



# SYB Futures League Rules



Updated April 2026

- I. Age Requirements
  - a. The Futures league is open to both boys and girls meeting the indicated age/grade requirements. Age/grade requirements are determined as of May 1 of the season year. For the Futures league the grade requirements are 1<sup>st</sup> through 2nd grade. If a child is not enrolled in public or private school, their eligibility for a particular league shall be based on the age and grade requirements in effect for Sycamore Community School District 427.
  
- II. General
  - a. Sportsmanlike conduct must be observed. No arguing or yelling at umpires, coaches, parents or players.
  - b. Coaches and parents should reflect positive and constructive direction, tempered with patience.
  - c. No smoking or alcohol is allowed on the playing field, benches or dugouts.
  - d. Each team is responsible for picking up litter from the dugouts, field and stands.
  - e. The use of bat boys and bat girls are not permitted.
  - f. All players must wear their team uniforms provided by the league to all games. Team hats are also required to be worn at all practices.
  - g. Coaches are responsible for crowd control. If a parent or spectator becomes unruly, they will be asked to leave the park. If they refuse, their team will forfeit the game. In the event that a dangerous or threatening situation develops, please contact the police (911) immediately. Please advise the commissioner of any of these situations at your earliest convenience.
  - h. While their team is on the field, coaches are allowed to be on the field for instructional purposes but they must not interfere with play.
  - i. While their team is at bat, coaches may be in the coach's boxes along the baselines.
  - j. Regulation games are 6 innings in length. In the case of rain or darkness, 4 innings will be considered a complete game, or 3 ½ if the home team is ahead.
  - k. The visiting team is listed first on the schedule and will take the field for warm ups 30 minutes before game time. The home team is listed second and takes the field 15 minutes before game time. Visiting team occupies the first base dugout and the home team occupies the third base dugout.
  - l. The home team will set up the field prior to the game. The visiting team is responsible for putting the equipment in the storage boxes and locking them after the game.
  - m. The home and visiting team each must give one new baseball to the umpires prior to the game.
  - n. Official scores and standings will be kept.
  - o. All players will be drafted by grade level. All 2nd graders will be drafted first followed by all 1st graders. The only exception will be if a 1st grader is a coach's kid.
  - p. The "Runowiecki Rule" – Any player with an evaluation score resulting in a 4th round or lower draft ranking, may automatically be placed on a team only because of rideshare needs. Limit one player per team.
  - q. If there is an odd number of kids in the draft, the teams with the highest cumulative draft score will received the extra kids.
  
- III. Field Dimensions
  - a. The playing field has base paths of 55 feet in length. The pitching rubber is 36 feet from home plate.
  
- IV. Rosters
  - a. Rosters are made up of a minimum of 9 players.

- b. A team will be allowed to field 8 players and still be a legal team. Failure to field a legal team constitutes a forfeit.
- c. In the event that there are only 8 players, the 9th players spot will **NOT** be an automatic out.
- d. If a team begins a game with 9 players and loses a player during the game due to injury or ejection. The 9th spot will **NOT** be an automatic out.
- e. If a team starting with 9 players loses 2 players for any reason during the game, that team will forfeit the game.
- f. If a player is injured during an at-bat, the player that made the last out will continue the at bat from its current status.
- g. No player may be added or deleted from any team by a coach. As soon as a team loses a player, the manager must notify the commissioner. New players will be added as available. Any coach playing or practicing with ineligible players will forfeit the next game. Ineligible players are those who have not registered to play in the lower in-house/rec leagues, or are on a full-time travel league.
- h. No new players may be added in the last 2 weeks of the season.
- i. If it is necessary to bring a player up from a lower league, the following rules apply:
  - i. No player will miss a game with their current team to play up a level.
  - ii. The coach of the player's current team must be notified of a player playing up a level.
  - iii. If a player is brought up to play and the game is suspended for any reason and enough of the team's players return for the make-up game, the player being brought up, will not be eligible to play in the make-up game.
  - iv. If a player is needed. The League commissioner must be notified. Both league commissioners will coordinate the player being brought up.
  - v. No coach may contact a player to play up. If so, the game will be considered a forfeit.

V. Game Play

- a. All weekday games start promptly at 6:00 p.m. Forfeiture time is 10 minutes after the scheduled start of the game. The last inning may not start after 7:30.
- b. A maximum of 10 players are allowed on the field at once.
- c. Each player must play a minimum of 4 complete innings in the field during a 6-inning game. Those 4 innings do not have to be consecutive. Failure to follow these rules will result in a forfeiture of the game.
- d. Players must play at least two (2) innings on the infield every game. This **does** include the catcher position. If there are any players that both the Coach and Parents agree should not play an infield because of safety concerns (i.e. ADHD), they do not have to meet the 2 inning infield requirement. Coaches must provide the name(s) of players that meet this condition before the regular season games start.
- e. All outfielders must play from the grass and not be on the infield ag lime ( at least 40 feet behind the infield, at the fields behind the pool). The outfielder should have to make an exceptional play to get a putout at any base.
- f. There is a limit of 4 runs per one half inning. If there are not 3 outs when 4 runs have been scored, the teams still change sides. In the 6th inning, the limit shall be 6 runs or 3 outs, whichever comes first.
- g. Mercy Rule:
  - i. A 15 run mercy rule will be in effect after 4 complete or 3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead.
  - ii. A 10 run mercy rule will be in effect after 5 complete innings, or after 4 ½ innings if the home team is ahead.
- h. There is no infield fly rule.

