



Grove City Parks & Recreation Department

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Youth Baseball Rules and Regulations: Junior League

General Personal Conduct Rules

- I. Little League® rules will be used except where noted herein.
- II. Grove City Parks and Recreation (GCPR) has a ZERO-TOLERANCE POLICY that includes, but is not limited to, the following: fighting, physical contact, aggressive behavior towards coaches, fans, parents, players, officials or other participants; belittlement of coaches, fans, parents, players or other participants; refusal to comply with the decisions of GCPR staff; and violations of substitution, safety and/or pitching rules. This type of behavior could result in indefinite suspension to a lifetime ban from Grove City Parks and Recreation activities.
- III. If a coach, fan, parent, player or other participant is ejected from a GCPR practice or game for ANY reason, that individual must leave the facility immediately, is suspended, and will not be permitted at any future practices or games until the GCPR or designee has reviewed the incident. The individual ejected, potential witnesses and the official(s) will be interviewed. Based upon the information provided, the ruling may result in a minimum of a one-game suspension up to a permanent removal from all future activities conducted by GCPR. Individuals suspended are not permitted at facilities for any practices or games until the suspension has been served.
 - A. Multiple suspensions or ejections may result in a suspension for the remainder of the season or permanent removal from all future activities conducted by GCPR.
 - B. Unsportsmanlike conduct is not tolerated from coaches, spectators, parents, players or other participants. Offenders will be ejected. Chattering or yelling at players is not tolerated.
 - C. Coaches, fans, parents, players or other participants are not to question the strike zone of an umpire. If there are any questions concerning rule interpretations or their application, only the head coach may approach the umpire before the first pitch to the next batter.
 - D. Only approved coaches with an application on file for the current season with the GCPR office are permitted on the playing field or in the dugout during games and practices.

General Game Information

- I. **Make-up Games:** Cancelled games are made up the next available assigned day. Coaches will receive a schedule outlining the game information as soon as possible. No exceptions will be made.
- II. **Standings:** Standings are kept to determine play-off seeding. Ties count as ½ game won, ½ game lost. Standings are determined by the following: (1) overall record, (2) head-to-head record, (3) total runs against for the season and (4) coin toss. End-of-season tournaments follow a single-elimination format.
- III. **Minimum Number of Players:** Teams may begin a game with eight (8) players and will not be penalized an out for a vacancy in the lineup. A team with seven (7) or fewer players will be rendered a forfeit. There is a 15-minute grace period that begins at the original scheduled start time of the game before a forfeit will be rendered. The 15-minute grace period does not change the original start time of the game.
- IV. **Player participation:** Each player will play at least three (3) innings in the field per game. All substitutions must be made no later than the top of the third inning.
 - A. Violations
 1. Regular season first offense: head coach is suspended.

2. Regular season second offense: head coach is suspended and game is forfeited.
 3. Playoff offense: game is forfeited.
- V. **Coaches:** Each team is permitted a maximum of three (3) coaches.
- A. A maximum of two (2) coaches are allowed on the field at a time while team is on offense.
 - B. One coach is required to remain in the dugout at all times.
- VI. **Doubleheaders:** Doubleheaders are permitted.
- VII. **Games Start Time:** The game start time is 6 p.m. including the first game of a double header. The second game of a double header will begin as soon as the umpires are ready to start play.
- VIII. **Game Length:** All games will consist of six (6) innings unless the following occurs:
- A. No new inning may start after 1 hour 45 minutes. A new inning begins once the third out of the current inning is recorded. Teams are encouraged to hustle on and off the field to keep the game progressing. The maximum time between each ½ inning is 1 minute or 5 warm up pitches.
 - B. The umpires confirm the start time and keep the necessary game time.
 - C. All innings started must be finished.
 - D. In the event of a stoppage of play due to inclement weather or curfew, a game is considered complete if play has gone beyond four (4) full innings, 3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead. If after the fourth inning, revert back to the last completed inning. Any game stopped in the first inning will restart. After the first inning, all games will resume.
 - E. Mercy Run Rule I: If a team is ahead by 15 or more runs after the completion of 3 innings, 2 ½ if the home team leads, the game is complete as long every player on the losing team has batted at least once.
 - F. Mercy Run Rule II: If a team is ahead by 10 or more runs after the completion of 4 or 5 innings, 3 ½ or 4 ½ if the home team leads, the game is complete.
 - G. Extra inning(s) are permitted, provided there is time remaining.
- IX. **Field Logistics:**
- A. The pitcher's plate is 54 feet from home plate.
 - B. The bases are 80 feet apart.
 - C. The home team occupies the dugout along the first-base line.
 - D. Coaches and players are responsible for cleaning their dugout and bench area after each game.
 - E. All players not on the field of play (defensive players) or on deck must remain in the dugout or other areas designated to ensure physical distancing. Players on fields 10 and 11 may not stand in the fence opening.
- X. **Player Equipment and Restrictions:**
- A. Mitts: Players may use any glove or mitt at any position other than catcher. No player may use a first-baseman's mitt at any position other than first base.
 - B. Bats:
 1. Length/Diameter: A bat shall not be more than 36 inches in length, nor more than 2 ⅝ inches in diameter, and if wood, not less than fifteen-sixteenths (15/16) inches in diameter (7/8 inch for bats less than 30 inches) at its smallest part. Wood bats taped or fitted with a sleeve may not exceed eighteen (18) inches from the small end.
 2. Weight: The bat shall not weigh, numerically, more than three ounces less than the length of the bat (e.g., a 33-inch-long bat cannot weigh less than 30 ounces).

