

The game format, rules for game play, and lineup system which are unique to Upward Baseball are designed to promote healthy competition and sportsmanship while also teaching the objectives of game play.

Game Format

- An umpire (or a coach-umpire in certain divisions) will lead both teams in prayer at home plate before every game.
- Any games ending in a tie should remain a tie. This will help keep games on schedule. In divisions where score is kept and if time constraints have not been met, an extra inning may be played.
- No division standings are maintained. Such standings add unnecessary pressure and intensity.
- All managers and coaches will adhere to the lineup system as detailed on page and in each division's "Rules for Game Play."
- A coach or designated individual from each team must keep the Upward Scorebook. The home team scorebook is the official scorebook.
- At least one manager, coach, or designated adult must be in the dugout (bench area) at all times. Managers and coaches are allowed on the field in certain divisions. Refer to each division's "Game Rules" section for guidelines.
- There will be no disputed calls, arguing with the umpires, or protests of games.
- There will be no appeals made by the defensive team with the exception of questionable swings at pitches (half swings). The manager or catcher may request the plate umpire to ask his or her partner for help on a half swing when the plate umpire called the pitch a ball.
- If a base runner attempts to "tag up" on a hit ball which results in an out, but leaves the base early, no appeal is necessary by the defensive team. The umpire will call the player out once the ball becomes dead.
- Players must keep their jerseys tucked in at all times. Caps should also be worn when playing defense.
- At the end of each game, teams, managers, and coaches will shake hands while exhibiting great sportsmanship.
- The ball used shall weigh between 5 and 5 ¼ ounces and measure 9 to 9 ¼ inches in circumference.
- Bats used must be a t-ball or baseball bat with a maximum length of 33" and a maximum diameter of 2 ¼ inches. (Minors may use BIC Barrels)
- No head first slides are allowed. Head first slides will result in an out. (Except going back to base)
- Batting helmets must be worn by players while batting and running the bases. Any base runner that intentionally removes the helmet while running the bases shall be called out upon completion of the play.
- The catcher shall wear a protective, supporter cup (exception of T-ball and Coach Pitch Divisions), chest protector, shin guards, and catcher's helmet with a mask.
- All male players must wear a protective, supporter cup (exception of T-ball and Coach Pitch divisions).
- Players, coaches, and umpires are not allowed to wear metal cleats or spikes.
- Players are not allowed to wear jewelry of any kind. *Exception:* Jewelry that alerts medical personnel to a specific condition is permissible.

Substitutions

This substitution system is designed to provide every player equal opportunity for improvement. The substitution system ensures that:

- Every child will play at least half of the game.
- No child will sit out more than one inning at a time.

- Every child will have an opportunity to be in the starting lineup.
- Coaches are not open to making unfair substitutions or being accused of such.
- Coaches are free from monitoring playing time for each player.
- Playing time for all players is virtually even over the course of the season.

In the kid’s pitch division, the pitcher and catcher are not factored into the substitution system

Implementing the System

The league director will supply each coach with a team roster that includes each player’s evaluation score. Beginning with the letter “A”, coaches should assign each player a letter according to their level of ability. Players should not be aware of this system or their rank. An example of a 12-player team will be used to demonstrate the substitution system. Bill, Joe, Sam, Tim, Mark, Scott, Trent, Jason, Josh, Steve, Ben and Brad make up the Angels team. One of the letters A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, or L will be assigned to each member of the Angels. Because Bill has the highest score, he is assigned the letter A. Brad is assigned the letter L because he has the most room for improvement.

ANGELS	
Player’s Name	Evaluation Score
Bill	50
Joe	46
Sam	42
Tim	40
Mark	39
Scott	37
Trent	37
Jason	36
Josh	35
Steve	33
Ben	31
Brad	30

On the following pages, the substitution system will be demonstrated. In all age divisions, every player on your roster will bat in the offensive lineup that you choose prior to the start of the game. This substitution rotation schedule only applies to defense. The batting order should not change once the game begins. We do encourage that you alternate your offensive lineup throughout the season. This will ensure that every child gets the opportunity to bat an equal amount of times over the course of the whole season.

Substitutions on the first game day start with player A. Players A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I and J start the first inning. The starting lineup for Game 1 is: The first 10 players listed on your roster (first 9 players for 5th-7th grades). See below.

GAME 1		INNING					
Player's name		1	2	3	4	5	6
A	Bill	1	3	5	7	9	
B	Joe	2	4	6	8	10	
C	Sam	3	5	7	9		1
D	Tim	4	6	8	10		2
E	Mark	5	7	9		1	3
F	Scott	6	8	10		2	4
G	Trent	7	9		1	3	5
H	Jason	8	10		2	4	6
I	Josh	9		1	3	5	7
J	Steve	10		2	4	6	8
K	Ben		1	3	5	7	9
L	Brad		2	4	6	8	10

It is imperative that you move your players around to play different positions. Often times it is convenient to keep your better players at the “key” positions. Remember that we want to work hard to improve the playing ability for ALL players. Substitutions on the second game day will start with player B. The starting lineup for Game 2 is players B through K. The starting line up shifts down one player every game. See below.

