



“8U” Baseball Rules

***Official as of March 2023**

Any rules not specifically covered by these below rules defers to Major League baseball rules and regulations. With respect to any incident, question or rules interpretation, the decision of the League commissioner, Association President, and/or tournament director shall be considered final.

The Game (Rule 1)

1-1. A regulation game shall consist of six (6) innings and begin promptly at the designated start time. Teams will be given a fifteen (15) minute grace period from the stated starting time. After fifteen minutes, the game is considered forfeited. Teams are encouraged only to request a change in the event of an emergency. Changes are not promised nor guaranteed. In the case of game cancellations, the home team managers must give the opposing manager three (3) dates which are available for both teams to play a make up game (these dates must be open for both teams). In the event of a rainout the home team will reschedule and notify the league via email as to the date and location of the makeup. All games should be rescheduled within one week of the original game date (does not need to be played within a week just rescheduled within a week).

1-2. If there is rain or a rain delay, you will be contacted by League Commissioner or appropriate representative as soon as possible. If there is a rain delay after the start of a game you may not take your team home until official notification from the League Commissioner or appropriate representative(s).

1-3. A new inning cannot start fifteen (15) minutes before the scheduled start time of the next game. No inning shall start after 10:15 pm. Regulation games shall be six (6) innings. Official game – A game is official after 4 1/2 innings. If the game is tied after 4 1/2 innings and the game is stopped due to inclement weather, darkness, or time constraints, the game will finish as a tie. If a game is tied after 6 innings the game will remain a tie. It is the League Commissioner’s decision to start the game and the umpire’s decision to stop a game.

1-4. **It is agreed by all organizations, that at the 8U level no organization will use a score board to keep score of their home games.** In the event of a tie score after six (6) complete innings, up to two (2) extra innings may be played if there is not a game following the game that is being played and **both managers agree**. No game shall extend past eight (8) complete innings. After eight (8) innings, if the score is still tied, the game will be ruled a tie. If there is a game following, the game will be ruled a tie.

1-5. Five (5) innings shall constitute a complete game in the event of inclement weather or darkness. In the event the umpire calls a **regular season game** after less than five (5) innings (four and a half (4 1/2) innings if the home team is winning), the game must be replayed from the start as a new game. In the event the umpire calls a **playoff game** after less than five (5) innings (four and a half (4 1/2) innings if the home team is winning), the game will resume from the point that the game left off in accordance with MLB playoff rules.

1-6. Play stops dead when five (5) runs are scored except in the final inning. When 5 runs are scored in the offensive team half of the inning, the offensive team automatically takes the field regardless of the number of outs **(no continuation permitted)**. In the final inning three (3) Outs must be made to end a side.

1-7. If both managers and umpires declare that **due to time**, that the top of an inning will be the last inning played, the 5 run rule limit per inning will be waived for that inning and three (3) outs must be made to end a side.

1-8. The infield fly rule shall **NOT** be in effect.

1-9. The 10 Run Rule **will be decided to be in effect by the trailing team for all games**. When a team is up by 10 or more runs and the team behind has batted through 4 1/2 innings the trailing team has the option to stop play, with the team 10 or more runs ahead considered the winner.

1-10. Two (2) Coaches may coach their team on defense in the outfield during the course of the game. These coaches must be AT or DEEPER than OF depth of 120 feet from home plate, so that coaches are not involved in the play.

Base Running, Batting & Pitching (Rule 2)

2-1. If in the opinion of the umpire a runner leaves the base before the ball is batted, a “no play” will be ruled. That team will then receive a bench warning. A second infraction by said team would result in the runner being called out. The pitch **WILL** count in the pitch count.

2-2. Any overthrow still deemed in the playing area is a live ball and base runners are free to advance at their own risk. Overthrows into foul territory on plays at first and third will stop play. Overthrows at second or up/down the line and not into foul territory will be considered a live ball.

2-3. Bunting, leading off of a base and base stealing are **NOT** permitted.

2-4. A batted ball must cross the dead ball arc set at 9 feet in front of home plate or it is considered a foul ball.

2-5. The Pitching Coach will pitch from or behind the 38 foot line which will be marked on the field of play. If the Coach is struck by a hit ball, play is called dead and the pitch does **NOT** count. The coach will make every effort to avoid contact with the ball after the ball has been hit into play. If the Coach inadvertently comes into contact with the ball, time out will be called and the Umpire(s) will determine if the runner(s) shall be returned to the previous base or advance to the next base. While on the mound, the Coach can do anything to instruct his player in the box, but cannot tell him/her when to swing.

