

**Katy PONY Baseball
Rec League Ground Rules
Shetland Division (Age 6)**



Managers are required to have a copy of the rules in their possession for each game.

Objectives

- Shetland Division focuses on instruction of beginning players.
- Team Managers and coaches will teach players to properly swing a bat, catch, throw and run the bases.
- Team Managers and coaches will teach players how to play different defensive positions throughout the season.

Sportsmanship

- Unsportsmanlike behavior will not be tolerated.
- Umpires will maintain control and have the authority to eject or remove players, coaches or spectators from the facility. Any manager, coach, player or spectator demonstrating unsportsmanlike behavior may be ejected from the game by the umpire and may be suspended for additional games.
- Umpires should not be approached by parents or spectators either during or after the game under any circumstances.
- For the safety of all players and to maintain integrity of the game, organized cheering or chanting is not allowed while the batter is preparing to hit the ball. This also applies to the dugouts. Like all rules, enforcement is subject to umpire judgment.
- Razzing, heckling, chanting or making disparaging remarks or noises directed at team managers, assistant coaches, players or spectators in any manner is prohibited. Shakers and other types of noise makers are not allowed.
- Foul and abusive language will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Cursing or throwing equipment is grounds for an automatic ejection from the game and/or the facilities by the umpire.
- There is a zero-tolerance policy for fighting, making threats or taking physical action. Any such occurrence will be immediately reported to the Board and the proper authorities.

Umpires

- An umpire is provided by the league for Shetland 6 Division games.
- If a league umpire is not available, the Shetland 6 Division Director should be contacted immediately.
- If a league umpire is not available, the team managers or other league representatives may need to be called upon to umpire and are expected to follow the rules without exception. When this occurs, the batting coach at home plate will be the umpire in charge. Use your best judgment and common sense.
- Each umpire has the authority to rule on any point not specifically covered in these rules.
- Any umpire's decision which involves judgment, such as, but not limited to, whether a batted ball was fair or foul, whether a pitch is a strike or a ball, or whether a runner is safe or out, is final. No player, manager or substitute shall object to any such judgment decision.
- The decision of the umpire will be final. Protests are not allowed.

Coaching - Administrative

- Players must register and play in the division that complies with the league's age chart.
- Shetland 6 will hold player tryouts and drafts. There will be no coach or friend requests acknowledged for Shetland 6. All players registered will be selected to a team.
- Any person wanting to be considered as a Team Manager or Assistant Coach must submit an application of intention to coach to the KPB Board. All coaches must submit a form, provide a copy of a valid ID, and pass a background check.
- The KPB Board will approve all Team Managers. The KPB Board reserves the right to interview all new applicants for Team Manager.
- All Team Managers and Assistant Coaches are always expected to conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner and must teach clean, sportsmanlike baseball. The KPB Board and/or Shetland 6 Division Director reserves the right to replace any Team Manager or Assistant Coach at any time for any cause upon majority vote by the Board.
- Team Managers and/or assistant coaches will not recruit players during registration or during the season from within the league to support any interest they may have in an Open League team. This will be grounds for expulsion.

- All Team Managers are encouraged to conduct a team meeting with parents and players once the Team Manager has received the team roster. This team meeting is encouraged to foster good team communications, discuss expectations, identify team volunteers, field questions, discuss practice schedules, etc.
- The Team Manager is responsible for having a representative from their team attend the “Team Parent” meeting. Attendance is required.
- Team Managers are to complete and submit a schedule request form to the Shetland 6 Division Director if they are unavailable for practice or games any days of the week. These requests do not guarantee that a scheduled game or practice session will not conflict with the day/date(s) requested.
- Team Managers will communicate to all team members that KPB maintains a website and a rainout line to communicate field status. These are the only two sources of information (other than the Team Manager) that should be used. Under no circumstance should players or family members contact the Facility Director to check on field/game status.
- KPB Board develops all game schedules. Rainout makeup games are scheduled by the Facility Director based on first available field openings. Schedule requests are not considered for rainout makeup games.
- All concerns or questions can be directed to the Shetland 6 Division Director.

