

Bethesda Chevy Chase Baseball, Inc.

American League
**Rules and
Regulations**

For the 2020 Season

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American League Rules and Regulations

Except as specified below the normal rules of Major League Baseball shall apply.

Purpose

The purpose of the American League is instruction. It is intended to constitute an introduction to a more structured game of baseball for children who are still relatively beginners. Children must be encouraged, assisted, and supported. It is the manager's responsibility to channel the children's natural talents and competitiveness in a positive manner. It is also the manager's responsibility to make sure that the parents on the team do not become overly competitive, overly excited or carried away by the situation. There should never be negative comments about the opposing team's players. Children in this division must not be criticized.

I. General

A. League Policies

Professional coaches are not permitted to coach a recreational team in any capacity while the team is playing a game. However, professional coaches may be hired by parents of players on a recreational team to assist the parent head coach at practice to help develop players' skills.

Recreational teams / rosters are not permitted to hold informal or formal try outs to form the team. Further, recreational teams may not be comprised in whole or in part of teams created via tryouts.

All team rosters and coaches must be reviewed and approved by the BCC Director for acceptance into the league, in order to ensure consistency with league rules and meet the goals and objectives of the league.

BCC Baseball reserves the right to refuse acceptance of any team and/or expel a team at any time if we feel that the team is not in compliance with the spirit and/or substance of the above mentioned policies.

B. Age

Second and third graders, generally 8 and 9 year olds.

C. Official Players

All players must be officially registered and assigned by the League management. No one who is not registered, and whose name does not appear on the official league roster, may ever play in a League game, or practice with a team. Use of a non-registered/non-

officially rostered player in a game will cause a forfeit and suspension of the manager.

D. Official Games/Time Limits

Generally, a game will consist of six full innings. An official game will consist of four innings (or three and one half innings if the home team is ahead) if there is a time, weather or darkness limitation. If the game is stopped before it becomes an official game, the game will be deemed a tie and not be replayed except by mutual agreement of the managers. If an official game is stopped at the end of a complete inning, the score stands. For official games stopped during an inning (top or bottom), the score will revert to the score at the end of the previous complete inning and will only be deemed suspended and to be restarted by mutual agreement of the managers.

In the event of a tie game at the end of 6 innings, the score shall remain a tie unless both managers agree to play one extra inning and the playing of that inning will not extend beyond the allotted time period.

Games must be started on time and completed within the scheduled time period, unless there is no game scheduled after the instant game in which case the game shall be played to completion. To facilitate timely completion, the coaches shall make sure that no new inning shall begin 1 hour 45 minutes after the scheduled start time of the game and the game shall not extend beyond 2 hours in total (the exception being, as stated above, if no game is scheduled to follow). If the game is not completed within the 2 hour time limit, the winner is the team that was ahead at the conclusion of the last complete inning.

Instruction during the game and other potentially dilatory activities are not allowed.

E. Start Time

Players should be at the field at least 15 minutes before the game is scheduled in order to begin the game on time.

The League expects that all managers, players, and parents should be entitled to rely upon the official schedule of games. As a result, managers are expected to have their teams prepared to play at the time/date/place indicated on the official League schedule. Therefore, it is generally NOT appropriate for a manager to rearrange games in derogation of the official League schedule. Where games must be postponed due to adverse weather, managers are expected to make best efforts to arrange suitable time/date/place to make the game up.

II. Administrative Matters

A. Line-Ups

At the start of each game, the managers of each team shall exchange a written batting order (line-up). (See Rule III A below.) No substitution is allowed in the line-up once the game has begun although a player may be passed over if unavailable due to injury, sickness or legitimate need to leave the game. A player arriving after the start of the games shall be inserted at the end of the line-up.

B. Number of Players

Each team must have at least eight (8) players and if they cannot field such a team after ten minutes of the scheduled start of the game, it will be considered a forfeit. (If agreeable to both managers, a forfeited game may be played unofficially for practice.) If at any time during a game, a team can only field seven (7) players for any reason (e.g. injuries, players having to leave, ejection of a player), the game shall be deemed forfeited by that team.