3. Under the USABat standard, the bat shall not be more than 34 inches in length; nor more than 2 ⁵/₈ inches in diameter, and if wood, not less than fifteen-sixteenths (15/16) inches in diameter (7/8 inch for bats less than 30 inches) at its smallest part. Wood bats taped or fitted with a sleeve may not exceed 18 inches from the small end. Solid one-piece wood barrel bats do not require a USA Baseball logo.
4. Junior League bats may also use bats that use the Batted Ball Coefficient of Restitution (BBCOR) performance standard. All bats not made of a single piece of wood shall meet the BBCOR performance standard, and such bats shall be so labeled with a silkscreen or other permanent certification mark. The certification mark shall be rectangular, a minimum of a half-inch on each side and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting color. Aluminum/alloy and composite bats shall be marked as to their material makeup being aluminum/alloy or composite. This marking shall be silkscreen or other permanent certification mark, a minimum of one-half-inch on each side, and located on the barrel of the bat in any contrasting color.
5. Illegal Bat Penalty:
 - a. A batter is declared out when he/she enters the batter's box with an illegal bat or is discovered having used an illegal bat. If the discovery is made before the next pitch, the defense may take the penalty or result of the play.
 - b. If an illegal bat is used, the head coach is removed from that game. If the first game of a double header, the coach may coach the second game of the double header.
6. Traditional batting donuts are not permissible.
7. All batters and baserunners must wear a helmet while on the field of play. Face guards and chin straps are optional.
8. All players must wear athletic cups.
9. Metal cleats are not permitted.
10. Casts may not be worn during the game by players or umpires.
11. Players must not wear jewelry such as, but not limited to, rings, watches, earrings, bracelets, necklaces, nor any hard cosmetic/decorative items. This applies regardless of the composition of such jewelry, hard cosmetic item or hard decorative item.
 - a. Exception: jewelry that alerts medical personnel to specific conditions.
12. Teams are not permitted to hit soft-toss into any fence unless a tennis ball or Wiffle ball is used.

Game Play Rules

- I. Batters and Batting Order
 - A. Batting Order: The batting order must consist of all players. Any player arriving late will be placed at the bottom of the order.
 - B. Unoccupied positions in line up
 1. Ejection: An out is assessed for the position in the lineup once occupied by an ejected player.
 2. All other reasons: An out is not assessed for players leaving for any other reason, i.e., injury, sickness, unwillingness/fear to play, outside family obligation, etc.
 3. If a batter or baserunner is injured and unable to continue the at bat, the last player declared out will continue for them. If the batter is replaced, the new player assumes the current count. If the injured player is unable to return prior to their next at-bat, the injured player is skipped without penalty.
 - C. When a batter unintentionally throws a bat, the action will be regulated as followed:

1. Warn the player and the other members of the player's team.
2. After the warning (second occurrence), the umpire will declare the ball dead immediately, the batter will be returned to the dugout, and any base runners will return the previous base occupied at the time of the pitch.
3. No out shall be called on the offending player for this action unless the bat makes contact with an official, player or coach or leaves the field of play.

