



# 2023 AYBS AAA Spring Baseball

## Local Rules & Regulations

The following Local Rules & Regulations supplement and supersede the official Little League Rules, Regulations, & Policies. If a situation is not addressed below, the Little League Rules, Regulations, & Policies will govern.

### Playing the Game

- **Bat Standards.** Players are only permitted to use a bat with the USA Baseball stamp. No older bats will be permitted into play - <https://www.littleleague.org/playing-rules/bat-information>. If a player comes to bat with an older bat it must be removed from play.
- The home team shall provide game balls. Regulation baseballs provided by the league will be used in all games. Coaches shall maintain game balls and rotate as needed.
- Games will consist of six innings. **Safety Judgment** should be exercised in terms of darkness and weather.
- **Home Field.** The home field dugout will be on the third base line.
- Bases will be set at the regulation 60 feet.
- Catchers will be outfitted with complete catcher equipment, **including a cup** (a cup is recommended for all players).
- All batters must wear a helmet fitted with a faceguard.
- All base runners must wear a helmet (no faceguard needed).
- One head coach and up to three assistant coaches will be allowed on the field and in the team area. **All volunteers (coaches and otherwise) MUST** complete a CORI form prior to engaging in AYBS activities, such as assisting with practices.
- **A game may be started and completed with only 8 players.** In the event that a team will have less than 8 players at the start of a game, players may be "called over" from the AAA team that is not playing that night. Any player that is "called over" shall not pitch, catch, or play the infield and should bat last in batting order. After the AA season has started, AA players will be allowed as call-ups. Coaches should not unilaterally make call over or call up decisions, and should be run by **VP Player Agent, VP Baseball** or **AAA Coordinator**.

- **Complete Game.** A complete game is 6 full innings. A game is considered complete after 4 full innings have been played. If the time limit is reached during the bottom half of innings 4, 5, or 6, and the home team is winning - the game is over and complete. If the time limit is reached before inning 4 begins, the remaining inning(s) will be played at a later date.
- **Time limit.** The scoreboard timer is the official timer for all games and no new inning may be started after 1 hour and 45 minutes for weekend games and 1 hour and 35 minutes for weekday games.
- Innings end when 3 outs are recorded **or 5 runs have scored**, whichever occurs first.
- In the final inning, if the visiting team is losing, they may score unlimited runs up to a maximum of 5 more than the home team's total. If the home team is losing in the bottom of the last inning, they may score unlimited runs until the game is won or ended with 3 outs.
- **Mercy Rule.** The mercy rule will be in effect when there is a 15-run lead and the losing team has had 4 at bats.
- **Tie Games.** If a game is tied after 6 innings, extra innings may be played to break the tie, subject to the time limit. If the game is tied and no new inning can be started due to the time limit, the result of the game will be a tie.
- Pitches delivered during extra innings are subject to the pitch-count/days of rest rules discussed in "Pitching" below.
- **Format for Extra Innings.** The first extra inning will be played with each team placing a runner at second base. The runner shall be the player that made the third out for the batting team in the prior inning. If the game is still tied after one extra inning of play, additional extra innings may be played. These extra innings will be played with each team placing runners on second and third base. The runners shall be the player that made the third out plus the previous hitter for the batting team in the prior inning.
- **Defensive play minimums.** The following minimums must be observed for all players on each team before the completion of a games:
  - 2 of the first 4 innings at any defensive position (PROPOSAL)
  - 3 of the first 5 innings at any defensive position
  - 4 of the first 6 innings at any defensive position
  - 1 of the first 4 innings at an infield position (NEW)

A team/coach in violation of the minimal play rules will be subject to forfeiture of any offending games, as decided by the AYBS Board. If a coach has a safety concern about a player in regards to minimum play requirements, that coach needs to discuss the concern with the Player Agent, VP of Baseball, or AAA coordinator prior to the start of games.

- The umpire(s) will cover the rules with both head coaches prior to the start of a game.
- Any concerns during the game shall be addressed between innings in a professional manner with both coaches and the umpires.