Coaching - Game Play

- Each volunteer will be issued a badge which must be worn at all times while on the field or in the dugout.
- Teams may have no more than 4 coaches and 1 team parent in the dugout at any time.
- Players, team managers, coaches and team parents must remain in the dugouts, on the benches or in the prescribed areas throughout the game.
- Coaches on Offense: The offensive team can have 3 coaches on the field -- 2 base coaches and a batting coach -- positioned at 1st base, 3rd base, and at home plate.
- Coaches on Defense: The defensive team can have 3 coaches on the field -- 2 in the outfield and 1 just outside the dugout to provide verbal instructions to the defensive team.
- Once the game is in play, no team manager or base coach can make physical contact with any players on the field of play. If this occurs, the umpire will declare the player out and the player will return to the dugout.
- Teams should have no more than 3 meetings per week, not to exceed 4 hours total, including games. Three or more players with one or more coaches present will constitute a meeting.
- Pre-game warm-ups should be held in the outfield or common areas – no infield practice before games.
- Parents should never “coach” from the stands or outside the fences. Please allow your teams on field coaches to do their jobs.
- No jewelry will be worn by any player, except for medical identification.
- Cell phones or any other type of communication device cannot be used on the field of play or in dugouts.
- Tobacco and alcohol in any form is not allowed in the dugouts, buildings, stands or playing areas.
- Dugouts must be cleaned of litter before leaving.
- Team Managers are required to have a copy of these rules in their possession for each game.
- Each Team Manager will provide a copy of their defensive position lineups before the start of game to ensure that proper player rotation (infield/outfield) is adhered to.

Game Length / Time Limits

- Games are 5 innings, but no inning will start beyond 1 hour and 5 minutes after the official starting time. If the game is tied at the end of regulation, it will remain a tie (no extra innings).
- Time begins upon umpire’s notification to the team managers. Subsequent innings begin the moment the third out is made (or fifth run scores) in the previous inning. The umpire is the sole judge of time.
- The game is completed when the time limit is reached and additional play will not change the outcome.
- If time expires while the home team is batting and winning, the umpire will announce, *“Time has expired, ball game”* before the next batter enters the batter’s box, not during a player’s “at bat”. If time expires while the visiting team is batting and is behind in the score and can mathematically tie or take the lead, the umpire will announce, *“Time has expired, we will complete the inning”*. If time expires while the visiting team is batting and winning, and the home team cannot mathematically tie or take the lead, the umpire will announce, *“Time has expired, ball game”*.
- If the umpire suspends and/or calls a game due to weather or other hazardous conditions, it is an official game if 2½ innings (home team leading) or 3 innings have been completed, or if the time limit has been reached. Team Managers must check with the umpire and/or Facility Director to ensure it is clear when a game has been suspended or cancelled.

Run Rules

- A maximum of 5 runs allowed per inning per team (3 outs or 5 runs will constitute an inning for the offensive team).
- The game is called if a team is behind by 15 runs after 3 complete innings or 10 runs after 4 innings.

Scorekeeping

- Both teams -- Home and Visitor -- will provide a scorekeeping volunteer. The Home team's scorekeeper maintains the official scorebook; the Visitor's scorekeeper manages the scoreboard.
- The Home scorekeeper for the first game of the day will get the official scorebook and scoreboard controller from the concession stand and bring it to the Field Press Box. Unless the game is the last Shetland 6 game scheduled for the day on that field, the scorekeeper will leave the scorebook in the press box for the next game.
- The Visitor scorekeeper for the last game of the day will return both the official scorebook and scoreboard controller to the concession stand.
- The Home scorekeeper will fill in all game information in the scorebook, including Team Names, Date, Time, Field Number, Batting Orders, and Scorekeeper Name. The Home scorekeeper will record all runs and outs made by inning for each team throughout the game.
- Both scorekeepers must sit in the press box during the game, unless physically unable to.
- Scorekeepers or others are not allowed to coach from the press box. Children are not allowed in the press box at any time.
- Scores will be posted, and standings will be maintained on the KPB website during the season to allow for proper seeding for post season play.

Roster

- There is no minimum number of players required to start a game.
- Prior to starting the game, Team Managers will exchange copies of the game lineup, including player names, uniform numbers, defensive positions, and batting order.
- Every player present for a game is in the batting order for the duration of the game. In the case of batting out of order, regular baseball rules apply -- the player who should have batted (the proper batter) is called out. Any hit or advance made by the batter is nullified. The only exception is for bathroom breaks, with only one bathroom break allowed per player per game while on offense.
- Any late arriving player(s) will assume the last position in the batting order, regardless of when they arrive for the game.
- If a player is unable to continue playing due to injury or illness, the team will not be penalized when it is the missing player's turn to bat.
- Players who must leave before the end of the game may do so. Their position in the batting order will be ignored for the rest of the game and no out will be charged.
- Players not registered with Katy PONY Baseball and not assigned to the team are ineligible. Players cannot participate in more than one PONY baseball division (i.e., Shetland and Pinto) at the same time.
- Only players who have played in the Shetland 6 division are eligible to participate in the KPB Shetland 6 All-Star program.