II. Base Running

A. Orange Safety Base

1. A defensive player must touch the white portion of the base to record an out.
2. The baserunner must touch the orange portion of the base to be considered safe.
3. **Exception:** If a batted ball in the infield is an errant throw and causes the fielder to move to the orange portion of the base, the runner must then proceed to the white portion of the base.
4. Umpire discretion will allow for safety considerations. This must be addressed at the pre-game meeting.
5. The baserunner will then use the white portion of the base when returning to first base after overrunning it, running on a base hit to the outfield (the player may elect to touch the orange portion here), or to re-tag and advance on a fly ball.

B. Sliding: Runners are never required to slide. However, if he/she elects to slide, it must be a legal slide. Runners must avoid excessive contact with the defensive player or will be declared out. This is an umpire's judgment call.

C. Coaches may not physically assist players in running the bases or fielding.

D. A courtesy runner is mandatory for the catcher of record once two outs are recorded. A courtesy runner is allowed for the pitcher of record or catcher of record at any time. The courtesy runner is the player who made the last out.

E. Stealing, lead-offs and headfirst sliding are allowed.

F. Batters have the right to advance to first base on a dropped third strike providing:

1. There are less than two outs AND first base is not occupied.
2. There are two outs.

III. Pitching

A. Any player may pitch.

1. **Exception:** Any player who has played the position of catcher in four (4) or more innings in a game, is not eligible to pitch on that calendar day.

B. A player may be used as a pitcher in up to two games in a day.

1. **Exception:** If a player threw 31 or more pitches in the first game, that player may not pitch in a second game that day.

C. A player may not pitch three (3) consecutive days.

D. A starting pitcher removed but moving to a different position and remaining on defense can return as a pitcher at any time in the remainder of the game, but only once per game.

E. Pitchers are not permitted to wear gray or white sleeves that extend past the jersey sleeve on pitching arm.

F. Any part of the pitcher's undershirt or T-shirt exposed to view shall be of a solid color.

- G. Pitchers are not permitted to use a glove that includes the colors white or gray. Pitchers may wear a batting glove unless it has white or gray visible or is deemed a distraction.
- H. Any coach visiting the same pitcher in the field of play two (2) times in any inning, or three (3) times during a game, must remove the pitcher from the game and may not return to pitch.
- I. If any coach, regardless of reason, violates the following pitching rules, the coach will be suspended the following game. If during the playoffs, the game will be forfeited.
 - 1. Both teams are required to track and confer between each half inning the accuracy of the pitch count. In the event of a dispute, the home team is the official record. Pitch counts sheets and scorecards become official once the umpires have left the playing field.
 - 2. Pitchers must be warmed up by a player wearing a mask. Coaches are not permitted to warm up a pitcher.
 - 3. Pitcher must throw all pitches for an intentional walk.
 - 4. A pitcher who delivers 41 or more pitches in a game cannot play the position of catcher for the remainder of that day.
- J. **Junior League Pitch Limit: 95 pitches per day**
 - 1. **EXCEPTION:** If a pitcher reaches the limit imposed (**95 pitches**) while facing a batter, the pitcher may continue to pitch until any one of the following conditions occurs:
 - a. The batter reaches base
 - b. The batter is out
 - c. The third out is made to complete the half-inning
 - 2. If a player reaches 66 or more pitches in a day, four (4) calendar days of rest must be observed.
 - 3. If a player pitches 51-65 pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest must be observed.
 - 4. If a player pitches 36-50 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest must be observed.
 - 5. If a player pitches 21-35 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar day of rest must be observed.
 - 6. If a player pitches 1-20 pitches in a day, no calendar day of rest is required.
 - 7. Notes: In a suspended game resumed on another day, the pitchers of record at the time the game was halted may continue to pitch to the extent of their eligibility for that day, provided said pitcher has observed the required days of rest.
 - 8. Example 1: A 14-year-old pitcher delivers 70 pitches in a game on Monday when the game is suspended. The game resumes on the following Wednesday. The pitcher is not eligible to pitch in resumption of the game because the pitcher has not observed the required days of rest.
 - 9. Example 2: A 14-year-old pitcher delivers 70 pitches in a game on Monday when the game is suspended. The game resumes on Saturday. The pitcher is eligible to pitch up to 95 more pitches in the resumption of the game because the pitcher has observed the required days of rest.
 - 10. Example 3: A 14-year-old pitcher delivers 70 pitches in a game on Monday when the game is suspended. The game resumes two weeks later. The pitcher is eligible to pitch up to 95 pitches in the resumption of the game, provided the pitcher is eligible based on pitching record during the previous four days.