C. Specific Field Ground Rules

Prior to the game, the managers shall agree to necessary and reasonable ground rules (i.e. having to do with field conditions) not inconsistent with these rules, including agreement as to areas that are "out of play". The ability to set ground rules does not permit the managers to waive or modify these "rules and regulations". Managers shall be responsible for keeping spectators, players, equipment and other objects out of areas that are deemed to be "in play" in order to prevent interference with players, thrown balls, etc. In particular, all bats, helmets and other equipment shall be maintained behind a backstop or other fence (if available) to prevent interference with the game.

D. Run Limit

In order to allow for full games to be played and to minimize lopsided uncompetitive games, the team at bat will be limited to scoring 5 runs each inning. However a team that begins any at bat behind by more than 5 runs will be allowed to score as many runs as necessary in order to tie the score only. This five-run rule is in effect for the entire game, including the sixth inning. If the game is tied after six innings, extra innings will be played time permitting.

E. Team Representative

Prior to every baseball game, each team must identify an adult (likely a parent) as that team's "Team Representative" for that particular game. The Team Representative will be responsible for enforcing

player safety rules, with an emphasis on compliance with the Bat Safety Rule. The Team Representative shall be involved in the pregame meeting at home plate with the coaches and umpires (in leagues that use umpires). Unless no other adult is available, the head coach and assistant coach may not also be deemed the Team Representative. It is strongly advised by BCC Baseball that the Team Representative be someone other than one of the base coaches.

III. Offensive/Defensive Play Requirements

A. Batting Order

All players must bat in the predetermined order of the line-up which consists of every player in attendance.

B. Bat Safety Rule

Where there is no safe (fenced-off) on-deck batting location, the on-deck batter shall only be permitted to swing a bat while standing on the field between the dugout (or the bench) and home plate on the side of the field facing the back side of the batter at the plate (e.g., with a right-handed batter at the plate, the on-deck batter will stand on the third-base side of the field). No other player is permitted to swing a bat, including the batter in the hole.

C. Fielding Positions

All players on the team shall take the field for defensive play and shall field all positions except pitcher. No more than six players may take up positions in the infield: the first, second and third basemen, the short-stop, catcher, and one pitcher's helper. In each game each player shall play at least 3 innings in infield positions and at least one inning in an outfield position. The only exception to this rule is for a team which may have more than 12 players participating in a game in which case the manager shall comply to the extent possible. A manager's failure to comply with this rule shall cause forfeit of the game and suspension from the League. The League will not tolerate managers who do not rotate their players defensively as required by this rule. Managers are strongly encouraged to allow players to play more than one infield position in the course of a game or throughout the season.

i. Outfield Positions

To prevent accumulating players in the infield, where there is a dirt infield "skin" that delineates the start of the outfield, at the time of the pitch the outfielders shall not be positioned any closer than 50 feet from the base paths. The first, second, and third basemen and short stop may not be positioned forward toward home plate in such a manner to unfairly intimidate

batters or unreasonably expose those defensive players to risk of injury.

ii. Pitcher Helper Position

The position of pitcher's helper can be played to either side of the adult pitcher but prior to and during the pitch the pitcher's helper must stand near the mound and at least 3 feet further from the plate than the pitcher. A pitcher's helper may not "charge" the plate during the pitch but must stand in place until the ball is hit.

iii. Outfielders vs. Infielders

On balls hit to the infield, outfielders shall not take throws in place of infielders at second base. Keep outfielders in the outfield. Outfielders shall not make put-outs in lieu of infielders at the bases.

IV. Base Running

A. Basepath

The basepaths shall be 60 feet in length.

B. Bowling Over and Sliding

At no time and under no circumstances may a runner either "bowl over" a defensive player in pursuit of a base or slide head first into a base. So too, at no time may a defensive player purposefully "bowl over" a runner in pursuit of a hit or thrown ball. Sliding may only be done "feet first" at any base unless a player is returning to a base to avoid being picked off. Any player sliding headfirst into a base shall be ruled out.

