



Hamburg Junior Baseball & Softball League  
**BASEBALL (9-10) Rules of Play (as of 5/14/25)**

**GAME REGULATIONS:**

1. All 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 4<sup>th</sup> inning when the game is called.
5. DIMENSIONS...Pitcher's rubber will be 46' from home plate, and the bases will be 60' from one to the next.

**EQUIPMENT:**

1. BATS...all bats must be "USA Baseball" approved (w/ sticker) to be legal. USSSA bats are prohibited, and if found to be used, the batter will be automatically called out. Second offense by any player on the team will be a forfeit by that team. Head Coaches must check all bats before each game!
2. BATTING HELMETS...Any baseball batting helmet that meets NOCSAE standards is legal. Protective facemask cages on helmets are NOT REQUIRED.

**RULES OF PLAY:**

1. Ten (10) players in the field for defense. 4 players must be located in the outfield.
2. All players must play at least 3 innings in the field.
3. Baserunners may leadoff or steal (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base) when the ball crosses home plate. If a baserunner leaves early, a dead ball called (no pitch), and that runner will be called out. Warnings can be issued before an out.
4. Baserunners may NOT steal home. Stealing home/ advancing home illegally includes (but is not limited to) running home when a catcher attempts to throw out a runner trying to steal a different base, running home when the catcher attempts to pick off baserunner on 3<sup>rd</sup> base, or running home on an overthrow to the pitcher from the catcher.
5. Overthrows from a live (batted ball) play...
  - i. OUT OF PLAY overthrow...if an overthrow goes out of play, regular baseball awards will go into effect and be handled by the umpire accordingly.
  - ii. IN PLAY overthrow...An IN PLAY overthrow is considered a throw from any defensive player to a fielder located in the infield who does not catch the throw cleanly and the ball stays in the field of play. If this happens, baserunners may only advance **ONE BASE** at their own risk, including home.
6. A DEAD BALL will be implemented when...
  - a. The umpire calls "dead ball" or "timeout" for any reason.
  - b. 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).
7. Pitchers may pitch no more than 2 innings in one game and those innings must be consecutive (one pitch counts as an inning). When a *pitcher is removed from the game as a pitcher he/ she 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 not 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 DOES NOT "must slide", it means that the baserunner must AVOID a collision with all defensive players.
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...Runners **may not head-first slide going to any base**. Runners will be called out for a head-first slide, but the play will continue (not a dead ball). Head first dive-backs are permitted (ie: a pick off play).

**MERCY RULE:**

- **INNING**...6 run maximum per at-bat, with the exception of the 6<sup>th</sup> inning and extra innings.

## **MERCY RULE (cont.):**

- **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:**

Only the head coach (identified prior to each game) may speak to the umpire regarding any disputes, rule questions, etc. Players, assistant coaches, scorekeepers and spectators 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 the 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 7-8 baseball division for that game to bring the team to the minimum of 10 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 9<sup>th</sup> spot in the batting order comes up. No grace period for an 8 player team, start the game and insert a 9<sup>th</sup> player when he/ she arrives.
- b. Teams with only 7 players cannot start the game. If they do not have an 8<sup>th</sup> 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 7-8 baseball division in the HJBSL 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.

## **HAMBURG DAWGS TRAVEL RULES AND NOTES:**

- A. 8U, 9U and 10U HJBSL travel players are required to play in a minimum of 80% of their house league games and 80% of practices.
- B. If found to be in violation of rule A. above, travel players will be deemed ineligible to participate in travel games, tournaments and practices indefinitely, pending a review by the HJBSL Board of Directors. EXCEPTION...if a travel player misses travel team functions as well as house league functions during the same time frame, this rule is waived (illness, injury, vacation)
- C. House league coaches and travel coaches should openly communicate pitch counts, innings pitched, future plans and all other pertinent information regarding 9U and 10U pitchers as much as possible. This communication is imperative as it relates to young arms and preventing overuse of developing bodies.
- D. 9-10 baseball PARENTS have the right to deem their child ineligible to pitch before any game for the purpose of preventing injury. Parents should notify their child's head coach of this decision no later than 12pm on gameday, as head coaches need as much advanced notice of such a decision so they can make their lineup.
  - a. Little League of America recommendations for 9-10 baseball pitch counts/ rest is as follows...
    - i. No more than 75 pitches in one day:
      1. 66+ pitches in a day = 4 days rest
      2. 51-65 pitches in a day = 3 days rest
      3. 36-50 pitches in a day = 2 days rest
      4. 21-35 pitches in a day = 1 day rest
      5. 1-20 pitches in a day = 0 days rest