



OWENSBORO CATHOLIC LEAGUE (OCL)

RULES - Major / Minor

2026

Facility

- 1 Teams will have the following responsibilities:

ALL PRACTICES: Put away bases, put away all equipment, rake all holes and base areas, rake around the mound and home plate, pick up all trash from dugouts and bleachers.

HOME TEAM: Rake all holes and base areas, rake around the mound and home plate, tamp down dirt around the mound and home plate / batters boxes, turn out field lights, lock up all doors, pick up trash from your dugout and bleacher areas on your side of field.

VISITING TEAM: Put away bases, place scoreboard controls in concession stand, clean restrooms, pick up trash from your dugout and bleacher areas on your side of field, brush mound off, cover with tarp if last game of the evening.

**** DO NOT RAKE OR DRAG INFIELD DIRT INTO THE GRASS, AS THIS WILL BUILD UP A LIP ON THE DIRT/TURF EDGE AND CAUSE BAD BOUNCES**

Batting

- 1 All helmets used in games or practices shall utilize a full face mask or approved jaw guard. This rule applies to player furnished helmets and OCL furnished helmets. Any player running the bases and deliberately removes his/her helmet is out and all runners must return to their original bases.
- 2 Mandatory Playing Rules shall be enforced. Violations of this rule will be dealt with by the Owensboro Catholic League Board (OCL Board) and may include forfeiture of the game(s) in question.

Batting Order -

- (a) The batting order will include all players present and eligible, & this same order shall be used throughout the game, Round Robin.
 - (b) A player who has left early when their turn in the batting order comes will be deleted from the batting order, without penalty, as long as you still have 9 batters. If you drop to 8 batters, the 9th batting position will be an out unless this is due to illness or injury or it is the 3rd out of the inning.
 - (c) A player arriving late will be added at the end of the batting order, without penalty.
- 3 The infield fly rule **is** in effect for Major. The infield fly rule **is not** in effect for Minor.
 - 4 **On a 4 ball walk, runners are allowed to attempt to go to 2nd base if they choose to do so. It is a live ball and if they are tagged, they are out. If a hitter is hit by a pitch, it is a dead ball, no runners advance unless forced.**
 - 5 Bunting is allowed. If a player "shows" bunt and does not pull the bunt attempt back prior to the ball reaching the plate in the umpire's judgment, the pitch will be called a strike, regardless if the player makes an attempt on the ball or not. **There is no slashing, which is where a bunt attempt is shown and then pulled back with a swing. If you show bunt, you can make the attempt to bunt or pull back, but may not swing.**
 - 6 Stealing **is** allowed. Runners are not allowed to leave the base prior to the pitch crossing home plate.
 - (a) First offense to leaving early shall be a warning with the runner returning to their original base. Second offense, the runner will be called out.
 - (b) **MINOR ONLY: There is a 1 base maximum per runner per pitch.**
 - 7 Sliding is permitted, except for sliding headfirst. Penalty: Runner is out. Diving back to the base is not considered sliding head first. Coaches are encouraged to teach their players to slide if there is a close play at all bases except first base.



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The runner may slide, attempt to get around the fielder who is in possession of the ball and waiting to make the tag (if not, the fielder has obstructed the runner), or give him/herself up.

Hurdling or going over the defensive player that has the ball and is waiting to make a tag is a LEGAL maneuver.

If the runner attempts to get around and successfully avoids the tag without going out of the base line, that runner is safe. If the runner attempts to avoid, but still makes contact, the runner is NOT automatically out. What constitutes an attempt is entirely up to the judgment of the umpire.

If the ball is on its way to the base or home plate, or the ball and runner get there simultaneously, and there is contact because the runner didn't slide or attempt to get around, this is just a collision, and collisions are part of baseball. Contact may occur with no penalty assessed.

Base/Pitching Coaches-

- 1 When a team is at bat, a first base coach and a third base coach may be on the field in the coach 's box while their team is at bat. Players may coach bases but must wear a helmet. All other coaches must be in the dugout or off the playing field.
- 2 Base coaches must stay in coach's box. If he/she interferes (touches) a player, the runner is out.

Defense-

- 1 Catchers must wear approved chest protector (long or short are both acceptable) and catcher's style helmet/mask and all male catchers are required to wear a cup at every practice and during games. Coaches will be responsible in seeing that the player have and use the required protective equipment.
- 2 When a team is playing defense, an adult coach for the defensive team may be stationed within a 4' radius of his/her dugout gate/opening (foul territory only) to provide instruction for all defensive players. This coach shall not be permitted to touch the ball nor advance into the infield while the ball is in play. This defensive coach shall not be allowed to shout out instructions to offensive runners in order to confuse them.
- 3 Except for injuries, player positions can only be changed one time per inning. Example: A first baseman may be moved to a regular outfield position any time during an inning, but must remain there until the inning is complete.
- 4 Obstruction is the act of a fielder who, while not possession of the ball, impedes the progress of any runner. A fake tag is considered obstruction. Note: Obstruction shall be called on a defensive player who blocks off a base, base line or home plate from a base runner while not in possession of the ball. Example: A catcher on his/her knees blocking home plate before he/she has possession of the ball, prevents the sliding runner from touching home, makes the catch and applies the tag is obstructing the plate. In this example, the runner shall be called safe.

