



Yorkville Youth Athletic Association

Major League Baseball Rules

General & Administrative

1. **The Field** - The games will be played on a 70-foot diamond. The distance from the back corner of home plate to the far outside corner of first base and third base will be **70-feet**. The distance from the outside corner of first base to the far corner of second base will be 70-feet. The distance from the back point of home plate to the front edge of the pitcher's rubber will be **50-feet for 6th and 7th grade pitchers. 8th grade pitchers will throw from 52 feet**. The distance from the center of 2nd base to the back corner of home plate will be **99-feet**
2. **The Umpires** - The league will provide one umpire for each game. In the event that no umpire is available, each team will provide one umpire to call balls and strikes from behind the pitchers mound during that teams offensive half inning, while one umpire from the opposing team will make calls from first base. Therefore, there will be two umpires on the field at the same time, one from each team. (Wait 10 minutes only for umpires then the game must begin.)
3. **The Teams**
 - a. **Minimum players to start the game:** At the start time for the game, each team must have at least (7) seven players from its official roster at the field for the game to be considered official.
 - b. **Bat the roster:** During the game, the teams will bat their roster of all the players present at the game, regardless of the number of players each team has. No pinch-hitting is permitted. The batting order may not be altered.
 - c. **Substitutions:** Teams may substitute in the field freely, including pitchers. Starters re-entering the game: After a starting player has been removed from the game, he may re-enter the game in another position, but he must occupy his original place in the batting order. There is no pinch-hitting.
 - d. **Substitutions - Pitchers:** A pitcher may be taken out of the pitching position and returned to that position later in the game - one time only. A player is permitted to pitch 4 total innings per game.
 - e. **Playing Time:** No player may sit more than 2 innings unless all other players on the team have also sat 2 innings.
4. **The Game**
 - a. **Number of Innings:** There will be a maximum of (7) seven innings per game. If a game is called due to inclement weather, or for any other reasons, a game must go 4 innings to be official, or 3.5 given the home team is leading.
 - b. **Time Limits:** The time limit for each game will be (120) one hundred and twenty minutes - (2) two hours. The last inning cannot begin if there is less than (15) fifteen minutes remaining in the (2) two- hour time limit according to the umpire's watch.
 - c. **A Half-Inning:** The offensive half-inning will consist of 3 outs; or **10 batters**

- d. **Final Batter:** When the final batter in the inning comes to bat, the umpire will call “two out, last batter”. At that time play will resume and shall be played as any other out, or until the umpire calls time out at the end of the play.

5. Coaching

- a. All coaches of the defensive team (the team in the field) must be inside the fenced in dugout unless they have called time and the umpire has acknowledged it.
- b. A coach is only permitted to visit the pitchers mound once in an inning before removing the pitcher from the game. On the second visit the pitcher must be removed from the game.
- c. Offensive first and third base coaches may not physically assist a runner or prevent his advancement during playing action, either by pushing him toward or away from a base. At the end of the action, the ball is dead, the assisted runner is out, any additional outs made on the play stand, and all runners not put out return to bases occupied at the time of the infraction (NFHS High School Baseball Rules, 3-2-2, 2010).
- d. Offensive first and third base coaches must vacate the area if a fielder is attempting to make a play. When the base coach interferes the ball is dead immediately and the batter is out. All runners must return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch (NFHS High School Baseball Rules, 3-2-3, 2010).
- e. **Game Responsibility** – Coaches are responsible for fielding a team to all Yorkville Youth Athletic Association scheduled games, regardless of the number of players who will attend. Coaches do not have the authority to cancel any game for any reason. Any disputes with fellow coaches, umpires, directors, rules or Yorkville administration, shall be discussed with parties involved and Yorkville Youth Athletic Association Executive Director at the proper appointed time. The only time a coach may remove a team from the field is in the event of imminent danger.

6. Equipment

- a. **Bat size:** Minimum bat diameter is 2.25 inches. Maximum bat diameter is 2 5/8 inches. The maximum length is 32", and there is no maximum weight.
- b. **Catcher's Equipment:** catchers must wear full equipment including, protective cup, mask, chest protector, shin guards, helmet and throat protector. Catcher's mitt is not required and must be supplied by the player.
- c. **Cleats:** baseball cleats may be worn, but the cleats cannot be metal, they must be rubber.
- d. **Baseball:** The ball used will be a standard baseball hard ball with a circumference of between 9" and 9.25". The weight of the ball will be between 5 oz. and 5.25 oz. or (142-149 grams).
- e. **Pine tar and rosin:** No pine tar may be used on the bats. The pitcher and batter are permitted to use rosin.
- f. **Eye black and Sunglasses:** The use of both eye black and sunglasses are permitted. The sunglasses must have plastic lenses.
- g. **Jewelry:** All jewelry must be removed. Religious medallions or symbols may be worn, but must be securely taped to the chest.

