



## General League Rules 2023

### 1. Game Durations & Status Determination

- a. All boys' league play shall be governed by Official Major League Baseball Rules and all girls league play shall be governed by Official ASA Softball Rules with exception to any of the rules listed herein and any MBSL age specific rules otherwise documented. Games will be (6) innings except for the 14U, 16U, and 18U leagues, which are 7 innings.
- b. Games shortened due to rain, darkness etc., will be considered complete if the home team is leading after 3 ½ innings or the visiting team is leading after 4 complete innings.
  - i. The 3-inning player participation requirement will be waived under this condition.
- c. Games stopped before the inning requirement due to weather, will be rescheduled from that point until complete.
  - i. The score books must be marked at the point the game was called and they will be picked up from that point when the game is rescheduled. Coaches are responsible to notify the league office of the situation of the game.
- d. All ties shall stand and shall be recorded in the standings as ties.
- e. Run rule limitations are league specific. See league specific division playing rules for this information.
- f. The MBSL will make every attempt to get all scheduled league games completed. Weather or other unforeseen circumstances may push the end of the season back which could in turn push back the start of the end of the season tournament. The league office will do its best to maintain the schedule outlined at the beginning of the season.
- g. Team standings will be final at the conclusion of the regular season play.
  - i. Tiebreakers will be settled in the following order:
    1. Head-to-Head Results
    2. ii. Results against the top 3 teams in the league
    3. iii. Head-to-Head Run Differential
    4. iv. Coin Toss

## 2. Game Times and Curfews

- a. There shall be a time limit to every regular season game. The umpire(s) shall announce the official start time and keep the official time, starting no new inning after the time limit has past.
  - i. Any new inning started prior to the time limit shall be completed in full unless:
    1. The drop dead time limit is reached
    2. The home team is winning after the top half of the inning
- b. Ten minutes will be allowed after the umpire calls "play ball" before a forfeit is declared due to the inability of either team to field a team.
- c. Both teams shall be granted five minutes of infield practice fifteen minutes before the start of the game. Teams are not permitted to use the dirt infield until their five minute infield practice window opens before games. Coaches (not umpires) are responsible for seeing that their team gets to practice. Failure to comply will result in forfeit of practice time. Games must be started on time. Pitchers will be granted three (3) to five (5) warm---up pitches or (2) two minutes, which ever comes first, before each half inning.
- d. Games will not be started after the following times
  - i. 8:15 for Tball league
  - ii. 9:00 pm on school nights
  - iii. 9:30 pm on other nights.

## 3. Playing Field Dimensions & Requirements

- a. Distance between bases is different by league. Check the age specific league rules for the dimensions of each age group
  - i. If the bases are found to be at different length and play has started the teams will complete the inning and adjust the bases to the proper distances. The time necessary to change bases will not be counted toward game time limit.
- b. Pitching rubber must be on a horizontal plane with home plate.
- c. Safety Base Information
  - i. On a hit ball play to first base, the infielder will use the white half of the bag and the runner will use the orange half of the bag.
  - ii. Exception: If the defensive play takes the infielder to the orange half or otherwise into foul territory, the batter/runner will now use the white half and the fielder will use the orange half. However, either player touching either part is legal for a safe or out call as the only purpose of this rule is to minimize collisions.
  - iii. Note: For all other plays (pickoffs, tagups, overruns, etc.) the white half is the only proper/active part of the base for any player.

## 4. Rosters, Eligibility, & Participation

- a. The defensive team will have ten players on the field, with the tenth player as an outfielder. All four outfielders must remain in the outfield grass until the ball is hit.
- b. A team must field at least nine players if your league normally plays with ten players or eight if your league normally plays with nine players at game time.
  - i. A ten minute grace period from the scheduled game time will be allowed after which a forfeit will be declared. The ten minute grace period will be considered a part of the time limit.

- c. All players must play at least three complete innings unless under disciplinary action or as defined in rule 1b for shortened games.
  - i. In the event of disciplinary action, the opposing manager must be informed of such action before the start of the game. Please check your league specific rules for player participation.
- d. All team players present at the start of a game will be in the offensive line up.
- e. Any team player arriving before the top of the third inning will be added to the end of the batting order, but shall only be required to play  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the remaining innings.
- f. If an umpire ejects a team player from the game, that position in the batting order is an out for the remainder of the game.
- g. If a player starts a game and leaves due to ejection, that position in the lineup is an out.
  - i. If a player leaves a game due to injury, their inability to bat will not result in an out.
- h. In all divisions, for teams using roster batting: (no substitute batters/pinch runners), if a player is removed from the game due to illness or injury during their at bat (not able to finish their at bat) the at bat is nullified and the next batter due up begins their at bat. The injured/ill batters spot in the batting order is now treated the same as in rule 4g above
- i. Only team players and approved head and assistant coaches will be allowed in their respective dugout.
  - i. The offensive team will be permitted base runners, batters on deck, batter, and only two members of the coaching staff (limited to the coaching boxes) on the field while the ball is in play. The coach must not interfere with any player or their attempt to make a play on the ball.
  - ii. All players must remain in the dugout and behind the fences until moving onto the on-deck spot. Players may not stand in the doorway to wait their turn to bat or while sitting out of the defensive line up.
  - iii. In the coach pitch divisions, the pitcher may not coach or talk to any player while pitching. The only exception to this rule is if the pitcher is giving instructions, such as to step into the batter's box or move around the plate to step inside the batter's box or move around the plate to the batter before making a pitch. The base coaches cannot touch a player until the ball is dead.
- j. Subject to the three inning participation requirement, any of the starting players may be withdrawn and re-entered freely.
  - i. The only exception to this rule is for leagues with pitching restrictions and league specific rules per age group.
- k. All players' jewelry must be removed before a player is permitted to play.
  - i. The only exception is for medical identification, which must be hidden.
- l. All players must keep their helmets on until they are safely inside the dugout fence even if the play is dead. This includes going back to the dugout from any base or from home plate after making an out. The only time a player can remove their helmet in the field of play is due to injury.
- m. No player will be allowed to participate with any kind of medical cast on their person.