If a player covering 1st, 2nd, or 3rd base is called for obstruction by the umpire, the runner will awarded the next base if it is open and the umpire determines the runner could have advanced on the play. If the runner retreats back to a base after obstruction occurs, the umpire, at their discretion, will determine if the runner is allowed to advance or not.

(Example: If a runner is trying to round second and go to third and the 2nd baseman obstructs with the runner at second, the runner will get third base at umpire's discretion). Only if the umpire determines that a player could not touch first base because of obstruction by the first baseman, will the runner going to first be called safe.

Only if the umpire determines that a player could not touch first base because of obstruction by the first baseman, will the runner going to first be called safe.

- 5 No outfielder will be allowed in the infield before the bat is swung. First Offense: Warning. Second Offense: Hitter gets a free base.



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- 6 When the pitcher is on the mound with the ball, base runners must either attempt to advance or retreat to their previous base. If the runner does not advance or retreat to previous base (in the judgment of the umpire), the runner will be declared out. Play is considered live and shall not be officially stopped until "time out" is called by an umpire.

Playing Requirements -

- 1 Every player on a team roster will participate in each game for a minimum of six (6) defensive outs. If these playing requirements are not met -
 - (a) The player(s) involved shall start the next scheduled game, play any previous requirement not completed & the requirement for the current game before being removed.
 - (b) Those players not fulfilling their playing time because of a shortened game (10 Run Rule, time limit or rain out) will start the next game & play six (6) consecutive outs & bat once before they are removed from the game.
- 2 Each team must field at least 8 players by game time plus 10 minutes or the game will be a forfeit. If the game is played as a "practice game", pitches will still count toward the pitcher's weekly pitch count and days of rest. If the team drops to 8 players or fewer during the game (due to illness or injury) no out will be charged to the "empty" batting position(s)...any other reason and an out will be charged to the empty batting position unless it is the 3rd out of an inning.

If a coach knows that his/her Major or Minor team roster will drop to 8 or fewer players for any given game, the coach has the option to pull up available player(s) from younger age groups for the games in which his or her team will have 8 or fewer players. (When pulling up players, the coach is limited to a total of 9 roster positions for that particular game, including his or her full time players.)

A coach may not pull up a younger player once a game has been started. The coach will be required to play with the players that are present at the start of the game (or full time players that show up late) even if his or her team drops below 9 players due to illness or injury.

Farm Teams -

Major teams may utilize any available Minor players and Minor teams may utilize any available Rookie or 8U players on a "first come, first served basis" for purposes of completing a game roster.

Any player that "plays up" is available to play any position on the field, including pitcher or catcher.

Players are not eligible to "play up" if doing so creates a conflict with a scheduled or make-up game in the player's natural division.

RULES - Pitching

- 1 Any player who has played the position of catcher in four (4) or more innings in a game is eligible to pitch on that calendar day.
- 2 A pitcher once removed from the mound cannot return as pitcher.
- 3 A pitcher who starts a new batter after 40 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of the day.
- 4 MAJOR only: The "uncaught third strike" is in effect.

The batter becomes a runner when the third strike called by an umpire is not caught, providing (1) first base is unoccupied or (2) first base is occupied with two out. To put the batter out, the defense must tag the batter or first base before the batter touches first base.



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If a pitch hits the ground before the catcher gloves the pitch, the ball is considered "uncaught".

- 5 Due to potential scheduling conflicts and the number of teams in any given season, pitchers in the OCL Major and Minor leagues must adhere to the rest requirements listed in this Rule.

Pitch counts will be reviewed and determined annually by the OCL Board.

PITCH COUNT

1 - 20 pitches, no day of rest (player can throw 20 pitches every day)

21 - 40 pitches, 1 calendar day of rest

41 - 60 pitches, 2 calendar days of rest

61 - 85 pitches, 3 calendar days of rest

Maximum of 85 pitches per game (11, 12, AND 13 YEAR OLDS)

Maximum of 75 pitches per game (10 YEAR OLDS AND YOUNGER)

Maximum of 100 pitches per week (Monday-Sunday, all ages)

****This Pitch count will also be applied to tournament rules****

A pitcher reaching his or her day limit of 85 or 75 pitches (depending upon age) is allowed to finish pitching to a batter if the day limit is reached in the middle of an at bat. A pitcher reaching his or her weekly pitch limit shall also be allowed to finish pitching to a batter if the weekly limit is reached in the middle of an at bat.

If a make-up or tournament game is played in the same week by a team that plays two other games (3 total games for the week), pitchers for that team shall be allowed up to 40 additional pitches (Major and Minor) for the third game only. However, prior to pitching in the third game, the player shall have met the rest requirements above and shall meet the same rest requirements before they are allowed to pitch again.