- h. **Protective cup:** All players will wear a protective cup at all times during the game.

Batting

1. **Batting Helmet:** A batter must wear a batting helmet.
2. **Bunting** - A batter is allowed to bunt the ball.
3. **Dropped third strike rule** - on a dropped third strike, the batter is out. He may not advance to first base.
4. **Bases-on-balls** - Regular baseball rules apply – 4 balls is a walk, 3 strikes is an out.
5. **Time out** - A batter who steps out of the batter's box without calling for and receiving a time out from the home plate umpire, will receive a called strike.
6. **Avoiding a pitch** - A batter who steps out of the batter's box to avoid being hit by a pitch will not be penalized.
7. **Hit by a pitch** - When a pitch hits a batter, he will be awarded first base. If a batter swings the bat, but is hit by the ball it is a strike. The ball becomes dead immediately when the ball hits the batter.
8. **Dropping the bat** - after hitting the ball, the batter will drop his bat in a safe and controlled manner in or near the batter's box or near the first base line. Failure by the batter to drop the bat in a safe and controlled manner will result in the batter being called "out."

Base Running

1. **Leading and Stealing** - Leadoffs are not allowed. A base runner must be in contact with the base when the pitcher, (1) has the ball in his possession, and (2) his foot is in contact with the pitching rubber. Base runner may leave the base when the ball crosses the plate, or when the ball hits the dirt in front of the plate, or when there is a wild pitch or when the pitcher's foot is no longer in contact with the pitching rubber. Runners may steal bases, except home plate, at any time, unlimitedly. Stealing home is prohibited under any circumstances. Players may advance from third to home on a passed ball. The player may not leave third until the ball passes the catcher. By rule, advancing to home on passed ball, or wild pitch, is not considered steal. **Also, a player is prohibited from advancing home on the throw from the catcher to the pitcher.**
2. **Leaving the base** - The base runner may attempt to "steal" the next base after the pitched ball passes home plate completely or if the pitch hits the ground in front of home plate.
3. **Penalty for leaving the base early** - If a batter leaves his base before the ball is hit or before the ball passes home plate, or before the ball hits the dirt, he will be called out by the umpire. Any ball in play is dead.
4. **Sliding** - Sliding is permitted. A player may refuse to slide, but must not come in contact with a fielder – he must give himself up by walking to the base. Base runners may not slide into a base headfirst.
5. **Avoiding contact** - A base runner will make a reasonable effort to avoid contact with a defensive player covering a base. A base runner will not attempt to "collide" or "knock

down" or "run into" any defensive player covering a base for any reason. A base runner that intentionally collides with a defensive player will be called out. If the defender is blocking the plate with the ball in their possession the runner should give him or herself up by walking to the base. If a base runner does not slide or give themselves up, and runs into a defender in possession of the ball, the runner will be called out, and EJECTED.

6. **Out of the baseline** – If a runner is out of the baseline, meaning he is more than three feet away from a direct line between bases, he will be called out (NFHS Baseball Rules, 8-4-2(a), 2010). A runner is also out if he dives over a fielder (NFHS, 8-4-2d).
7. **Base runner's Interference** – A runner is out if he runs into, or obstructs, a fielder who is in the immediate act of making a play, even if the fielder is in the baseline (NFHS, 8-4-2c). Any runner is out when he deliberately knocks the ball from a fielder's hand (8-4-2r).
8. **Batting helmet** - Base runners will wear a batting helmet while on base.

