



9U-12U 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 for 9U-12U: **46/60 feet**.

Game Rules

1. Time Limit

- Hard stop at **90 minutes** or the end of **6 innings**, whichever comes first.
- **No new inning** may begin after **75 minutes**.
- New innings start immediately after the completion of the previous inning.

- 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.
- **Tiebreakers for Semi-Finals/Finals:** Last batted-out starts on second base, no outs, 1- 1 count. Pool play ties remain ties in standings.

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. Higher seed for playoff games.

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. Warm-Up Pitches

- Between innings: 5 pitches. New pitchers: 8 pitches.
- Players warming up pitchers must wear a catcher's mask.

7. Pre-Game Practice

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

8. Defensive Lineup

- 9U–10U: Maximum 10 fielders.
- 11U–12U: Maximum 9 fielders

9. Batting Lineup

- All players in attendance must bat. Players may re-enter the field, except for pitchers once removed.
- **Minimum players to start:**
 - 9U–10U: **9 players** (can end with 8).
 - 11U–12U: **8 players** (can end with 7).

10. Pitching Limits

- **3 innings/game, 6 innings/day, 7 innings max/tournament.** Throwing one pitch counts as an inning.

11. Lead-offs & Steals

- Leading off is only allowed once a pitch reaches home plate.
- Steals are only allowed once a pitch reaches home plate.
- Home plate is open for 10U-12U, closed for 9U unless a play is made on the runner at 3B.
- Runners cannot advance if the pitcher is on the rubber, including going to 2B on a walk. If a pitcher is on the rubber before the walked batter reaches 1B, they cannot advance.
If base runners leave early:
 - 1st time: Dead ball.
 - 2nd time (same inning): Runner out.

12. Dropped 3rd Strike

- 9U–10U: No advancement to first.
- 11U–12U: Standard rules apply. Base is empty w/less than two outs, or any time with two outs.

13. Sliding

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

14. Fake Bunt & Swing

- **Not allowed.** A batter pulling back and swinging will be out, and the play will be dead.

15. Courtesy Runners

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

16. Infield Fly

- The infield fly rule applies for all age brackets.

17. 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.

18. On-Deck Batters

- On deck batters must be on the back side of the hitter.

19. 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.

20. 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. Refund Policy

- Full refund for no games played due to tournament cancellation.
- Half refund for playing at least one game.
- No refund if two or more games are played.
- No refund for team withdrawals.

6. Awards

- 1st and 2nd place teams receive individual awards.
- If the tournament is incomplete, no champions are declared, and no awards are given.

7. 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