2-6. The play is considered dead when an infield player possesses the ball in the infield and not making a baseball move or calls for time out. Runners cannot advance past any base they have already considered to have made at that time. $\frac{3}{4}$ lines will be placed on the field (15 feet from second, third, and home plate). If the runner is not passed the $\frac{3}{4}$ line prior to the umpire calling time, the runner will return to the last base they were on or passed.

2-7. No outfielder can make an infield play; they must throw the ball to an infielder unless in a rundown situation.

2-8. Each batter will be afforded 8 pitches to put the ball in play. Four strikes and the batter is out. A foul tip/foul ball on the fourth strike is not an out. If a foul tip is caught, it is not considered an out. A foul ball, defined as any ball traveling above the batter's head and not touched by any fencing and that is caught will be an out no matter what the pitch count is at the time.

2-9. A player playing the position of pitcher must be no more than 5 feet from the pitcher chalk line when the ball is pitched. There is to be a circle around the pitcher chalk line with a 5 foot radius and the player pitching is to have at least one foot in the circle.

Rosters & Players (Rule 3)

3-1. A team roster must be presented with the name, shirt number, date of birth and age before the first game, and may not be altered for any reason after the first game has begun.

3-2. All players must play within their own School District.

A player may petition the league to play outside their School District and must meet three criteria.

- 1.) The request must be in writing stating the reason why they are not playing within their School District.
- 2.) If the player resides in the Chartiers Valley; Keystone Oaks School; West Allegheny or Carnegie Districts the player must receive a release from the parent organization.

3.) All organizations must agree that the player can play for a different organization.

3-3. Call across will apply for fall ball. A player may play within an organization for another team and may play or bat in any spot.

All call ups must come from the community needing a call up. (Example STAA can only call up STAA players.)

3-4. Rosters must be set before the first game of the season. No late sign-ups. Team rosters will be due to the league by April 15th.

3-5. A maximum of fourteen (14) players may be named on the roster. In addition one (1) manager, three (3) coaches and one (1) scorekeeper will be permitted in or near the bench area. Only adult coaches (18 years or older) are permitted to coach bases.

3-6. All players are required to wear full uniforms, consisting of same color and type of hat, the same color and type of uniform shirt, the same color and type of baseball pants. All shirts must be tucked in. All shoes must be tied and no metal spikes are permitted.

3-7. The official playing age is that player's age as of August 31, 2023. All rostered players must be no more than 8 years old on this date. Birth certificates must be available upon request. If a certificate cannot be produced at time of request said team must produce the document before its next game. If a birth certificate (or photo copy) cannot be produced, the player in question will not be eligible for subsequent games, and the game in which the age of the player was challenged, shall be considered forfeited.

3-8. All players should remain in the bench area at all times during a game except when involved in play on the field. Only one (1) on-deck batter is permitted. No other player shall be permitted to swing/hold a bat. The umpire shall strictly enforce these restrictions.

3-9. A team may field up to ten (10) players but may not play with less than eight (8) fielders. If at any time this rule is not met, the game is over and the team with enough players to play, eight (8) or more wins. However the game will still be played as an exhibition, the team with not enough players will borrow the "last out (s)" from the other team to play right field.

3-10. With ten (10) players, four (4) players must be placed in the outfield at outfielders' depth. Outfielder's depth is defined as no less than 120 feet from home plate. Hash marks can be placed on the foul lines and centerfield prior to the game. There will be no "rover" position. If fielding nine (9) players, three (3) players must be placed in the outfield at outfielders' depth. In all cases, the fielding team must field a pitcher, catcher, first baseman, second baseman, third baseman and shortstop in their normal baseball positions. Each player will field at least three (3) innings, unless an injury occurs. **ALL PLAYERS MUST PLAY 2 INNINGS IN THE OUTFIELD.**

3-11. There shall be a continuous batting order that includes all players present at the start of the game. This batting order cannot be changed or modified during the course of a game. There shall be unlimited free substitution during the game at all positions. Should a player be removed due to injury or illness, the manager shall notify the opposing manager. No out assessed if a child leaves the game due to sickness or injury. The opposing team's manager will be notified before the start of the game if a boy/girl will not be playing due to disciplinary or sickness reasons. A player may return to the game if removed for injury or illness. A manager is obligated to play a player if he comes late or when the game is in progress. That player will be placed at the end of the lineup.