- **Pitch Count and Scorekeeper.** Each team must designate a scorekeeper and an official pitch count recorder. Teams should maintain a scorebook and pitch count for their team and the opposing team. At the end of each inning the scorekeeper from each team should meet and confirm pitch counts. The pitch count recorder must provide the current pitch count for any pitcher when requested by either manager or any umpire. A coach must inform the umpire and the opposing coach when a pitcher has delivered his/her maximum limit of pitches for the game. Each coach is responsible for updating their pitch counts on the AYBS website within 24 hours of the game's conclusion.
- **Scores.** The head coach of the home team is responsible for entering in the final score of their game on the AYBS website within 24 hours of the game's conclusion.
- **Game delays/postponements due to weather.** Any game that has gone less than 4 innings and is called due to weather conditions will be replayed from the beginning.
- If the home team is ahead after 3 ½ innings it will be considered a complete game.
- Scores/results for games called after 4 innings will be based on the last full completed inning.
- Pitches delivered in the called game are subject to the pitch-count/days rest rules discussed below.

### Weather Protocol

- Decisions on weather-related delays or postponements will be made with the safety of players and fans as top priority. Coaches may make the call; however, they must inform the **AAA Coordinator** or **VP Baseball** and the **Umpire Coordinator** of any decision ASAP.

### Pre-Game

- **Coaches** and the **AAA Coordinator** or **VP Baseball** should communicate in advance of game time. If possible the field should be inspected for playability. Games should NOT be played on a wet/muddy field to prevent damage.
- The decision to postpone the game should be made no later than one hour before game time to allow communication to parents and umpires. If a game is postponed it will be the coaches' responsibility to work together and with the **AAA Coordinator** to reschedule the game.

### In-Game

- **Rain:** The umpires shall confer with both coaches and determine a reasonable delay. Teams should remain in their dugouts ready to play. The time limit clock will continue.

- **Lightning:** If lightning is spotted the game shall be stopped **immediately**. All players will leave the field and remain in the dugouts. Parents and spectators are encouraged to go to their cars. The game may not resume until 20 minutes after the LAST lightning sighting. The time limit clock will continue.

## **Batting**

- **A continuous batting order** is always in effect.
- Players who arrive after the start of a game shall be inserted at the end of the lineup.
- On-deck batter can leave the team area and be in dugout. On front field, on deck batter may be in the warm-up area, and batter on double deck can be in dugout. Bats and helmets may be kept in dugouts.
- If a batter is walked, the batter is allowed **first base only**. The batter is not allowed to round first base and steal second. Once play begins with the next batter, the runner at first becomes eligible to steal second base.
- Any runners on base may attempt to steal.
- If a batter is hit by a pitch, as determined by the home plate umpire, the batter shall be awarded first base. A pinch runner may take first base if the hit batsman is physically unable to continue playing.
- Any batter who throws their bat will receive one warning and both coaches will be notified. Subsequent violations will result in the batter being called out and the play ruled dead.
- Bunting is allowed. No slash bunts (batter squares to bunt, then swings to hit). If a slash bunt occurs, batter will be called out and ball is dead. Any runners that advanced will return to their original base. This is a safety issue.
- Infield fly rule is in effect.
  - Runners on first and second or bases loaded with less than 2 outs, pop up to the infield is an automatic out. The ball is live, runners are not required to, but may, advance.

## **Base Running**

- A runner may only attempt a steal/leave the base as the ball crosses home plate. This should be instructed to the players and reminded by the base coaches. If the runner leaves early the play should be ruled dead and the runner(s) sent back and the team warned. Subsequent violations by any base runner on that team will result in the runner being called out.

- Runners will be allowed more than one base on an overthrow per play. It is a live ball until it gets back to the pitcher. If a runner rounds a base and is in continuous motion towards the next base, he may continue – **coaches are encouraged to manage this strategy carefully.**
- Play stops when the pitcher is on the mound (the circular area within approximately 3 feet of the pitching rubber) with the ball. Runners in motion may continue if they do not stop. Runners not in motion must return to their base. This will encourage players to get the ball into the pitcher immediately.
- Catcher's interference will not be called. Rather, the umpire and/or coaches will provide instruction to the catcher. It will be a NO PITCH dead ball and players may not advance.
- Obstruction and interference will be called.
- **Sliding.** There should be no contact between a runner and a defensive player at any time.
- The runner must slide into a base (except first base) every time there is a possible play being made at that base. At the same time, the defensive player may not position himself/herself to block the base when the runner is attempting to slide into that base.
- Should the runner fail to slide during a play being made, and the defensive player is not blocking the base, then the runner is out. If the play is being made at the plate the run will not count. **Remember, the intent is to eliminate contact between the two players.**
- If a defensive player clearly blocks a base the runner will be called safe and the defensive player immediately instructed on the problem. Repeated violations may result in the player being removed from the position upon discussion between the umpire and both coaches.
- Head-first slides are **not allowed**, and the player will be called out. Players may dive back to the previous base just rounded.