Also, in order to protect both the runner and the catcher (or other defensive player) whenever there is a reasonable prospect of a defensive play at home plate the runner must slide rather than run through the plate. However, if the catcher has moved up the third base line with the ball or to receive the throw, the runner may try to evade the tag and does not have to slide. A runner who violates any portion of this rule is automatically deemed "out".

Catchers shall never block the plate while awaiting a throw by kneeling on or around the plate, thereby leaving a runner no access to the plate in a slide. Catchers should remain standing while awaiting a throw, thus leaving space for a sliding runner to touch the plate between or around the catcher's legs.

Managers are directed to familiarize their players with the protective purpose and application of this rule before games are played.

C. Play Termination

After a ball is hit, the play is terminated and runners must cease advancing when the defensive team has

returned the ball to an infielder who exercises control over the ball within the confines of the infield. Runners who have not reached the next base they are approaching at that time play is stopped must return to the base from which they came. To be clear, it does not matter how close to the next base the baserunner is when play is stopped. If the runner has not arrived at the next base the runner must go back.. If the defensive team opts to make a play on a base runner who is in-between bases rather than hold the ball to end the action, the ball remains "live" and the runners may advance at their risk until and unless the defensive team terminates the play by exercising control over the ball within the infield. Coaches should encourage players in-between bases to keep running until play is stopped in case the defense opts to make a play on the baserunner instead of terminating the play.

D. Stealing and Leading

There is no stealing or leading. Base runners must remain in contact with the base until the ball is hit by the batter. If runners leave the base early, they must return to the base and any ball hit on that pitch is rendered a nullity.

E. Dropped Third Strike

When the catcher drops a swinging "third strike" (not an uncaught foul tip or foul ball) the batter is out and may not run to first.

F. Infield Fly Rule

There is no infield fly rule.

G. Overthrows

Overthrows at home plate, first or third base resulting in the ball going out of play will cause the runners to be awarded one base in addition to the base on which they were standing, or to which they were already running. On overthrows to first base which go out of play, the runner shall be awarded second base only even if first base has been rounded at the time the ball goes out of play. If the ball does not go out of play, runners may advance at their own risk, subject to the Play Termination Rule in Section IV-C..

V. Pitching

A. Pitching Machines

If there is a pitching machine it shall be used instead of adult pitchers (see V-B below). The machine shall be positioned at a distance to the plate agreed upon before the game by the two managers (usually 45-46 feet). The machine shall stay in the same position for both teams' turns at bat throughout the game. The pitching speed shall be set for each offensive team at

the discretion of the respective team's manager/coach feeding balls into the machine. While the height and speed of the machine should generally be left unchanged throughout the team's "at bat", the manager/coach may adjust the height or speed of the pitch when necessary to accommodate an individual batter.

In the event that a batter hits a ball which strikes the pitching machine before being touched by any defensive player, the play is terminated immediately and the batter is awarded first base with a ground rule single. However, no other base runner may advance unless forced to advance because of the batter's assumption of first base. In this regard, the ground rule single acts as if the batter was walked, i.e., a pre-existing base runner on second and/or third would not advance if there was no base runner on first before the ground rule single was awarded. In no instance may a base runner advance more than one base as a result of being forced to the next base by the ground rule single, nor may the defensive team record an out against any base runner on the automatically terminated play by catching the batted ball on the fly after it hits the batting machine, by tagging a base runner, throwing to first base or otherwise.

In the event that a batter hits a ball which strikes the pitching machine or comes to rest in close proximity to the machine after being touched by a defensive player, the play is terminated immediately and all runners (including the batter) are awarded the bases to which they were headed at the time the ball is ruled dead.