3-12. Players cannot be switched from one defensive position to another during the course of the defensive half inning unless due to injury and the injured player must be removed from the field until the start of the next inning or due to a pitching change.

3-13 There will be no borrowing from another 8U team to fill a team. Call ups from tee ball are permitted; the call up will be an outfielder, bat last in the batting order and must wear his roster uniform.

Equipment and field set up (Rule 4)

4-1. Effective January 1, 2018 all bats must be USABat certified and must have the USABat licensing stamp on the bat in order to be used in league play.

There is a zero tolerance on the use of illegal bats. The following will be the penalties for the use of an illegal bat:

- 1st offense - Game forfeited and official warning given to manager of said team. Player using bat is suspended that game, plus the next game.
- 2nd offense – Game forfeited and Manager ejected, Player using bat is suspended that game, plus the next 2 games.
- 3rd offense - Manager ejected and suspended next game and Player is suspended that game plus 3 additional games.

4-2. The bases are to be located at a distance of sixty (60) feet from the point of home plate to the center of first and third bases and from the foul lines to the center of second base.

Safety (Rule 5)

5-1. All catchers must wear full protective gear including a protective cup. All batters, on-deck batters and base runners must wear protective helmets. It is strongly recommended that all players wear both athletic cup and mouth protection.

5-2. No metal cleats or street shoes are permitted to be worn during a game. Molded rubber cleats or sneakers are the only allowable shoes.

5-3. It is the responsibility of the defensive player to avoid contact with the base runner. Defensive players are not permitted to position themselves in the baseline except in the act of fielding a batted ball.

5-4. All base runners shall avoid intentional collisions and a runner who in the judgment of the umpire has caused an intentional collision shall be called out and the ball shall be called dead. Shoving or pushing will not be tolerated. The umpire will determine the consequences of such an act (a flagrant act will result in ejection). 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, whether it was intentional or not. If a runner has to go around a player who does not have the ball, it is obstruction. One or more bases may be awarded to the runner by the umpire if the umpire believes he would have reached that base safely without the obstruction.

5-5. No runner advancing to a base shall slide headfirst. The first violation will result in a warning to the offending team. The base runner will be called out on the second occurrence by the same team.

5-6. Managers and coaches are not permitted to smoke, vape, chew tobacco, consume alcoholic beverages or use profane language on the playing field.

General Conduct Policies (Rule 6)

6-1. Each community will host a mandatory Recreational Baseball awareness program that speaks directly to good sportsmanship, respect for players, coaches and umpires. Hold this during the coach's clinic and make it mandatory for parents who are interested in managing and/or coaching. If they don't attend, they don't manage/coach.

6-2. If a player throws a bat, batting helmet, glove or any other equipment, both he and his or her team will be issued a warning. Any subsequent incident by the same team in the same game will result in an out.

6-3. All umpiring decisions regarding judgment calls are final and cannot be appealed. Any decision regarding a rule violation or rule interpretation can be appealed to 2nd umpire, the League commissioner or appropriate representative before play is continued. No further appeals are possible. Umpires will call what he/she sees.

6-4. Only the manager will have a dialog with umpire, coaches and other volunteer help may not comment, or question the umpires calls (technical or not). Comments from the Manager will be conducted in a civil manner as the umpire can eject anyone (manager or coach) for misconduct or aggressive tone towards them.

6-5. At no time shall any player, manager, coach, umpire or fan harass any other player, coach, manager, umpire or fan. Both managers and umpires are responsible for the conduct of all players, coaches and fans. At any time, the umpire may ask a fan to leave the area for the good of the game. If said fan refuses to leave, then the umpire or manager will call the police for assistance.

6-6. Should a player be injured, play shall cease immediately. Runners shall be entitled to the base they are going to at the time of the injury.

6-7. Ground rules are to be reviewed between the umpire and two managers at the start of the game.

6-8. The home team is responsible for an umpire. The umpire should try to call the game behind the plate. If no umpire shows up for the game then a coach or parent from both teams should handle the umpiring. Do not cancel the game because of not having an umpire.

6-9. All communities agree to respect and abide by each other's internal disciplinary policies. If a manager, coach or parent is disciplined by a community, that sanction will be honored by all communities in the League. This will include issues resulting in up to a 1 year suspension or any other internal punitive actions that may occur:

Examples are as follows:

- a) Parent is disciplined for 3 games. The away community will support the sanction and it will not allow their attendance once notified,
- b) Manager or coach is suspended for a period of time. The individual cannot manage or coach in another community within the League once notified.