GAME 3		INNING					
Player's name		1	2	3	4	5	6
A	Bill		1	3	5	7	9
B	Joe		2	4	6	8	10
C	Sam	1	3	5	7	9	
D	Tim	2	4	6	8	10	
E	Mark	3	5	7	9		1
F	Scott	4	6	8	10		2
G	Trent	5	7	9		1	3
H	Jason	6	8	10		2	4
I	Josh	7	9		1	3	5
J	Steve	8	10		2	4	6
K	Ben	9		1	3	5	7
L	Brad	10		2	4	6	8

GAME 2		INNING					
Player's name		1	2	3	4	5	6
A	Bill		2	4	6	8	10
B	Joe	1	3	5	7	9	
C	Sam	2	4	6	8	10	
D	Tim	3	5	7	9		1
E	Mark	4	6	8	10		2
F	Scott	5	7	9		1	3
G	Trent	6	8	10		2	4
H	Jason	7	9		1	3	5
I	Josh	8	10		2	4	6
J	Steve	9		1	3	5	7
K	Ben	10		2	4	6	8
L	Brad		1	3	5	7	9

Each division’s section will include specific information on suggested field dimensions and game rules (general, defense, and offense). Except where the rules unique to Upward Baseball apply, play is governed by the National Federation of State High School Associations’ (NFHS) Rules Book (website: www.nfhs.org).

Coach Pitch (6-7 year old) Machine Pitch

(League age determined by the first day of the month following the last game date) or the first day of the month corresponding to the first game date.

Suggested Field Dimensions

- Base paths - 55 feet.
- Pitching rubber - 46 feet from the back point of home plate to the front of the pitching rubber.
- Pitching rubber circle – six feet in diameter and the center will be 46 feet from the back point of home plate.
- Machine pitching line – 40 feet.
- Foul zone - a 10 foot chalked arc from the first base line to the third base line drawn from the back of home plate. The ball must be past this line to be fair. If not, it will be a foul ball.
- Infield restraining line – Two four-foot lines will be drawn across the foul lines at a distance of 40 feet from home plate (20 feet in front of the base paths). Infielders must stay behind these lines until the ball is hit.
- Outfield restraining line – Two four-foot lines will be drawn across the foul lines 20 feet behind the base paths. Outfielders must stay behind these lines until the ball is hit.
- Mid-point base lines – A mid-point line (six feet long) will be drawn between first and second base, second and third base, and third base and home plate. These lines will assist the umpire in determining which base to award a base runner when time is called.
- Outfield fence – 140 to 200 feet

Game Rules

General

- A regulation game is four innings or 1 hour. No new inning starts after 45 minutes.
- Scores are not kept.
- The umpire will be responsible for counting pitches and for calls at each base. A continuous batting order, including all players on the team roster who are present, will be used.
- Each batter will receive five pitches. If the batter fouls off the fifth pitch or subsequent pitches, he shall receive an additional “last pitch”. If the batter swings and misses the “last pitch” or fails to swing, he is out.
- If a child is absent, injured, becomes ill, or must leave the game early, the team will skip over the spot in the batting order without penalty.
- A team will bat until three outs are recorded or after batting a maximum of their entire lineup, whichever comes first. If a team has fewer than 10 players present. When the final batter comes to the plate in adherence with the maximum number of batters rule, there will be automatically two outs. He is treated no differently from previous batters, as play will stop when an out is recorded or when time is called by the defensive team. **Reminder:** *The offensive team must alert the umpire and opposing team when the last batter steps to the plate.*
- Play stops when a defensive player has possession of the ball in the infield and calls time OR in the pitcher’s circle and calls time and when any and all base runners choose not to advance. The objective is for the infielder to stop the progression of any and all base runners. The defensive player with the ball must be standing within the baseline or closer to home plate. The umpires will use the mid-point base lines to determine where to place the runners once time is called. **Reminder:** Coaches work with your outfielders on throwing the ball to the infield. It is not appropriate for an outfielder to run the ball into the infield.
- If the pitcher fields a ground ball and intentionally stops play by calling time before making a play on a runner, any runners forced to run may advance one base.
- No infield fly rule.

- A base is not considered occupied unless the base runner touches the base. Should a runner fail to touch a base, he will be called out once the ball becomes dead. As long as the ball is live, the base runner can attempt to return to the base he failed to touch.

Defense

- A defensive unit will consist of a catcher, pitcher, four infielders, and four outfielders (maximum team size is 12). If only nine players are present, a team will play defense with three outfielders.
- Each inning's defensive players will be determined by adherence to the Upward Baseball Substitution System.
- Every player must sit out one inning before any player sits out two innings OR do we use the Upward Baseball Substitution system?
- The player/pitcher must wear a helmet with a face mask.
- The player/pitcher must have at least one foot inside the pitching circle when the ball is hit.
- The catcher must be in a squatted position well behind the batter and wear a helmet with a face mask.
- The infielders and outfielders must stay behind their respective restraining lines until the ball is hit. If not, the violation results in the offensive team getting the choice of the play or re-bat.
- There is free defensive substitution (enter and/or re-enter the game anytime) the entire game. All players will play a minimum of one inning at an infield position (P, C, 1B, 2B, SS, and 3B) and one inning at an outfield position. Allow players to learn and experience different positions on the field. However, player safety must be given consideration when assigning positions (e.g. pitcher and first base).
- No player should play the same position for more than two OR three consecutive innings. May not be a problem if we use the Upward Substitution System.
- The defensive team is allowed one coach on the field. The coach must stand in the outfield, no closer than the outfield restraining lines.

Offense

- The coach/pitcher must pitch (either standing or on one knee) somewhere between the coach pitching line and the foul zone line. The coach/ pitcher must throw the pitch overhand and as flat as possible.
- A struck ball must travel beyond the 10 foot foul zone to be ruled a fair ball.
- A batted ball that hits the coach/pitcher will be ruled a dead ball and a no pitch.
- If a ball hits the defensive coach who is standing on the playing field, the ball is ruled dead and all base runners will be granted one extra base.
- No bunting or half-swings.
- A base runner cannot lead off or steal a base. The base runner must stay on the base until the ball is hit.
- Base runners can advance one base at their own risk on all overthrows.
- The offensive team is allowed three coaches on the field: coach/pitcher, first base coach, and a third base coach.