

COLONIAL BASEBALL SUMMER LEAGUE

General League Rules – Draft - Rev 1

Section 1. League Philosophy

This League is intended to provide competitive summer baseball while preserving player development, sportsmanship, and enjoyment of the game. A teams are intended for the highest level of competition offered by the League. B teams are intended to provide meaningful competition and development for players who are not yet at the A level or who benefit from additional game opportunities. The League is organized around town-based summer travel teams. Participating towns may continue to operate under their own local rules and regulations for internal matters, roster administration, and town-level governance, except where League-wide rules control competition, safety, scheduling, discipline, or other matters expressly reserved to the League.

Section 2. Age Divisions

1. The League shall serve players ages 9 through 12.
2. The Board shall establish specific division structures each season, which may include separate age groups, combined age groups, or grade-based groupings.
3. The Board shall publish the official age cutoff date before registration opens.

Section 3. Team Types

- A Teams: More competitive teams intended to represent the highest level of play in the League.
- B Teams: Developmental and competitive teams intended to provide quality instruction and appropriate competition.
- The Board may determine how many teams at each level will be formed in each age group based on registration, field availability, coach availability, and competitive balance.

Section 4. Rosters

1. Recommended roster size is 11 to 13 players per team.
2. Teams may add or replace players only with League approval.

Section 5. Team Selection

- The League shall attempt to place players at an appropriate level.
- Team placement decisions shall prioritize:
 - player safety,
 - player development,
 - appropriate competition,
 - roster balance,
 - and fairness across the League.

Section 6. Season Format

1. The League shall establish the regular-season schedule each year.
2. The Board may provide for standings, playoffs, round-robin events, end-of-season tournaments, or festival-style formats.
3. The League may modify the schedule because of weather, field conditions, holidays, or other operational needs.

Section 7. Game Length

1. A regulation game shall be 6 innings, unless shortened by weather, darkness, time limit, mercy rule, or mutual agreement approved under League policy.
2. No new inning shall begin after [TIME LIMIT, e.g., 1 hour 45 minutes] for regular-season games, unless otherwise announced by the League.
3. An inning begins immediately after the third out of the previous inning.
4. The Board may adopt different time limits by age level.

Section 8. Run Rules / Mercy Rule

A game may end early if one team leads by:

- 15 runs after 3 innings, or
- 10 runs after 4 innings, or
- 8 runs after 5 innings.

The League may adjust the mercy rule by age group.

Section 9. Batting Rules

1. All players present bat in a continuous lineup.
2. Free defensive substitutions are allowed.
3. Late-arriving players are added to the end of the lineup.

Section 10. Defensive Participation

1. Free defensive substitution is encouraged unless the League adopts stricter rules for A divisions.
2. No player shall sit on the bench for excessive consecutive innings except for injury, illness, discipline, or late arrival.
3. For B teams, a minimum defensive participation rule is strongly recommended.
4. For A teams, the League may permit more competitive substitution patterns, but reasonable participation standards should still apply.

Section 11. Playing Time

- The League values participation and development.
- B Teams: Every player in attendance should receive meaningful game participation.
- A Teams: Playing time may reflect competitive circumstances, but no player should be routinely marginalized.
- The Board may adopt a minimum-playing-time rule by division.

Section 12. Position Eligibility and Safety

1. Catchers must wear full catcher's gear in good condition.
2. Players may not play catcher if injured or physically unable to do so safely.
3. The League may limit certain positions based on safety, experience, or skill readiness.
4. Coaches must not place a player in a position for which the player is clearly unprepared from a safety standpoint.

Section 13. Pitching Rules

The League should adopt one clear pitching policy and distribute it before the season.

Recommended baseline:

1. Pitcher usage shall prioritize arm health over competitive advantage.
2. Coaches are responsible for accurate pitch counts and required rest.
3. A pitcher removed from the mound may not return to pitch in the same game.
4. A pitcher may remain in the game at another position, subject to safety and substitution rules.
5. Warm-up pitches shall be limited to a reasonable number between innings and for new pitchers entering the game.
6. Intentional walks may be handled by rule or by pitched balls, as determined by the League.

