

**Hereford Area 2013 Baseball Rules**  
**Grades: 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-11 Leagues - FINAL**

**Rules: Grades 3-4, 5-6, 7-8 League shall play General Rule Book, Official Baseball Rules, National Baseball Congress, and 9-11 play Official Baseball League Rules with the exception of the Hereford Inter-Council Baseball Rules.**

1. **Sportsmanship:** It is agreed that each council should monitor for unsportsmanlike conduct and handle accordingly. The umpires are empowered to confront anyone behaving in an unacceptable manner. Still, we are reminded that because in many circumstances the umps are younger and possibly intimidated, coaches must also take a part in the control not only of their players, but also of the spectators. If unacceptable behavior is exhibited by anyone a warning should be given. If the behavior continues, the game will be suspended and the team responsible will forfeit the game. We must make everyone know that unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated. Our children should NEVER have to put up with derogatory statements of any kind!
2. **Dimensions:**

Grades 3-4:	60' base distances – 46' pitching distance.
Grades 5-6:	60' base distances – 46' pitching distance
Grades 7-8:	70' base distances – 50' pitching distance
Grades 9-11	75' Base Distance – 54'3" pitching distance
3. **Length of Game:** At least four innings must be played for a game to be considered complete, 3 ½ if home team is winning. If a game is suspended and not complete, it will be replayed in its entirety. Otherwise, whoever was leading at the end of the last complete inning is the winner. If game is called during an inning, then the score will be what it was at end of last complete inning. If the score was tied at the end of the last completed inning, the game will be resumed at the start of the top of the next inning. Once resumed, all players on the team roster are eligible to play any position
  - a. Grades 3-4/5-6/7-8 Length of game is 6 innings.
  - b. Grades 9-11 Length of game is 7 innings.
4. **Participation:**
  - a. All players showing up prior to the game, in uniform (For safety, a uniform consists of a hat, shirt and long pants), shall be in the batting order for the entire game. All players must play at least two innings in the field. Players may be restricted from playing by their manager if they are ill, or if they have not been practicing.
  - b. Grades 9-11 League:
    - **If 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> graders play high school ball, they cannot pitch.**
    - If an individual Council has more than one travel player, best attempts must be made to equally distribute these players to all teams.
5. **Re-Entry Rule:** All players (including pitchers) may re-enter their position at any time with the exception of a pitcher who has been removed as a result of hitting three batters or if they have met their maximum pitch count (see below).
6. **Pitching regulations:**
  - a. **All Leagues:**

A pitcher's pitches will be counted by both the pitcher's coach and the opposing team's coach. Once the pitch count reaches 40, a pitcher can face no other batters. If the pitch count reaches 40 the pitcher can continue pitching to finish the batter he is facing, but cannot face any batters after that. **THERE ARE NO INNING LIMITS IN EFFECT – JUST THE PITCH COUNT LIMIT. Any game on or after May 1<sup>st</sup>, the pitch count increases to 50.**

**For all ages:**  
Any pitcher that hits 3 batters in a game must be removed from the mound.
  - b. A pitcher, once removed for hitting batters, may not return to the mound. If a pitcher is removed for other reasons, he may return to pitch. But pitch count picks up where he left off when originally exiting the game.