Equipment - The Ball

- A regulation league provided Official Tee Ball will be used for all league games. A Training Tee Ball is not an acceptable ball and is prohibited from league play. If it is discovered that a training ball is used, an out will be assigned to that team. Any questions regarding the type of ball can be directed to the Shetland 6 Division Director.

Equipment - The Bat

- Team Managers are expected to check each player's equipment prior to each game.
- PONY Baseball has adopted the USA Baseball bat standard ([USABat Standard](#)). Except for -3 BBCOR certified, all 2 5/8", 2 1/2" and 2 1/4" barrel bats (-5, -7, -9, etc.) must be certified with the USABat licensing stamp on the bat in order to be used for play.
- The bat barrel must be no larger than 2 5/8" and no more than 42 inches in length. Bats cannot be dented, cracked, modified or misshaped.
- T-Ball and Coach-pitch bats cannot be used in any Division other than Shetland (T-Ball).
 - Because Pinto Division uses a regulation baseball and not a safety ball, Coach-pitch bats cannot be used in the coach pitch (Pinto) Division.
- If an illegal bat is detected after a ball is hit, the batter is out, and base runners will return to their original base prior to the hit. The Team Manager will be removed from the game and may be suspended for the next scheduled game.
- Any questions regarding bats can be directed to the Shetland 6 Division Director.

Equipment - The Tee

- Only league-approved batting tees are allowed for the Shetland Division. Any questions regarding the type of tee can be directed to the Shetland 6 Division Director.

Equipment - The Glove

- It is recommended that each player bring a baseball glove of proper size and fit. Plastic toy gloves are not allowed as they can crack and can cause injury in case of glove failure. Any questions regarding gloves can be directed to the Shetland 6 Division Director.

Equipment - The Uniform

- Players must wear their league provided Team Jersey and Team Cap, along with baseball pants, socks and appropriate footwear (cleats preferred) in order to participate in league play.

Batting

- The batting tee will be placed on top of home plate, covering home plate, by the batting coach, who is responsible for removal prior to any play at home plate. If the batting coach fails to remove the tee from home plate before a base runner hits the plate, the batting team will receive an automatic out, and no run allowed at home plate.
- Batters are not allowed to adjust the tee or take practice swings after the ball has been placed on the tee. A practice swing includes the batter "measuring" or placing the bat to the tee with the ball on it. PENALTY: Strike.
- Batters are not permitted to bunt at the ball on the batting tee. PENALTY: Strike.
- The batter will be called out (strike out) after failing to hit the ball after five swings at the ball on the tee.
- Any batted ball that does not travel beyond the 10-foot infield arc will be considered a "fair territory" foul ball. If the ball touches the 10-foot infield arc and remains in contact with the arc, it is considered a fair ball.
- Verbal instructions to batters are permitted, but physical positioning of players is not allowed.
- The penalty for a batter throwing a bat is umpire's discretion and can result in a warning, an out and/or ejection.

Base Running

- When the ball is in the possession of an infielder and, in the umpire's judgment, all play on the runner(s) has ceased, the umpire shall call "*Time*". The ball is dead and shall be returned to home plate.
- When the ball is live, base runners (going from one base to the other) can advance at their own peril (risk of being put out). Once the ball is declared dead, no further advancement by the offense can be made. There is no halfway mark and runners will not be returned unless advancement was made after the ball was declared dead. To add further clarity:
 - a) If a fielder attempts to make a play on a base runner, the play continues. If a play is attempted and the fielders make an error, the play continues, and base runners can advance.
 - b) If an infielder does not attempt to make a play (maintaining possession of the ball in the infield) and runners make no attempt to advance, the umpire will call the ball dead.
 - c) The key baseball component is that the lead runner must be stopped for the play to be over and ball declared dead.
- The ball is considered live if the ball is in the possession of an outfielder.
- Base runners are not permitted to steal bases and will remain in contact with the base until the ball is hit. PENALTY: If a base runner is off the base when the ball is hit, the base runner is out, and the ball is in play.
- When an out is made on a base runner, the base runner must leave the field of play and return to the dugout.
- If an infielder is attempting to tag a runner, the runner is out if they move more than 3 feet either direction from the base path they have established. The base path is measured from where the runner is, not from a direct line between bases, so a runner can round 1st base and make a huge arc toward 2nd with no penalty. For purposes of this rule, the base path is basically 6 feet wide but it's not always directly between the bases -- it's from where the runner is.
- Base runners may "tag up" (be in contact with the base they were on at the start of the play) after a fly ball is caught and can attempt to advance to the next base when the fly ball is first touched by the fielder. When tagging up, the base runner must re-trace their steps. For example: If the base runner started on 1st base and made it around second base and was advancing towards 3rd base before realizing that they need to tag up, the base runner must run back and tag 2nd base, then back to 1st base to properly tag up. The base runner cannot cut across the infield to 1st base, they must tag 2nd base first.
- If a base runner is hit by a fair batted ball, the base runner is out for interference, the batter is awarded 1st base and the ball is dead unless the following exceptions occur:
 - *If a defensive player attempts to make a play on the ball but fails to field the ball and then the ball hits the base runner, in the judgment of the umpire, the base runner shall not be called out by the umpire, the play continues, and the ball is live.*
 - *If the base runner is hit by a fair batted ball after a fielder first contacted the ball, in the judgment of the umpire, the base runner shall not be called out by the umpire, the play continues, and the ball is live.*

