, the player must be placed as the last player in the batting order.
- E. The infield fly rule will not apply.

6. OFFENSIVE RULES:

- A. A player's turn at bat will consist of seven (7) pitches or (4) strikes whichever comes first. This rule will be strictly enforced. If a pitcher (adult) throws (7) pitches and the player does not swing at any pitch, the player is called out. If a player fouls the seventh pitch or fourth strike, another pitch is thrown.
- B. No player is permitted to swing a bat until inside the backstop. Managers and Coaches must enforce this rule, and the bench coach must instruct the players when it is time to enter the backstop. Any player violating this rule will be given one (1) warning only! A player who violates this rule a second time will forfeit an at-bat for each subsequent violation.
- C. A batter who throws a bat will receive one (1) warning per game. All subsequent violations will result in that player being called out and all runners must return to their original bases.
- D. If a player is hit by a thrown ball and any Manager or Coach thinks he/she is hurt, play is stopped immediately. The batter earns the base he has reached prior to the stoppage of play.

7. DEFENSIVE RULES:

- A. A limit of two (2) adults are permitted on the outfield lines when a team is on defense. A third adult who calls balls and strikes should be behind the catcher and assist the catcher in speeding up the game.
- B. The Manager and Coaches are encouraged to instruct the players on fundamental defensive play (i.e., force outs, throwing to the cutoff, etc.)
- C. It is recommended that the defensive team play with ten (10) players. If there are more than ten (10) players, then coaches can discuss prior to the game on whether to add an outfielder. Normal infield positions will be strictly enforced. The infielders must be positioned between the baseline and the outfield grass. Outfielders must be positioned on the grass.
- D. Set infield positions are not permitted and no players should play a specific position for than two (2) consecutive innings. Recommendation: The first base position will require the player to have the skill level that he/she can adequately protect themselves.
- E. Managers are strongly encouraged to rotate players to various defensive positions **including a minimum of two (2) innings in the infield**. However, safety of less skilled players must be paramount in positioning players. If

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a Manager feels a player cannot defend his/herself at a position without being hurt, the Manager has the right not to place that player at that position. The parents of that player should be informed of the situation with the understanding it is a safety issue and nothing else.

- F. Once an inning has started, players may not be moved to new positions for the purpose of competitive advantage.
- G. A throw to home plate may only be fielded by the catcher. Any additional players running home to assist on a play at home will result in a SAFE call.
- H. The pitcher can pursue an out, at any time, on any runner at any point in the base path, prior to time the ball crosses the pitching circle.

8. BASE RUNNING RULES:

- A. Leading from a base is not permitted at any time. The runner is out after one warning.
- B. If a runner is hit by a batted ball, the runner is out and the ball is dead.
- C. A runner may not advance "tag" on a caught fly ball.
- D. A runner may advance on an overthrow only if the ball is in play; and the runner may only advance one (1) base.
- E. An overthrown ball going out-of-bounds is a "dead" ball. Base runners will only get the base they are advancing to at the time the ball goes out-of-bounds.
Example 1: The batter is running to first base, the ball is thrown out-of-bounds, and the batter has touched first base. The batter gets first base only.
Example 2: The base runner has rounded second base by one step when the ball goes out-of-bounds beyond first base. The runner is given third base.
- F. Managers and Coaches should instruct all players to slide when a play is being made on the bases and home plate. Non-sliding runners who collide with a defensive player will be called out.
- G. For a batted ball being returned back to the infield from any other defensive outfield position, once the ball is possessed by an infielder, any runner beyond the half-way point shall continue to the next base. Any base runner not at the half-way point shall return to the previous base.

9. PITCHING RULES:

- A. The pitcher need not be the Manager or Coach.
 - B. The adult pitcher must make every effort not to interfere with a batted ball. A ball hitting an adult pitcher remains a live ball. A ball caught by an adult pitcher is a dead ball, the batter gets to continue to bat, and the pitch does not count against the seven (7) pitch rule.
 - C. Pitchers cannot be changed during an inning to accommodate an individual hitter's preference.
 - D. The adult pitcher's position must be on the mound. A pitcher may not leave the pitcher's circle to throw a "T-ball" type pitch to any child! This rule will be strictly enforced by the League.
- 10.** The adult who is pitching must make every effort to throw the ball with relevant velocity. There should be no arc on pitched balls. A Manager or Coach who does not adhere to this rule will be asked to step down, and must

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be replaced by an adult who will throw pitched with velocity. If a Manager or coach feels a player is not capable of hitting these pitches, the Manager or Coach must discuss this fact with the player's parents.

11. TOURNAMENT/TRAVEL TEAM ELIGIBILITY:

- A. Players wishing to be considered for a Tournament Team or a Travel Team must have attended a minimum of 50% of their in-house games at the time the team is selected.

12. COACHES CLEARANCES

- A. Any coach that is providing supervision or instruction on the field must have all clearances required by the organization before any participation. It will be the responsibility of the Head Coach to ensure that all clearances have been submitted in a timely manner.