- c. Any violation of the above pitching regulations shall result in a forfeit by the offending team.
  - d. **Grade 3-4 League Only - Coach Assist Pitch Rule**
    - The rule starts in the 1st inning.
    - The coach pitches from same distance just like the players.
    - The coach comes in if the count is 3 balls (any # of strikes). The pitcher comes back in for the next batter.
    - The coach pitches to his own batters and can strike them out on swings or called pitches.
    - When the coach is in, the pitcher takes a position to the right or left of the coach & fields all balls that come his way. The coach can't make any plays.
    - When a coach enters the game to pitch, players on base cannot steal or advance on a passed ball by the catcher.
    - There is no limit to the number of pitches a coach can pitch to his players.
7. **Intentional Walks:** There will be NO intentional walking of any player.
  8. **Forfeits:** A team must have at least 7 players dressed and ready to play in all age groups to start an official game. Forfeit time is 15 minutes after scheduled start time.
  9. **Number of Players:**
    - a. **Grade 3-4 League Only** - A maximum of 10 players may play in the field, but 4 of the players must play in the outfield grass. Failure to do so will result in a warning from the umpire; no penalty.
  10. **Bunting:** Bunting is allowed in all age groups.
  11. **Dropped third strike:**
    - a. Grades 3-4 Leagues: Batter is out.
    - b. Grades 5-6/7-8/9-11 League: Batter may run to 1<sup>st</sup> base if less than 2 outs and 1<sup>st</sup> base is unoccupied or if there are two outs.
  12. **Fake Tag:** Fake tag is unnecessary offense, runner is awarded extra base.
  13. **Balks and Stealing:**
    - a. Grade 3-4 League – There are no balks. No leading. Runners must stay on the base unless they are attempting to steal or the ball is hit. On any pitch (except foul balls), stealing will be allowed from first to second or second to third base only once the ball has reached home plate after it has been pitched. Any runner on third base cannot steal home and/or advance on passed balls or wild pitches. *Stealing is NOT permitted if a team is up by ten or more runs.*
    - b. Grade 5-6 League - Leading is allowed, balks will not be enforced, but the umpire will notify the coach of the violation so the coach can instruct the player. On any pitch (except foul balls), stealing will be allowed from first to second or second to third base only once the ball has reached home plate after it has been pitched. Any runner on third base cannot steal home, but can advance on passed balls or wild pitches. *Stealing is NOT permitted if a team is up by ten or more runs.*
    - c. Grade 7-8 and 9-11 Leagues – balks will be called. 1(one) warning will be given by the umpire per pitcher. Leading is allowed. Stealing is allowed. *Stealing is NOT permitted if a team is up by ten or more runs.*
  14. **Base Running:**
    - a. Grade 3-4 League – Once a runner makes a motion back to the base last touched during a game play (such as a batted ball and stops running and turns to go back to base, walks back to base...) play for that runner shall be considered complete, runner must return to base. Runner is still at risk of being put out. However, if played on, runner has option of attempting to advance.
  15. **Interference:** The base runner must allow the fielder to play on a batted ball or thrown ball. Contact with a fielder in the act of receiving a batted ball is an automatic out. Contact with a fielder receiving a thrown ball is most likely an out but if in the umpire's judgment, contact is incidental or without fault of the runner or the fielder, the play shall stand. If, however, the umpire judges that the runner could have avoided contact, the runner is out. **(Naturally we are stressing safety, so it is important that the runner make every effort to slide, dodge, etc. to avoid**

**collision).** A flagrant foul will result in the runner being declared out and then removed from the game).

16. **Obstruction:** A fielder must allow a runner free access to the base if the fielder is not in the act of receiving the batted or thrown ball. The umpire may award a base to the runner if he/she feels they had been obstructed.

17. **Delay of Game:**

- a. Approximately 120 seconds will be afforded for each team to transition between half innings. Approximately 45 seconds will be allotted for a batter to be in position to bat after "PLAY" is called. Approximately 45 seconds will be allotted for a pitcher to release a pitch to the batter after "PLAY" is called. If a team is deemed by the umpire to be taking more than the allotted time, the umpire will provide a courtesy warning to the coach. If the situation does not improve following the warning, at the umpire's discretion the following penalties will be imposed.
  1. "PLAY" will be called by the umpire approximately 120 seconds after the last out of a half inning regardless of whether pitcher, catcher, or any other fielder is on the field and prepared to play ball at that time. If a coach is on the field when "PLAY" is called, he or she must leave IMMEDIATELY or be charged with a defensive time out. Any time out thus charged will be treated like any other time out and will count toward the defense's maximum for the game.
  2. If the first batter is not in position to bat within 45 seconds of an umpire announcing "PLAY", and every 45 seconds thereafter, a strike will be called on the batter until the batter strikes out or is in position to bat. A pitch need not be released by the pitcher for a strike to be called. An offensive time out cannot be called to prevent a strike from being called before the batter is initially in position to bat.
  3. If the pitcher does not release the pitch to the batter within 45 seconds after the umpire announces "PLAY" and the batter is in position to bat, and every 45 seconds thereafter, a ball will be called on the batter. A defensive time out can be requested to prevent a ball from being called. Any time out thus called will be treated like any other time out and will count toward the defense's maximum for the game.
  4. At the umpire's discretion, coaches may request additional time because of injuries, etc.
  5. To help facilitate the following of the above, substitute runners will be permitted for catchers at 2 outs.

18. **Five Run Rule:**

- a. For the team at bat, when the 5<sup>th</sup> run of the inning scores, once a play is considered completed, the team at bat shall move to the field, regardless of the number of outs. It is possible however to score more than five runs in an inning.  
Example: Bases are loaded and batter hits an apparent home run. All runs count that score before in the, judgment of the umpire, the play was complete. The Five Run Rule is in effect only during the first 5 innings (first 6 innings for Grade 9-11 league). It is not in effect during the last innings of the game or extra innings.