### Stealing

- Up to four steals per inning, including one steal of home, will be allowed.
- Stealing of home is allowed so we can teach our players and gravitate towards a real game. This is not in place to see how many times a team can take advantage of a catcher.
- Coaches should control their runners and use good judgment and sportsmanship when stealing.
- Stealing second base on a walk is prohibited. The batter may not continue on towards 2nd after a walk. (See **Batting** above.)
- For purposes of the steal limits, **an attempted steal is considered a steal.** An attempted steal results in a runner being thrown out.
- If multiple baserunners attempt a steal on the same pitch, each attempt counts toward the inning limit.

- No baserunner may advance on an overthrow of a steal. Encourage your catchers to throw down ALL the time. Once the thrown ball reaches its intended base, the ball becomes dead until the next pitch is delivered. If multiple baserunners are in motion before a throw reaches its intended base, those runners are permitted to steal provided that the team is still within their steal limits.
- If a runner attempts to steal after the limit is reached and is thrown out, the runner is out and any advancing runners shall return to their previous base, or if the runner is safe, the runner and any advancing runners shall return to their previous base.

## Pitching

- Players should not be used as pitchers until they have demonstrated enough control and poise to throw strikes to live batters in a game situation. Coaches should, however, strive to develop pitchers whenever possible.
- A pitcher will be replaced on the mound if he hits three batters in one game. It is the umpire's discretion if the batter has been hit. Batters who step into a pitch or fail to move from a pitch are not considered hit by a pitch, as determined by the home plate umpire.
- If a pitcher walks four consecutive batters in one inning, then they must be replaced on the mound by another pitcher. If a pitcher hits a batter, it counts as a walk so if he walks 3 batters, then hits the 4th, he must be replaced. If the 4th walk ends an inning due to run limit, the pitcher must still be replaced at the start of the next inning.
- No dropped third strike rule.
- **Catcher overthrows.** When the catcher returns the ball after a pitch, runners may advance without incurring a stolen base attempt, if the ball gets away from the pitcher and off the mound. A runner who attempts to advance in such a situation is subject to being thrown out by the defense. This rule is in place not to take advantage of pitchers and catchers, but rather to keep runners paying attention, and to encourage the defense to back up all throws.
- A pitcher once removed from the mound may not return as a pitcher.
- A pitcher must be removed upon reaching 75 pitches in a game; however, the pitcher may remain in the game at another position. If a pitcher reaches the 75-pitch limit while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any one of the following conditions occur:
  - The batter reaches base;
  - The batter is put out; or
  - The third out is made to complete the half-inning.
- A pitcher may play catcher in the same day IF they throw less than 41 pitches. If they throw 41 or more, they may not catch for the remainder of the day.
- Note there is no prohibition on a player who has played catcher from playing pitcher in the same game; however, coaches should keep in mind the spirit and intent of the rule and make decisions accordingly.

- Pitchers in the AAA division must adhere to the following rest requirements:
  - 66+ pitches = 4 calendar days of rest
  - 51-65 pitches = 3 calendar days of rest
  - 36-50 pitches = 2 calendar days of rest
  - 21-35 pitches = 1 calendar day of rest
  - 20 or < pitches = 0 calendar days of rest
- The pitching rest rules apply to the number of pitches thrown in an AYBS game, an AAU game, or any other team play capacity (i.e., if a player threw 25 pitches on Saturday for their AAU team, the pitcher may not pitch in an AYBS game until Monday). It is the coach's responsibility to know when his/her player has pitched and how many pitches were thrown and to abide by the rules set forth herein. In addition, coaches are strongly encouraged to use caution and not over-use any pitcher irrespective of AYBS pitching rest rules, for example, when a player pitches and catches.
- **Pitching during the Playoffs.** All pitching rules as far as pitch count and days of rest will remain in effect.
- **There are no balks.** However, if a pitcher is in his windup, the batter squares around to bunt and the pitcher stops, then it is considered a dead ball NO PITCH. The umpire or coach should use the opportunity to instruct the pitcher.
- **There are no intentional walks.** However, a pitcher may mix up pitches and not put it right down the pipe. Mixing up the pitches and making it challenging for the batter is considered different than intentionally throwing 4 balls outside the strike zone.
- A pitcher must deliver the pitch from the rubber after giving the batter time to get set. No quick pitches.