- i. There is no dropped 3rd strike rule.
- VI. Batting
- a. All players will bat in a continuous batting order. If a batter bats out of order, that batter shall be called out and any runners that have advanced during that at bat shall return to where they were before that at bat.
  - b. Extra base hits are allowed.
  - c. A thrown bat will result in one (1) verbal warning given to the team. A second offense will result in a dead ball, the batter will automatically be called out and runners may not advance. A third offense will result in the batter being ejected from the game.
- VII. Base Running
- a. No leadoffs are allowed.
  - b. Runners may leave the base when the ball is batted (Crack of the bat).
  - c. Runners may not advance on an overthrow to first base.
  - d. All overthrows on any base besides first base the runner is allowed to advance one base only at their own risk. If an attempt is made on the advancing runner(s) and another overthrow is made the play is dead. An overthrow is defined as a ball going past the intended player, not falling out of the players glove and landing next to their feet
  - e. Runners who have not made it half-way to the next base when the player or coach pitcher possesses the ball within the pitching circle must go back to the previous base. Marks will be made on the field to indicate half-way between the bases. (See VIII. d.)
  - f. Runners must slide on all close plays.
  - g. No infield fly rule.
- VIII. Pitching
- a. (Regular Season) Coaches will pitch with the player getting a maximum of 7 pitches per at bat. The coach pitcher must pitch from within 4 feet of the pitching rubber. The batter cannot end an at bat with a foul ball.
  - b. (Playoffs) Coaches will pitch with the player getting 3 swinging strikes or a maximum of 7 pitches per at bat. The coach pitcher must pitch from within 4 feet of the pitching rubber. The batter cannot end an at bat with a foul ball.
  - c. Coaches are encouraged to work with kids in practice to develop proper throwing mechanics and pitching skills.
  - d. The Coach pitching MUST make an attempt to catch the ball coming to the pitcher to stop the play ( VII. e ) The goal is not to have boys running the ball to the pitcher to stop the base runners.
- IX. Fielding
- a. A team may have up to 10 players on the field. The 10th player MUST play in the outfield grass.
  - b. Outfielders are not permitted to cover any base for a put out.
  - c. The player pitcher must have one foot within the pitching circle and be in line with or behind the pitching rubber before each pitch is thrown.
  - d. Catchers must wear full protective gear at all times.
- X. Equipment
- a. Only approved equipment is to be used. Equipment will be checked out to each coach at the start of the season and must be returned within 2 weeks of the end of the season.
  - b. Bats must be USA stamped and the barrel cannot exceed 2-5/8" in diameter.

- c. Before each game the opposing coach will inspect all of the bats from the other team. Any illegal bats will be removed from the playing field before the game can begin.
  - i. If there is suspicion that a player has brought an illegal bat into the game after the game begins, he/she will approach the umpire and ask for a bat check.
    - 1. If an illegal bat is discovered, the batter will be called out and no runners will advance if a ball was put into play.
    - 2. If there is a second offense, the player and the head coach will be ejected from the game.
  - ii. Bats can be spot checked by any member of the SYB board.
    - 1. The same disciplinary actions will be enforced if an illegal bat is found by a SYB board member.
- d. Equipment is not to be modified and only equipment approved by one of the National Youth Baseball Organizations is approved. Broken equipment that needs to be replaced must be turned in before new equipment will be issued.
- e. Contact the league commissioner for any replacements.
- f. It is mandatory to wear a protective cup.
- g. No metal cleats are allowed.

XI. Weather

- a. Coaches and the umpire will decide whether or not a game should continue in the event of rain or darkness. The Umpire has the final decision.
- b. In the event of lightning, play will be stopped immediately and all players will be removed from the field. Thirty (30) minutes must elapse with no sign of lightning before a game can continue.
- c. Please move to your cars and not under any of the pavilions. Our fields get flooded quickly and lightning striking the wet ground is extremely dangerous.
- d. If a game is called in the middle of an inning because of rain or darkness after four (4) complete innings (or 3-½ innings if the home team has the lead) it will be considered a complete game. If there hasn't been four (4) complete innings (or 3-½ innings if the home team has the lead), the game is not considered a complete game and must be made up from the start of the game.
- e. In the event of inclement weather before games start, a decision will be made by 4 pm on game day as to the status of the game.
- f. In the case of a rain out, coaches will communicate with the commissioner as to when the game will be made up.
- g. Under no circumstances should a game be played when the wind-chill is below 40 degrees.

XII. Make-up Games

- a. Rain outs will try to be made up on Saturday or Sunday of the same week of the rain out. Commissioners will set times of makeup games based on field availability.

XIII. Conduct & Discipline

- a. Coaches are responsible for the conduct of their fellow coaches, players and fans. If a Coach, player or fan is ejected, the following suspensions apply:
  - i. 1st Offense – 1 game suspension to be served the following game and will not be allowed to be near the fields. You may be in the parking lot.
  - ii. 2nd Offense – Remainder of the season.
  - iii. These penalties are a minimum and any dismissal from a game will be reviewed by the board with corrective action to follow.
- b. If a parent or fan becomes unruly, they will be asked to leave the facility. If they refuse to leave; the team will forfeit the game.

*\*\*All rules are established for the safety, development and betterment of the players and the game. All rules are expected to be strictly followed as established. Any rules intentionally broken by a coach will be given one verbal warning. A second infraction will result in disciplinary action from the league, including, but not limited to, censure, suspension, revocation of league privileges, or ejection from the league. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for investigating and enforcing the League rules, including the Code of Conduct, bylaws, and constitution. Coaches and parents, please let the league commissioners know of any intention violations.*