19. **Equipment:**

- a. **Gloves:** There are no restrictions as to size or type of the glove a player may wear at any position. Players must have a glove to participate
- a. **Balls:** Home team provides one new ball (rubber-core official little league ball) and one good used ball (rubber-core official little league ball).
- b. **Bats:** Any bat designated "Official Baseball" will be allowed with the maximum bat size being 2 5/8 (-3).
- c. **Catchers:** must wear mask, shin guards, cup, helmet/mask, throat protector, and chest protector. Any player warming up pitcher must wear a helmet/mask.
- d. **Runners and Batters:** must wear helmets
- e. **Players:** shall not be permitted to wear metal spikes.

- f. **Uniform:** To participate in a game, players must be in uniform. A uniform consists of a shirt (no tank tops) baseball pants (no shorts), and a baseball cap. Jewelry (other than medical alerts) will not be allowed.
20. **End of Play rule: (Grade 3-4 league ONLY)** Play stops when ball is returned to pitcher. Any runner more than ½ way between bases may continue to the next base
21. **Rainouts and Postponements: COMMISSIONERS AND COACHES – IF YOU MUST CANCEL A GAME YOU HAVE 24 HOURS TO DO SO IN AN EMERGENCY ONLY! IF YOU DO NOT NOTIFY YOUR COMMISSIONER TO CANCEL A GAME OR YOUR TEAM DOES NOT SHOW UP AT THE FIELD, YOU STILL MUST PAY FOR THE UMPIRE(S). Commissioners are the only people to contact the umpire coordinator!!! Games should ONLY be cancelled due to school functions or weather.** Managers shall try to call opposing manager and umpire if possible by 5:00 pm, if a game is not to be played. If you don't hear from the opposing manager, then go to the field. When a game is postponed, it is the Home Team Manager's responsibility to notify the visiting team manager within 3 days of the original date to offer an alternate date(s). The visiting team manager then has 3 days to confirm the game. Failure on either team manager's part shall result in forfeiture. Assignment of fields for makeup games is done by the local Baseball Commissioner ONLY. The local Baseball Commissioner or his/her designee shall then call the Umpire in Chief to reschedule a game. If an umpire shows up on a field for a scheduled game but the game has been cancelled and the umpire is not notified, that umpire shall be paid. Payment should be made by the Home Team Baseball Association or the Home Team Manager. No game is officially scheduled until it is approved by the Community Supervisor. Games stopped for darkness or inclement weather with less than 4 complete innings played, 3 1/2 if home team is at bat, shall be replayed in their entirety. Games suspended after 4 complete innings played shall revert back to last complete inning. Team ahead shall be declared the winner. **If during a game, lightning or thunder should appear in the area, it is the umpire/field attendant's responsibility to suspend or terminate the game.** The Baltimore County Representative will make final determination. (See lightning directive).
22. **Darkness:** The umpire/field attendant shall be the judge as to whether and when play shall be suspended during a game because of unsuitable weather conditions or the unfit condition of the playing field. As a general rule, prior to May 10<sup>th</sup>, no inning should start after 7:45pm. After May 10<sup>th</sup>, no inning should start after 8:00pm. It is at the umpire's discretion that these start times be adjusted due to weather, darkness, or a late game start time. **A representative from the Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks will make the final determination on all weather and darkness decisions.** If possible when an umpire senses that a game is not going to be played in its entirety, he/she will notify both team managers prior to the last full inning to be played.
23. **Protests:** Should be avoided if at all possible. An umpire's decision is not grounds for a protest. If there is a protest, then the protesting manager must notify the umpire at time of infraction. Umpire shall call time, confer with the opposing managers only and then, the protesting manager shall call appropriate League Commissioner. A written protest must be in the Recreation Office within 24 hours after the game. The Commissioners will convene a hearing and rule on the protest in an expedient manner. The Umpire Commissioners is empowered to declare a forfeit, or order the replaying of all or any segment of a game they deem warranted. Protests on judgment calls by officials will not be considered. The Umpire Commissioner shall handle the protest. Opposing managers/coaches, umpire/s of the game, umpire commissioner and baseball commissioners will be notified of meeting date and time.
24. **Deadlines:** Any recreation council that does not adhere to the scheduled due dates for program information will have their respective staff person and recreation council notified and will have 24 hours to forward information to the appropriate commissioner. Failure to comply within 24 hours results in removal from the program.
25. **Smoking:** No one is allowed to smoke in the playing area.