



Majors Fall Ball Rules



As we are getting ready to start our Fall Ball Season, we wanted to send out the rules and expectations for Fall Ball. Fall Ball is an instructional program, the rules are a little different than during the regular spring season. We want every player to have the opportunity to try new things and develop skills along the way. The Fall Ball rules that we have established in years past helps to facilitate these goals. Here are some house-keeping items for the upcoming season beginning:

Purpose

- It's all about the kids! -Have fun, play fair and ensure the kids learn and get better. Fall Ball is instructional, designed to develop skills, build confidence, and encourage kids to try new positions.
 - There are no wins or losses recorded, this season is all about developing the kids to prepare them for the division they will be playing in, in the spring. Scores will be recorded during each game for learning purposes but not turned in for wins or losses.
 - Standings will not be kept. Sportsmanship, effort, and learning are emphasized.
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Age Group

- Division: Minors (Ages 10-12)
 - Players use the league age they will be for the upcoming spring season (age on April 30th of the following year).
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Game Format

- Game Length: 6 innings or 90 minutes, whichever comes first. No new inning will start after 75 minutes of game time. Hard stop at 90 minutes.
 - Pitchers are allowed five warm-up pitches between innings and eight if a new pitcher enters the game.
 - Mercy Rule: Game ends if one team leads by 15 after 3 innings or 10 after 4 innings, unless both teams agree they want to keep the game going.
 - NFHS Rules will apply. The following are additional rules that supersede NFHS rules in our Fall Ball League. <https://www.nfhs.org/>
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General Rules

- Nine players on the field at a time. (Ten can field if both teams agree on that.) Seven-player minimum to begin to play. No rovers allowed. The extra player must play an additional spot in the outfield.
- Rotation Encouraged: Coaches should rotate kids through both infield and outfield positions.
- A player cannot play the same position for over two consecutive innings.
- All players will bat; if a player cannot continue to play, there will be no penalty to the offensive team when he is due up. If he is able, he can re-enter without penalty.
- All players are limited to sitting out no more than one inning per game, unless they are late for the game or injured. All players must play at least one inning in the infield per game.
- Bunting is allowed.
- Base Advancing:
 - a. Runners may leave the base after the pitch crosses home plate. If a runner leaves early, he will be called out. No appeals
 - b. Runners may advance bases on passed balls.
 - c. The batter cannot run on a dropped 3rd strike.
- Players who throw their bat or helmet may be ejected from the game.
- It is the base runner's responsibility to minimize violent collisions with the fielder at all times and locations along the base paths, whether the fielder is in the act of fielding a hit ball, receiving a putout throw, or awaiting a putout throw by whatever means available (including sliding) when such situations arise. Any base runner who does not attempt to do this will be called out and, if flagrant, ejected from the game. Note: When a fielder, at the umpire's judgment, obstructs the runner's advance (without the ball), the runner is awarded that base they would have advanced to had there been no obstruction. If, however, the base runner chooses to "steamroll" the fielder rather than minimize the contact, he will be called out.
- Runners cannot leave the base before a pitch crosses home plate. If they leave early, the runner will be sent back to their original base and given a warning. If this continues, umpires may use discretion and call the base runner out. *No runner may score on a ball overthrown from the catcher back to the pitcher.
- Stealing: Allowed, but no leading off (runner leaves when the ball crosses the plate).

Pitching Rules

- Pitching Limit: Max 2 innings per pitcher per game, 4 per week. (This will encourage more kids to give pitching a try.)
- One pitch thrown in any inning is counted as an inning pitched for that

particular pitcher.

- A coach may make only one trip to the mound to talk with their pitcher per inning. If a coach makes a second trip to the mound in the same inning, not counting trips due to injuries, the pitcher must be removed from the mound.
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Defense

- Infield Fly Rule: In effect.
 - Dropped 3rd Strike: Batter is out (keeps things moving at this level).
 - Overthrows: Runners may advance at their own risk (teaches awareness).
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Coaching & Umpiring

- Two umpires per game.
 - Disputes are resolved by umps/head coaches quickly to keep games moving.
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Sportsmanship

- Players, coaches, and fans must respect umpires, opponents, and the game.
 - Negative cheering, arguing with umpires, or unsportsmanlike behavior will not be tolerated.
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- “Free Substitution” Rule: Players may re-enter the game defensively at any position.
- Speed-Up Rule: Courtesy runner for catcher when there are 2 outs.
- Ball Type: Use regulation hardballs (9 in, 5 oz).
- Uniforms: Jerseys and hats required. Color of pants/socks are optional, you can’t make these mandatory.
- The batter and base runner must wear helmets at all times.
- Rubber cleats or tennis shoes only. No metal cleats
- Bat Rule Updates: All bats must be certified by the new USA Baseball Bat Standard and have the USA Baseball stamp on them. 2 5/8” bats are allowed with no restriction of length to weight ratio (drop). 2 1/4” bats will still be allowed if they

too are stamped with the USA Baseball stamp. FALL BALL: USSSA Bats are only allowed if both teams agree to use them before the game starts.

- Umpires can call games due to weather, darkness, or any other safety reason deemed necessary by the umpire.
- The field size is 46' pitching rubber with 60' base paths.
- Umpires decisions are final. The head coach is the only coach allowed to consult the official on a call and must do so respectfully.
- Upon observation, the umpire will immediately call missed bases, leading off, etc. The defensive team does not have to make an appeal play.
- Field Maintenance –Please rake between games if needed. Please pick up and remove any garbage that is left in the dugouts or bleachers after your game.

****Any rule can be adjusted before a game starts if both head coaches agree on the change and inform the umpires of it.***