Pitching

1. **Maximum innings per game** - A pitcher may not pitch more than (4) four innings per game.
2. **Maximum innings per double-header:** A pitcher may not pitch more than (6) six innings in a double header.
3. **Complete inning pitched:** If a pitcher delivers one pitch in an inning, he shall be charged with (1) one complete inning pitched.
4. **Maximum innings per seven-day period** - A pitcher may not pitch more than (6) six innings in a seven-day span. Innings pitched include Yorkville Travel, and all non-Yorkville leagues. It is the coach's responsibility to be aware of any innings pitched outside the Yorkville Major League.
5. **Foot on the pitching rubber** – During the act of pitching pitchers must have one foot in contact with the rubber.
6. **Pick-offs** - A pitcher may not attempt a pick-off at any base.
7. **Balk** - A pitcher may not be charged with a balk.
8. **Spitball** - A pitcher may not touch their throwing hand to their mouth and then the ball without first wiping off their hand, or fingers, on a their shirt or pants. If a player puts their hand to their mouth and then the ball a "Ball" will be added to the count.
9. **Hit batsman** - A pitcher who hits (3) three batters in one offensive half-inning, or hits (4) batters in the game will be removed as pitcher, and may not return to the game as a pitcher.
10. **Bases-on-balls** - Regular rules apply, 4 balls equals a walk. Coaches will remove a pitcher if he is unable to place the ball over the plate and gives up many walks.
11. **Intentional Walks** – Intentionally walking a batter is prohibited.
12. **Pitcher removed** - If a pitcher is removed from a game for any reason, he may return to pitch if he has not been removed from the field. For example, he may play the outfield and then return as the pitcher later in the game.

Catching

1. **Equipment** - Catcher must wear full equipment including: protective cup, mask, helmet, chest protector, shin guards and throat protector. Catchers may wear a catcher's mitt.
2. **Talking to batters** - Catchers will not talk to batter or attempt to distract the batter in any way. If a catcher violates this rule the batter will be awarded a base-on-balls. This is a judgment call and may not be protested.

Fielding

1. **Maximum number of fielders** - There may be (10) ten fielders on the field during the defensive half of an inning.
2. **Maximum number of infielders** - There may be as many as (6) infielders in the infield.
3. **Maximum number of outfielders** - There may be as many as (4) four outfielders, and there will be no use of the "short fielder" to cover an infield position.
4. **Infield fly rule:** The infield fly rule shall apply in all games. An infield fly is a fair fly ball (not including a line drive nor an attempted bunt) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort, and provided the hit is made before two are out and at a time when first and second bases, or all bases, are occupied (NFHS High School Baseball Rules, 2-19, 2010).
5. **Avoiding contact** – A fielder who does not have the ball may not deny a runner access to the base he is trying to reach. The runner has the right to reach a base without obstruction if a fielder does not have the ball. The fielder is not allowed to deny the runner access to the base. **If the fielder has the ball, he is allowed to block the base and deny the runner access.** Being in the act of catching the ball is *not possession*.
6. **Fielder's Interference** – An umpire will call obstruction when a fielder, without the ball, makes contact with a base runner within the baseline. An obstructed runner and all other runners affected are awarded the bases they would have reached, in the umpire's opinion, had there been no obstruction.

Sportsmanship

1. **Throwing equipment** – Deliberately throwing a bat, helmet, glove, or other piece of equipment is illegal. Any player that does will be ejected.
2. **Fighting** - A player who instigates a fight will be automatically ejected. A player who responds in a manner to defend himself will not be ejected. However, a player who responds to an instigated fight in a manner that escalates the fight shall be ejected as well.
3. **Unsportsmanlike Conduct** - Behavior including, but not limited to, trash-talking, arguing with an umpire, purposely distracting the pitcher, and foul language, can result in suspension.
4. **Suspension** - If warranted, the league, or organizational directors, may suspend a player or a coach from any team. Coaches can bench their players, and can request that a player be suspended.

Coaching Expectations and Objectives

As coaches at this level, your focus will no doubt be on fielding a competitive team. Your greatest challenge will be to ensure that the players are being taught the necessary skills, techniques, and understanding of the game of baseball so that when they enter the upper leagues the players will possess the necessary fundamentals and basic knowledge to allow for a truly competitive environment.

With respect to teaching your Major League players, your focus should be towards refining skills and talents of individual players with a strong emphasis on consistency. Often the difference between an average player and a good player is the ability to consistently execute the required fundamentals. A few basic examples of this are:

1. Player consistently being in the “ready position” just prior to the pitcher’s delivery
2. Outfielders consistently backing up the infield and each other.
3. Making sure all fielders and runners understand their roles on each and every pitch. While many of your players will have been taught these basic skills, what they often lack is the discipline to consistently execute them. As a Major League coach, developing your players to the point where they consistently execute fundamentals should be on the top of your priority list. Accomplishing this will, without question, provide you with a more competitive team.