## 5. Player Pick-Up Rule

- a. Any picked up player required to fill in for an absent or injured roster player(s) must be from the league below or another team in the division of the league.
- b. Picked up players may only play in the outfield.
- c. All picked up players must bat at the end of the batting order.
  - i. All of a team's regularly rostered players are to bat prior to any picked up players.
- d. Any team using pick up players must field six rostered players. A team may pick up enough players to get their numbers back to the numbers of rostered players provided they field six rostered players.

## 6. Team & Player Conduct

- a. The following actions will not be condoned or permitted:
  - i. Abusive actions
  - ii. Foul language or profanity
  - iii. Unsportsmanlike behavior on the field, in the dugouts, or in the stands.
  - iv. Taunting
  - v. Abuse of equipment.
  - vi. Use of any tobacco products inside the fences and dugouts.
  - vii. Consumption of alcohol or illegal narcotics
- b. Runners are responsible for avoiding collisions with the defensive players. If a defensive player without the ball obstructs a runner, it is a call to be made by the umpire(s), but collisions must still be avoided.
  - i. When a play on a runner is imminent, he/she must either slide, try to "get around" the tag or surrender to the tag without making physical contact with the defensive player in any way. Failure to comply shall result in the runner being declared "out" and also being ejected from the game. However, sometimes there is incidental contact that is not harmful nor intentional and has no impact on the play. All these instances shall be the judgment calls by the umpire(s). The intent of this rule is to minimize injuries caused by unnecessary collisions. No player shall be called out for simply failing to slide.
- c. Each team will be entitled to one warning for a batter throwing a bat in the direction of any other players, coaches or umpires upon hitting a pitched ball. After the warning, all subsequent offenders shall be declared "out" and no runners shall be allowed to advance.
  - i. It is a separate violation to throw any equipment in anger or frustration and any player doing so shall be ejected from the game for unsportsmanlike conduct immediately after any play in progress. The intent of these rules is to minimize the risk of injury to others on the field.
- d. Chants may not include a player's name or nickname.
- e. The penalty for a player being ejected from a game shall be that he/she shall sit out the team's next game. The umpire shall document the offending player to league staff, and the coach shall be responsible to make sure the player sits out the next game, if not a forfeit will be incurred.
- f. The penalty for a coach being ejected from a game shall be that he/she sits out the team's next game. The umpire shall document the offending person to league staff. If the offending person fails to comply, the team will incur a forfeit.

## **7. Protests**

- a. No protests will be allowed on judgment calls of the umpire.
- b. Any Manager, at the time of the protest, shall notify the Home Plate umpire that they are lodging a protest and shall continue the game under protest. At this point the home plate umpire will call a conference at home plate with both coaches and other members of the umpire team to notify them that the game shall be played under protest. The home plate umpire shall mark in the scorebooks, the current game situation and complete the protest form. If the protesting manager desires to follow-up on the protest at the end of the game, the protest has to be presented in writing within twenty-four hours to the league office for review by the MBSL Advisory Group.
- c. All protests must be submitted in writing and submitted to the office along with a \$50.00 cash fee. If the protest is upheld, the fee will be returned.
- d. While no one is allowed to object to or argue with judgment calls, it is customary for umpires to allow controversial calls to be discussed with them by the teams manager only, (not coaches). If there are two (2) or more umpires on the field, managers shall have the right to ask the umpire making the call to discuss it with his/her partner(s). The call remains in the hands of the umpire that made the original call.

## **8. Scorekeeping**

- a. Home team will be the official scorekeeper. In the 10U age group and above, it is imperative that the outs and/or innings are tracked by pitcher on the official scorebook.
- b. Both team's scorekeeper's must be informed of starting line ups prior to the start of the game.
- c. Both team's scorekeepers that are involved in divisions with pitch counts, must check with each other every half inning to collaborate the counts.
- d. All coaches must keep their pitch count sheets in the scorebook for each game. League staff have the right to review pitch count sheets at any time.
- e. Umpires must sign the official score book at the end of the game.
- f. Home team managers are responsible for completing and signing the umpire timecard if it is needed.
- g. The winning team shall be responsible for inputting the game results into Teamsnap following each game

## **9. Protective Equipment**

- a. Catchers must wear a chest protector, shin guards, protective mask, and protective headgear with a mask.
  - i. Tball catchers only need to wear a helmet with a facemask.
- b. All batters and base runners must wear protective helmets. Any player judged to have intentionally discarded their protective helmet while running the bases will be called out by the umpire.
- c. Metal cleats are not permitted.
  - i. Exception: Boys 14U and 18U will be permitted to wear steel.
- d. All players must keep their helmets on until they are safely inside the dugout fence even if the play is dead. This includes going back to the dugout from any base or from home plate after making an out. The only time a player can remove their helmet while in the field of play is due to injury.
- e. All equipment is to be kept inside the dugout fences at all times.

- f. Diamond 5 – Bullpens. These bullpens are open to the diamond while game play is in action. When a pitcher and catcher go to the bullpen to warm up, a second player with glove must also accompany them. This player must protect the blind side of the catcher during the warmup session.
- g. Violation of these rules is punishable by the ejection of the player from the game and suspension from the succeeding game.