B. Adult Pitching

If no pitching machine is available, the manager/coach or other designated adult of the team at bat will pitch overhand only to his or her team, from a point mutually agreed upon by the two managers at the beginning of the game. The adult pitcher may not field a batted ball or throw the ball for a defensive out, and must use maximum reasonable effort to avoid interfering with the fielding of the ball. A batted ball which strikes or is caught by the adult pitcher is rendered a nullity, requiring all runners to return to their bases and the batter to the plate where the pitch/strike count resumes as it was prior to the previous pitch. Note, this is different from the result described in Rule V-A above involving a batted ball striking the pitching machine.

C. Called Balls and Strikes

There are no called balls or strikes, no bunting and no walks or hit batsmen. A player continues to bat until he or she makes a hit, an out, or strikes out swinging, subject to a limit of six (6) pitches to be thrown to each batter. The adult pitcher shall keep track of the numbers of swinging strikes and the number of pitch-

es thrown and shall inform the batter when 3 pitches remain, 2 pitches remain, and 1 pitch remains. On any pitch, if a foul ball which rises above the batter's head is caught on the fly by the catcher the batter is out. On the sixth pitch, a foul ball which is not caught on the fly by a fielder (or a foul tip which is not caught by the catcher on the fly) shall not be counted as a pitch for purposes of the six pitch limit and the batter gets another pitch. The same treatment applies to a foul ball on each subsequent pitch until the batter strikes out, hits safely or is put out.

Note, managers shall not give batters additional or unlimited pitches beyond the limits established by this rule.

VI. Coaching:

A. Base Coaches

Adults designated by the respective managers shall serve simultaneously as the base coaches and as umpires during their respective team's "at bat". The first base coach shall be responsible for umpiring calls at home plate and at first base; the third base coach shall be responsible for umpiring calls at second and third base.

B. Defensive Coaching

Each team may designate one defensive coach who may assist that team's outfielders during their defensive half of the inning. The coach may stand in the outfield beyond the outfielders. The defensive coach must avoid interfering with any hit or thrown ball.

C. Criticizing the Umpires

Managers shall refrain (and shall take action to prevent their coaches, players, parents and fans) from criticizing the coach/umpires and from making anticipatory safe/out or fair/foul calls that are the responsibility of the designated coach/umpires.

D. Adult Participation in Defensive Plays

No adults may participate in any defensive plays (except for pitching to the batters).

VII. Mandatory/Prohibited Equipment:

A. Batter Equipment

All batters and base runners shall wear protective helmets at all times. See BAT RESTRICTION on website.

B. Catcher Equipment

All catchers shall wear a supporter and protective cup, catchers helmet with throat protector, face mask, chest protector and leg protectors.

C. Game Ball

The official game ball for the American League is the RIF # 5. The manager shall insure that the RIF #5 ball is used at all games and practices and make sure no other balls are used. Use of a regulation hardball is never permitted.

D. Uniform

While on the field during a game, players are required to wear the official League uniform, which at a minimum consists of League-issued hat and shirt.

VIII. Thunder/Lightning:

At the first instance of lightning or thunder Managers shall halt the game and remove their teams from the field to the security of cars or buildings that offer appropriate protection. If field conditions permit and where otherwise reasonable, consistent with protection of the players and others in attendance, the game may resume 15 minutes after the last instance of lightning or thunder.

IX. Other

A. Hectoring

Managers shall not permit their players, fans or parents to purposely hector or distract the opponent's players, either directly by comment or indirectly by the playing of music, singing, chanting or excessive cheering, even if ostensibly for your own batter. Upon the opposing manager's complaint in this regard, a manager shall take action to terminate the distracting behavior of his/her team.

B. Familiarity With Rules

All managers are expected to be fully familiar with these Rules and to carefully instruct their coaches and players on these Rules. Managers are also expected to bring the Rules to the game and to go over them with the umpires before the game to maximize efficient and orderly administration of the game.

C. Disputes

Any disputes over the Rules or judgment calls by the umpires shall be conducted in a brief, calm and dignified manner. If satisfaction is not obtained after such effort, the manager should simply note an appeal of the situation to the umpire and continue the game in a sportsmanlike manner. Appeals shall be filed after the game with the American League Commissioner.

Notes