

1. Overview

- (a) The rules set forth below are a local supplement to the Cal Ripken Rulebook. In the event of conflict, the rules set forth below take precedence over the Cal Ripken Rulebook.
- (b) By mutual consent, coaches may change the rules listed below prior to any given game *with the exception of rules regarding equipment, pitching and sliding into bases*, as these are player-safety rules.

2. Equipment

- (a) No metal cleats.
- (b) Non-wood bats must have the *USA Baseball Marking* with a $2\frac{5}{8}$ inch barrel maximum. One-piece wood bats are legal, but BBCOR bats are not. *Coaches and players knowingly using illegal bats may be suspended, as this is a player safety issue.*

3. Before the game

- (a) Home team shall occupy the third-base dugout, prepare the field, and give two new baseballs to the umpire.
- (b) Home team shall designate an official scorer, who will note the start time of the game and inform the umpire.

4. Length of game

- (a) Games are six innings.
- (b) Games are subject to a time limit. In the event of delay due to rain, the time clock will be paused.
 - i. For major and minors, no new inning shall be started if *one hour and forty minutes* have elapsed.
 - ii. For rookie (machine pitch), no new inning shall be started if *one hour and twenty-five minutes* have elapsed.
- (c) A game interrupted by rain or darkness is official if four innings have been completed (three-and-a-half if home team leads).
- (d) Regular season games interrupted by rain or darkness before becoming official will be re-played from the start.
- (e) Playoff games interrupted by rain or darkness will continue from the point of interruption. Time limits still apply; scorekeepers must note the time of the interruption.

5. Players

- (a) Number of players
 - i. Teams may play an official game with a minimum of seven players. A team playing with seven or eight players will not be required to take an out when reaching the ninth spot in the batting order.
 - ii. A team must have seven players present at ten minutes past the scheduled start of the game. If a team cannot field eight players at this time, the game will be declared a forfeit.
- (b) The batting order
 - i. All players must bat.
 - ii. Players arriving after the beginning of the game shall be added to the bottom of the batting order.
 - iii. If a player must leave mid-game due for any reason, that player's place in the batting order will be skipped and that player's team will not be required to take an out.
- (c) Defensive play
 - i. Teams may play ten players defensively. Only a pitcher, catcher, first base, second base, third base and shortstop are allowed on the dirt infield at the start of a pitch.
 - ii. Rookie (machine pitch) teams may have one "pitcher." This player may stand on either side of the pitching machine. All other infielders must be in regular positions at the start of the pitch.
 - iii. Free substitution is allowed defensively, except for pitcher in minors and majors where pitching rules set forth below must be followed.
 - iv. Coaches are encouraged to make sure all players play an equal number of defensive innings, and that all players play both infield and outfield.

6. Pitching

- (a) *Pitching rules are player safety rules, and may not be changed by agreement of coaches under any circumstances.*
- (b) Each pitcher is allowed a maximum of six innings per week, where a week begins on Sunday morning and ends Saturday night.
- (c) Innings in games that are rained out or otherwise canceled shall still count toward a pitcher's count for a week.
- (d) A single pitch in an inning counts as an inning.
- (e) The six-inning limit applies even if players are playing in multiple leagues on multiple teams; pitchers may not pitch three innings in our league and four innings in another. Coaches are responsible for monitoring players in such cases.
- (f) A pitcher who throws three innings in a day must have two full days off before pitching again. A pitcher who pitches three innings on Monday may not pitch again until Thursday.
- (g) Pitchers may throw only three innings in a game.
- (h) Starting pitchers may re-enter the game as pitcher; relief pitchers may not.
- (i) Pitchers are allowed eight warmup pitches between innings. Players who warm up a pitcher must wear a mask.

7. Specific rules

- (a) No leading off in rookie (machine pitch) or minors. Base runners may lead off in majors.
- (b) No base stealing in rookie (machine pitch). Minors baserunners may leave their base after the pitch has crossed home plate. Minors players may not advance to home on a passed-ball/wild-pitch during the month of April. Majors baserunners may steal at any time.
- (c) No balks will be called in minors. In majors, umpires should work with pitchers to help them understand and comply with the balk rule. Umpires have discretion to give warnings, and then to call balks if pitchers continue to violate the balk rule.
- (d) The infield fly rule will apply in majors only. An infield fly is a fair fly ball (not a line drive or bunt) that, in the judgment of the umpire, can be caught by an infielder, pitcher, or catcher with ordinary effort and when there are runners on first and second or first, second, and third and less than two outs. In case of an infield fly, the batter is out and runners may advance at their own risk.
- (e) The dropped third strike rule will apply in majors only. If the catcher fails to catch the ball on the fly on a third strike, and first base is open, or there are two outs, then the batter becomes a runner. A batter who delays or makes no effort to run to first may be called out at the discretion of the umpire.
- (f) Sliding
 - i. *Sliding rules are player safety rules, and may not be changed by agreement of coaches under any circumstances.*
 - ii. Runners advancing to second, third or home must execute a foot-first slide if a play (force or tag) is possible. Runners who are returning to base from a leadoff can slide back head first.
 - iii. If a runner fails to slide, the umpire shall issue a warning to that team. All subsequent runners on that team who fail to slide will be called out.
 - iv. If a runner intentionally makes contact with a fielder to dislodge a ball, the runner will be called out. (That is, there are no warnings to be issued for this conduct.)
- (g) Teams may score a maximum of six runs in an inning.
- (h) Rookie (machine pitch) rules
 - i. Each player will bat until they get seven pitches or three strikes, whichever comes first. A foul ball on the seventh pitch will mean an additional pitch.
 - ii. Batter/runners and runners are allowed to advance only one base on batted balls that do not leave the infield dirt. If the ball leaves the infield dirt, then batter/runners and runners can advance two bases (at their risk). Once the ball returns to the infield dirt, batter/runners and runners may not advance past the base they are advancing to.
 - iii. A batted ball that hits the pitching machine is a dead ball; the batter gets a single and all runners advance one base from where they began the play.