Recommended Pitch Count Limits by Age

- Ages 9–10: 75 pitches per day
- Ages 11–12: 85 pitches per day

Recommended Rest Requirements

- 1–20 pitches: 0 days rest
- 21–35 pitches: 1 day rest
- 36–50 pitches: 2 days rest
- 51–65 pitches: 3 days rest
- 66+ pitches: 4 days rest

Additional Pitching Safety Rules

1. No player may pitch on three consecutive calendar days.
2. A player who catches more than 3 innings in a game may not pitch later that day.
3. A pitcher who throws more than 40 pitches in a game may not catch later that day.
4. The League may impose weekly maximums.

Section 14. Base Running

1. Leading off, stealing, dropped-third-strike advancement, and headfirst slides may be permitted or restricted by division.
2. The League should publish a division-by-division summary before Opening Day.
3. For younger or B divisions, the League may limit stealing to support catcher development and pace of play.

4. Malicious contact is prohibited.
5. Headfirst slides into a base may be prohibited except when returning to a base, depending on division rules.

Section 15. Courtesy Runners

Courtesy runners may be allowed for the pitcher and catcher with two outs, or at any time for injury-related reasons, consistent with League policy.

Section 16. Equipment Rules

1. All bats must meet the standard adopted by the League for the season.
2. Players must wear helmets while batting, on deck if permitted, and running bases.
3. Catchers must use protective cups and full catcher's equipment.
4. Metal cleats may be prohibited by age, field rules, or facility rules.
5. Coaches must remove damaged or noncompliant equipment from use.

Section 17. Umpires

1. Umpires shall have authority to enforce the rules and maintain order.
2. Judgment calls are not subject to protest.
3. Coaches may respectfully request clarification on rule interpretations.
4. Unsportsmanlike behavior toward umpires may result in warning, restriction to bench, ejection, or further discipline.

Section 18. Protests

1. Only rules misapplications may be protested.
2. Judgment calls may not be protested.
3. The protesting coach must notify the umpire and opposing coach at the time of the disputed ruling and before the next pitch or play, where feasible.
4. The League shall determine the protest review procedure.
5. The Board's decision on the protest shall be final.

Section 19. Ejections and Discipline

1. Any player, coach, or spectator ejected from a game may be subject to additional discipline.
2. A coach is responsible for the conduct of the team's spectators to the extent reasonably possible.
3. The Board may impose suspensions for fighting, abusive conduct, repeated misconduct, or serious unsportsmanlike behavior.

Section 20. Game Administration

1. Home team shall be determined by the schedule unless otherwise stated.
2. Home team is responsible for field preparation, official scorebook if required, and game balls if assigned by League policy.
3. Visiting team shall assist with postgame field cleanup when appropriate.

4. Both teams shall be ready to start at the scheduled game time.

Section 21. Weather, Field Conditions, and Suspended Games

1. The League, site authority, or umpire may suspend or cancel games due to weather, field conditions, darkness, or unsafe conditions.
2. Lightning requires immediate suspension of play and clearing of the field.
3. A suspended game may be resumed or declared complete according to League policy.
4. The Board should adopt a clear communication procedure for postponements.

Section 22. Forfeits

A team may forfeit for failure to field the minimum number of eligible players, use of an ineligible player, refusal to continue play, or other serious rule violations, as determined by the League.

Section 23. Score Reporting and Standings

1. Teams shall report scores promptly in the manner established by the League.
2. The Board shall determine standings tiebreakers.
3. For younger developmental divisions, the League may choose to de-emphasize standings.

Section 24. Conduct Expectations

Players

Players are expected to:

1. Show respect for teammates, coaches, opponents, and umpires.
2. Hustle and pay attention.
3. Refrain from taunting, throwing equipment, or arguing.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

1. Teach and model sportsmanship.
2. Keep competition in perspective.
3. Follow League rules on pitching, safety, and participation.
4. Communicate respectfully with all participants.

Parents and Spectators

Parents and spectators are expected to:

1. Encourage all players positively.
2. Refrain from coaching from the stands.
3. Avoid criticizing umpires or opposing players.
4. Maintain appropriate sideline behavior.

Section 25. Board Authority

The Board may interpret, clarify, suspend, or amend League rules when necessary to address safety, fairness, scheduling, competitive balance, or operational issues, provided any material changes are communicated to coaches and families.