11. Schedule Examples

1 Calendar Day of Rest	
Pitched	Can Pitch
Monday	Wednesday
Tuesday	Thursday
Wednesday	Friday
Thursday	Saturday
Friday	Sunday
Saturday	Monday

2 Calendar Days of Rest	
Pitched	Can Pitch
Monday	Thursday
Tuesday	Friday
Wednesday	Saturday
Thursday	Sunday
Friday	Monday
Saturday	Tuesday

3 Calendar Days of Rest	
Pitched	Can Pitch
Monday	Friday
Tuesday	Saturday
Wednesday	Sunday
Thursday	Monday
Friday	Tuesday
Saturday	Wednesday

4 Calendar Days of Rests	
Pitched	Can Pitch
Monday	Saturday
Tuesday	Sunday
Wednesday	Monday
Thursday	Tuesday
Friday	Wednesday
Saturday	Thursday

Coaching Guidelines

- I. Each coach and his/her assistants are to conduct practices and games in a way that provides the best opportunity for all players on their team to acquire skills that the Grove City Little League® determines they should learn at their current level of play. These skills are cumulative.
- II. Junior League (Pony) focus skills
 - A. Proper lead-off, stealing
 - B. Squeeze play
 - C. Hit and run techniques
 - D. Advanced pitching techniques
 - E. Advanced hitting techniques
 - F. Refined outfield and infield play
 - G. Refined relay procedures
- III. **Coaching Drills** – Throwing and catching the baseball is often the most overlooked and under-coached fundamental of the game. A coach who dedicates extra time toward this will have success.
 - A. Throwing
 1. Cradle – elbows out not tucked into stomach
 2. Throwing position- palm facing away from player
 3. Maintain eye contact on target through entire motion
 4. Pointing lead toe at target
 5. Four-seam grip
 6. Tuck glove hand away to allow body to come through
 7. Arm position (don't get hung up on throwing over the top)
 - B. Catching

1. Arms must have some bend and remain relaxed
2. On balls above the waistline – fingers glove should point to the sky and glove hand and throwing hand should be “thumb to thumb”
3. On balls below the waistline – glove hand palm should be toward ball and glove hand and throwing hand should be “pinky to pinky”
4. Do not allow players to “stab” at the ball, encourage them to shift their bodies to get in front of the off target throws
5. Drills
 - a. Relay lines
 - b. Throwing circle
 - c. Bucket drill

C. Hitting

1. Stance/Balance
2. Feet must be squared
3. Stance must be as wide as the shoulders at minimum
4. Weight should be 75 percent back, knees bent, balanced on inner parts of feet, not on heels
5. Knees and belt buckle should be pointing at the plate
6. Hands should be up and back
7. The bottom hand arm should have some flex, forming an angle at the elbow
8. Head and eyes should be in the zone, chin should be able to touch front shoulder
9. Grip
 - a. Place the bat in the players’ hands and line up the “door knocking” knuckles, rotate the bottom hand slightly clockwise (counterclockwise for left handers) and rotate the top hand slightly counterclockwise (clockwise left handers)
 - b. Have players place both hands on the bat and point the bat at the pitcher’s mound
10. Approach/Contact
 - a. Must keep hands inside the baseball
 - b. Hands move down, taking the knob of the bat toward the ball
 - c. Keeping bat head level, bottom hand palm toward the ground, top hand palm facing up
 - d. Head should stay down through impact so chin begins on the front shoulder and the back
 - e. Shoulder touches the chin after contact
 - f. Hands begin to roll over, after contact, to gain full extension

D. Drills

1. Soft toss
2. Bottom-hand drill
3. Two-tee drills
4. Two-color soft toss
5. Batting practice