### Playoff Seeding

- To break regular season record ties and to accurately slot teams into the seeded single elimination tournament, AYBS has adopted the following rules to break ties:
  - 1. Winning Percentage - Highest of:  $(\text{wins} + (\text{ties} * 0.5)) / \text{games}$ .
  - 2. Head-to-Head Winning Percentage - Highest of all teams tied after computing #1 of:  $(\text{Total Number of Wins against tied teams in \#1} + (\text{Total Number of Ties against tied teams in \#1} * 0.5)) / \text{Total Number of Games played against tied teams in \#1}$ .
  - 3. Head-to-Head Run Differential - Highest of: Total number of runs scored when playing all tied teams in #2 - total number of runs allowed when playing tied teams in #2.
  - 4. Runs Allowed Per Game - Lowest of: average number of runs allowed per game.
  - 5. Runs Scored Per Game - Highest of: average number of runs scored per game.
- During the playoffs, teams will NOT reseed.

## Miscellaneous

- **Summer Eligibility.** In order to be eligible for our Summer baseball tournament teams (Tondorf, Sizzler, Sparkler), a player would need to be present for a minimum of 50% of the games which their Spring team has played, as measured at the time of the Summer team selection meeting. Where extenuating circumstances arise (ie injury, illness, family emergencies), exceptions to this policy may be requested, and will be reviewed on a case by case basis by the AYBS Board.
- **Parking.** ONLY head coach's vehicles are permitted past the gate. If at any time a board member spots parents' vehicles past the fence the game will be stopped until the cars have been moved. Game clocks will not stop while cars are being moved.
- **Umpires.** Steve Clark will be coordinating the umpires. If for any reason the game is going to be canceled it is the coaches' responsibility to contact Mike Jenkins and Steve Clark directly.

## Contact Information

<b>AAA Coordinator</b>	Mike Jenkins	508-686-6567 (C)
<b>Umpire Coordinator</b>	Steve Clark	617-312-4806 (C)
<b>VP Player Agent</b>	Tim MacKay	508-843-6296 (C)
<b>VP of Baseball</b>	Jeff Lemay	617-616-8053 (C)

## Sportsmanship

Coaches should exercise the highest standards of sportsmanship and fair play and set the example for their players. The main goal is fair play, fun and an enjoyable learning experience. Winning should be secondary to a great experience and improvement.

Coaches and assistant coaches will maintain bench discipline to protect players, fans, reduce distractions and help keep players "in the game". When a team is batting only two coaches are permitted on the field in the first and third base coaches' boxes. A player may coach a base but must always wear a helmet.

Only head coaches (or assistant coaches filling in for head coaches) may approach an umpire, along with the opposing coach, on a disputed call or a question on a rule. Once the umpire renders a decision on a call, it is FINAL. Continual questioning of a call will not be tolerated. All our umpires are young adults trying to do the very best they can. Repeated questioning aimed at intimidating or influencing an umpire's call is not permitted regardless of the call.

Coaches are reminded that examples are being set, so have a quiet discussion with the umpire out of hearing range of the players. Coaches are reminded that it is always their responsibility to support the umpires.

Unsportsmanlike conduct: such as arguing with umpires, opposing coaches, players, or fans will not be tolerated. Coaches will be brought before the Board for any controversial incidents. The Board will decide on any necessary disciplinary action on a case by case basis. **All coaches and parents are expected to adhere to the AYBS Code of Conduct.**

**Conclusion:** It is very important to remember that the purpose of AYBS Baseball is to continue to *develop the skills and fundamentals of baseball* and to teach *sportsmanship* and *teamwork*. Competition is an important concept to learn, but each player should feel and be treated like an important and valued member of the team by coaches and team members

### **Mission Statement**

Ashland Youth Baseball & Softball (AYBS) is a non-profit, volunteer-run organization dedicated to providing the youth of Ashland with opportunities to play tee-ball, baseball, and softball in a safe, supportive environment. AYBS aspires to be an outstanding educational- athletic organization that provides a high-quality experience, in which every athlete:

Is coached using the principles of the Little League Double-Goal Coach, where winning is an objective but more importantly life skills are taught

Has fun playing the game

Feels like an important part of the team regardless of performance

Learns "life lessons" that have value beyond the playing field

Learns the skills, tactics and strategies of the game and improves as a player.

We recognize coaches most directly make this possible, so we provide all coaches with the tools to succeed as Little League Double-Goal Coaches. We are committed to creating a culture in which coaches, parents, fans, umpires and athletes work together to achieve our mission.