

Southtowns Baseball League

12U Baseball Rules of Play (as of 5/21/25)

GAME REGULATIONS:

1. All regulation games are **six** innings long.
2. All regular season weeknight games will begin at 6:00pm (play-off games scheduled on a weeknight will begin at 5:45pm).
3. No new inning will begin after 2 hours and 15 minutes of play (play-off game length will be at the discretion of the field supervisor).
4. Shortened games - A complete game consists of 4 complete innings...or...if the home team is leading after 3 ½ innings...or if the home team takes the lead in the bottom of the 4th inning when the game is called.

EQUIPMENT:

1. BATS...bats must have the "USA Baseball" stamp or sticker on them to be legal.
2. BATTING HELMETS...Any baseball batting helmet that meets NOCSAE standards is legal. Protective facemask cages on helmets are NOT REQUIRED.
3. DIAMOND DIMENSIONS...Pitcher's rubber will be 50' from home plate, and the bases will be 70' from one to the next.
4. METAL SPIKES are **NOT** permitted. Plastic molded spikes or sneakers are permitted.

RULES OF PLAY:

1. Nine (9) players in the field for defense.
2. All players must play at least 3 innings in the field.
3. LIVE BALL/ DEAD BALL rules...
 - a. If the ball is in play, it is a live ball unless the pitcher has possession of the ball in the mound area.
 - b. The ball will be called dead as follows:
 - i. umpire calls "dead ball" or "timeout" for any reason.
 - ii. The pitcher has possession of the ball and is on the pitcher's MOUND AREA, which constitutes the round dirt area that surrounds the pitcher's rubber (umpire's discretion).
4. Baserunners may lead off or steal (2nd and 3rd base) **when the ball leaves the pitcher's hand.**
5. Baserunners who leave early will be called out (umpire calls "dead ball/ no pitch").
6. Baserunners may steal home or advance home on a passed ball or wild pitch.
 - a. HOWEVER, if there are plays made on a baserunner or other baserunners, a baserunner may advance home at their own risk.
7. Pitchers may pitch no more than 2 innings in one game and those innings must be consecutive (one pitch counts as an inning). *Once a pitcher is removed from the game as a pitcher he may not return to the game as a pitcher.*
8. All players present must be in the batting order. Late arriving players must be inserted into the LAST spot in the batting order upon arrival and must be given their first plate appearance at their next turn in the order after arriving. Scorekeeper must report this to the opposing team immediately.
9. No intentional walks allowed. Pitchers must pitch to every batter. If it's determined by the umpire that the pitcher intentionally walked a batter, the pitcher will be removed from the game.
10. Infield Fly rule **IS** in effect.
11. Dropped Third Strike rule **IS** in effect.
12. Non-collision rule **IS** in effect. All baserunners must avoid contact with fielders. Incidental/ legal contact will be left to the discretion of the umpire. Non-collision rule does not mean that a runner must slide, it simply means that the baserunner must **AVOID** a collision.
13. No defensive player may block/shield any base or the runner's base path unless that player has possession of the ball. Standard OBSTRUCTION baseball rules are in effect.
14. Head-first slides are **NOT** permitted. Runners will be called out for a head-first slide, but the play will continue (not a dead ball). However, if a runner is diving back to a base, dive-backs permitted (ie: a pick off play)

MERCY RULE:

- **INNING**...6 run maximum per at-bat, with the exception of the 6th inning and any extra innings.
- **GAME**...12 runs or more at the end of 4 innings of play (or 3½ if home team is leading)...OR...10 or more runs at the end of 5 innings (or 4 ½ if home team is leading).

COACHES, UMPIRES AND CONDUCT:

Only the head coach (identified prior to each game) may speak to the umpire regarding any disputes, rule questions, etc. Players, assistant coaches, scorekeepers, spectators, etc. may not speak to umpires at any time for any reason! This will be strictly enforced, and the head coach is responsible for making sure this rule is followed! All coaches, assistants, players and fans are bound by the Code of Conduct for Youth Sports set forth by the Village of Hamburg Recreation Dept. and HJBSL Board of Directors.

FORFEIT RULE:

If a team has at least 8 rostered players available for a game, the HEAD COACH must attempt to call players up from the 10U baseball division for that game to bring the team to the minimum of 9 players for the game. See CALL-UP rules below.

Game Day Forfeits: Each team will be given a 10 minute grace period if they have **7 or less players**.

- a. Teams can play a game with 8 players, but will take an out every time the 9th spot in the batting order comes up. No grace period for an 8 player team, start the game and insert a 9th player when he/ she arrives.
- b. Teams with only 7 players cannot start the game. If they do not have an 8th player by the 10 minute grace period, they forfeit.

CALL-UP PLAYER RULE:

If a coach secures a player or players to be called up for a game, the following procedure should be followed:

- Call up players must be from the 10U baseball division and active in the organization's house league.
- Call up players must play defense in the outfield ONLY!
- Call up players must bat in the last spot(s) in the batting order.
- If a call up player unexpectedly gives a team more than the minimum amount of players needed, DO NOT send the player home. In this case, the called up player will play less innings in the field than all roster players, and follow the rules above as well as all rules of play.

THUNDER & LIGHTNING POLICY:

*The policy below will be enforced keeping in mind one thing...SAFETY!

*NOTE...the presence of thunder and lightning DOES NOT AUTOMATICALLY CANCEL A GAME!

*HJBSL follows the NYSPHSAA policy on thunder and lightning... Thunder and lightning necessitates that contests be suspended. The occurrence of thunder and/or lightning is not subject to interpretation or discussion - thunder is thunder, lightning is lightning.

*When thunder is heard and/or when lightning is seen, the following procedures should be adhered to by the Field Supervisor OR the head umpire (in the absence of a Field Supervisor).

- a) Suspend play and direct participants to go to shelter, a building normally occupied by the public or if a building is unavailable, participants should go inside a vehicle with a solid metal top (e.g. bus, van, car).
- b) Do not permit people to stand under or near a tree; and have all stay away from poles, antennas, towers and underground watering systems.
- c) After thunder and/or lightning have left the area, and wait 30 minutes after the last boom is heard or strike is seen before resuming play or competition.