



8U Baseball Rules

General Rules

1. Prohibited Items

- Carry-ins are NOT allowed. Concessions and a free water bottle filling station will be available.
- Pets/Animals of any type or breed
- Illegal Drugs
- Alcohol
- Smoking/Vaping
- Weapons of any kind
- Abusive language directed towards anyone on the grounds

2. Parking

- On-site parking in the WMLL lot is reserved for accessible parking only.
- All other vehicles must park along the road, or in designated areas found on the maps below.

3. Age Eligibility

- Age is determined as of **May 1, 2026**. Proof of age must be provided upon request.
- **Penalty for illegal players:** Immediate forfeit (10-0 score), player ejection, and tournament warnings for all coaches. A second offense results in team disqualification.

4. Roster

- Rosters are limited to **15 players**.
- No roster changes are allowed after the first pitch of a team's first game.

5. Field Dimensions

- Rubber/base distances: **40/60 feet**.

Game Rules

1. Time Limit

- Hard stop at **75 minutes** or the end of **6 innings**, whichever comes first.
- If time expires during a team's at-bat, the game reverts to the last completed inning's score, regardless of if the home or visitor team is batting.

2. Game Delay Rule – Forfeit for Intentional Stalling

- To ensure fair play and competitive integrity, any team found to be intentionally delaying the game to manipulate the outcome—such as running out the clock—may be subject to immediate forfeit at the discretion of the tournament director or umpire-in-chief.
- **Examples of delay tactics include, but are not limited to:**
 - Excessive or strategic pitching changes not based on performance or injury
 - Calling multiple or prolonged mound visits without cause
 - Repeated or unnecessary timeouts
 - Slow or intentional stalling between pitches or innings
 - Deliberate delays in taking the field or resuming play
 - Any other action deemed by officials to be a clear attempt to waste time
- **Enforcement:**
 - If an umpire or tournament official determines that a team is engaging in intentional stalling, the team will receive one formal warning. Continued stalling after the warning will result in immediate forfeit of the game.
- ***This rule is in place to promote sportsmanship and respect for the game, the players, and the tournament timeline.***

3. Home Team

- Determined by a coin toss at home plate. The team that traveled the furthest calls the toss. The winner of the coin toss chooses home or visitor.

4. Early Starts

- Games may start up to **30 minutes early**, except for back-to-back games.
- Any team that does not take the field within 10 minutes of the declared start time shall forfeit the game, upon the opposing team taking the field and throwing a pitch.

5. Run Rule

- **Leading by 15 runs** after 3 innings, **10 runs** after 4 innings, or **8 runs** after 5 innings ends the game.

6. Pre-Game Practice

- No batting or infield practice is allowed on the field before games.

7. Defensive Lineup

- Maximum **10 fielders**.
 - 6 infielders, 4 outfielders
- No infield shifts
- Outfielders must play on grass or designated line marked on the field, approximately 20' back
- No coaches from the defensive team will be allowed on the field while their team is on defense.
- Catcher must be in full gear

8. Batting & Scoring

- All players in attendance must bat, free defensive substitutions
- **Minimum players to start:**
 - 9 players (can end with 8).
- **Maximum of 6 runs per inning**
 - **Last Inning (optional)** unlimited runs if both coaches agree before the game starts.
- **No bunting**
- **Number of Pitches:** Batters receive up to **6 pitches** or 3 swinging strikes (whichever comes first). No walks.
- **Foul ball on the final pitch** will warrant an additional pitch.

9. Pitching Rules

- **Coach Pitch:** A coach from the batting team pitches to their own players.
- **Pitcher's Circle:** A 10-foot radius circle around a point 40 feet from home plate (can vary slightly)
- **Defensive Pitcher:** A player must stand with at least one foot inside or on the edge of the pitching circle and cannot move forward until the ball is hit.
- **Coach Pitcher Distance:** Typically, 40 feet; the coach must deliver an overhand pitch from a standing position.

10. Base Running

- No stealing bases
- No leading off, runners must stay on the base until the ball is hit.
- Runners may advance one base on an overthrow, but the play is dead once the lead runner stops or control is regained by the pitcher within the pitcher circle.
- No advancing on passed balls or wild pitches.

- The play is dead once the pitcher regains control of the ball inside the pitcher circle after a ball that is hit in play.

11. Sliding

- No mandatory slide rule, but base runners must avoid contact. No headfirst slides, except when returning to a base.

12. Courtesy Runners

- Must run for the catcher when there are 2 outs.

13. Infield Fly

- The infield fly rule ***does NOT apply***; it will be a live ball.

14. Throwing Bat

- If a player throws their bat, either intentionally or accidentally, they will receive a warning. A second instance or any subsequent occurrences will result in the batter being called out, and the play will be ruled a dead ball.

15. On-Deck Batters

- On deck batters must stay behind the dugout fence, no on-deck batters on the field.

16. Injured Players

- If a player is unable to continue due to injury, their spot in the lineup will be skipped without penalty, and they may not reenter the game. For late-arriving players, they must arrive before their team completes their first turn through the batting order. A late-arriving player will be placed at the end of the lineup. If their turn to bat has passed before they arrive, they are ineligible to play in that game.

17. Sportsmanship

- Unsportsmanlike behavior by players, coaches, or spectators will not be tolerated.
- **Penalties:**
 - Coach ejection: Potential suspension for the next game.
 - Spectator ejection: Banned for the tournament duration.
 - Player ejection: The player's spot in batting order becomes an automatic out.

Equipment Rules

1. Bats

- USA and USSSA bats are allowed.

2. Spikes

- No metal spikes are allowed.

3. Helmets

- All batters and runners must wear helmets with earflaps. C-flaps are allowed if properly manufactured.
- Players coaching bases must wear a batting helmet.

Tournament Operations

1. Score Reporting

- Home team coaches must report scores; directions will be posted in the dugouts.
- Disputes must be reported within **3 hours** to the Tournament Director.
- Home score book is the official score book.

2. Tiebreakers

- Head-to-head (not applicable for 3+ team ties).
- Fewest runs allowed.
- Run differential.
- Coin toss.
- Three-way ties start with rule number two then work down.

3. Protest

- Protests are not permitted on judgment calls. If a discussion with an umpire or Tournament Director is necessary, only the designated team manager is allowed to participate.

4. Weather/Shortened Games

- Games are official after:
 - 3 innings (2 ½ if the home team is leading).
 - 1 hour elapsed on the game clock.
- Games canceled due to weather will not be rescheduled. In addition, weather conditions may result in all games being shortened for all or part of the tournament.

5. Awards

- All teams will receive an award for their participation.
- If the tournament is incomplete, no champions are declared, and no awards are given.

6. Liability

- West Madison Thunder, West Madison Little League, or tournament sponsors are not liable for injuries.
- Teams must carry their own insurance and submit proof before their first game.

Updates

West Madison Thunder reserves the right to modify rules as needed. Schedule changes, weather delays, and results will be posted online at <https://www.westmadisonthunder.com>. Coaches, players, and parents are responsible for checking for updates.

***Parking maps below:**

West Madison Little League Fields Parking



Gillespie Field Parking