- Obstruction, in the judgment of the umpire, is the act of a fielder who, while not in possession of the ball and not in the act of fielding the ball, impedes the progress of any base runner. When obstruction occurs, the umpire shall call or signal "Obstruction." If a play is being made on the obstructed runner, or if the batter/runner is obstructed before touching first base, the ball is dead and all runners shall advance, without liability to be put out, to the bases they would have reached, in the umpire's judgment, if there had been no obstruction. The obstructed runner shall be awarded at least one base beyond the base last legally touched before the obstruction. Any preceding runners, forced to advance by the award of bases as the penalty for obstruction, shall advance without liability to be put out.
 - **Exception:** *If a fielder is about to receive a thrown ball and if the ball is in flight directly toward and near enough to the fielder so he must occupy his position to receive the ball he may be considered in the act of fielding a ball. It is entirely up to the judgment of the umpire as to whether a fielder is in the act of fielding a ball. After a fielder has tried to field a ball and missed, he can no longer be in the act of fielding the ball. For example, if an infielder dives at a ground ball and the ball passes him and he continues to lie on the ground and delays the progress of the runner, he very likely has obstructed the runner.*

Defense

- Ten players should be used defensively; six in the infield and four in the outfield. Free substitution.
- No player may sit on the bench more than one consecutive inning unless the player refuses to play or is unable to play.
- Good baseball fundamentals will be taught – fielders should learn to throw to the proper base and should be discouraged from running down base runners to make an unassisted out.
- Every player must play at least two innings at an infield position each game. Team Managers should provide every player with an equal opportunity to play infield and outfield to progress their development.
- No infield fly rule. Infielders must catch fly balls.
- Infielders may not block the path of a base runner or guard the base when they are not in possession of the ball. If an infielder interferes with a base runner, an "Obstruction Call" will be signaled by the umpire and the runner will be deemed safe at the base he/she was advancing to.
- Outfielders must remain in the grass approximately half way between the infield dirt and the outfield fence until the ball is put into play.
- Outfielders must throw or hand the ball to an infielder. Outfielders are not allowed to tag a base runner or run to a base to make an out.
- The catcher will stand at least 6 feet behind the tee and at an angle from the batter – towards 1st base for right-handed batters and 3rd base side for left-handed batters.
- The catcher may field the position defensively once the ball is in play but must not interfere with the batter and/or base runner.
- The catcher must always wear a batting helmet.
- The player fielding the pitcher's position must remain in contact with the pitcher's plate until the ball is put into play.
- Any batted ball that travels beyond the 10-foot infield arc is considered to be "in play".

Post Season Tournament Rules

- Post Season Tournament play, if applicable, will be determined by the league.
- Seeding will be determined by: (1) won-loss record, with ties counting as a half win and a half loss, (2) head-to-head – used only when 2 teams are tied, (3) total runs allowed, (4) total runs scored, (5) coin flip.
- Home team is highest seed (lowest seed number), except Home team for the championship game is the team from the winner's bracket, regardless of original seeding.
- Time limits for the championship game will be determined by the league.
- Trophies or medals awarded to the champion and runner-up.

Regular Season Rules Amended for Post Season Tournament

- Players may play any position.
- Games are 6 innings (the 1 hour and 5-minute time limit still applies).
- In the sixth and subsequent innings only, a maximum of 10 runs may be scored.
- Games will be played out to a winner. If the score is tied at the end of regulation play (6 innings or 1 hour 5 minutes), an additional inning will be played with a maximum of 10 runs allowed per team.