**** Players "playing up" are not eligible for the 40 additional pitches if they have reached their weekly maximum.**

If a make-up game is played in the same week by a team that plays *only* one other game (2 total games for the week), pitchers for that team shall be limited to 100 pitches for the week and shall meet the rest requirements required above and shall meet the same rest requirements before they are allowed to pitch again.

- 6 Pitch counts for all pitchers used in a game shall be kept by the field umpire and shall be recorded after each half inning in the home team's scorebook and should also be recorded in the visiting team's scorebook.

Game Rules-

- 1 Umpire will be furnished by OCL.
- 2 After a batter hits the ball, she must make an attempt to place the bat in the batter's box or lay the bat down. If a batter slings a bat, the umpire will issue a "team warning" for the first offense. The second time, the batter is out. If, in the umpire's judgment, the bat is slung dangerously the first time, no warning, the batter is out.
- 3 An inning shall consist of 3 outs or 5 runs for Minor only. If at any time a team cannot score enough runs to catch the other team, due to the 5 runs per 1/2 inning rule, the game is officially over. (For the purposes of these rules, this shall be known as the Mercy Rule.) If both coaches agree, the teams may play out the rest of the game, but any additional runs shall not be scored. There is no run limit in Major. Both Minor and Major games will consist of 6 innings, but no inning shall be started after the time limits listed below. The 10 Run Rule will be in effect for Major games - if either team is winning by 10 or more runs after 4 complete innings.
- 4 *Regular Season time limits will be adhered to as follows:*
There will be a 1:30 time limit on ALL games.



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The time limits starts at the time the first pitch is made in the game with the expectation that teams are warmed up, completed the pre-game prayer, and ready to go at the posted game time. The umpire has the authority to start the time limit prior to the first pitch if in his/her judgment teams did not meet this expectation.

When two games are played on the same field on the same night, the first game will start at 5:45pm and no inning of that game will start after the 1:30 time limit. Any inning started prior to the 1:30 time limit will be completed even though its completion may cause that game to run beyond 7:15pm.

ANY GAME IN WHICH THE SCORE IS TIED AND CALLED BECAUSE OF THE TIME LIMIT WILL END IN A TIE. (Each team will be credited with a 1/2 game win and a 1/2 game loss.)

Regarding TIE games. TIE games halted due to weather, curfew or light failure shall be resumed from the exact point at which they were halted in the original game. The pitcher of record may continue pitching in the same game on any subsequent date provided said pitcher has observed the required days of rest.

A game shall be considered a regulation game if at least 3 innings are completed. If play is halted before the completion of the 4th, 5th or 6th inning of a game, the final score will be defined as the score at the end of the last completed inning. All pitches thrown prior to a game being halted shall count towards the pitch count for each pitcher (daily and weekly limits). This includes the pitches thrown during the uncompleted innings. (A completed inning will include any inning that the home team is at bat and the home team has more runs than the visiting team).

- 5 A runner will be called out if he/she runs more than 3 feet out of the runner's established baseline to avoid a tag. This call will be made by the umpire. Only the head coach in charge may appeal to the umpire for this call.
- 6 Bats shall not be more than 33 inches in length. Any baseball bat 2-1/4 inches in diameter is permitted, but only "USA Baseball" approved 2-5/8 inches in diameter bats are permitted. The umpire in charge shall make the final decision as to the acceptance of the bat for any given OCL game.

Field -

- 1 The on-deck circle will be a 3' circle placed on the field in close proximity to each team's dugout, and the on-deck batter must wear a helmet. For safety reasons, teams may use either on-deck circle for the on-deck batter.
- 2 The distance from home plate to the pitching rubber shall be 46 feet. First and Third Bases are 60' away from home plate.

Tournament-

- 1 *Tournament time limits will be adhered to as follows:*
There will be a 1:30 time limit on all games except for the championship games (no time limit). In championship games, all innings shall be played unless the game is called according to the Mercy Rule in Minor or 10 Run Rule in Major.
- 2 Tournament will be seeded based on overall record. First tiebreaker for tournament seeding is head-to-head record. Second tiebreaker is coin flip. The rules used for regular season will be used for tournament except that games will not be allowed to end in a tie and will continue until a winning team is determined.
- 3 The higher seeded team is the home team throughout the tournament. Regarding TIE games, TIE games halted due to weather, curfew or light failure shall be resumed from the exact point at which they were halted in the original game.

Eligibility



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- 1 Owensboro Catholic Minor division is for 9 and 10 year olds. The "playing age" of the child is determined by the child's age on April 30th of the current year.
- 2 Owensboro Catholic Major division is for 11, 12, and 13 year olds that meet the age requirement in place for the current season.
- 3 Players turning 11 on or before April 30th of the current year are not eligible to play Minor. Players turning 13 on or before July 1 of the previous year are not eligible to play Major.
- 4 A Minor/Major player may not play simultaneously in another Owensboro Catholic League Division, but shall be allowed to fill in for players in other leagues as outlined in appropriate league rules.