



Hamburg Junior Baseball & Softball League 7-8 Baseball - Rules of Play (as of 5/13/2025)

GAME REGULATIONS:

1. All games are **six** innings long.
2. All regular season weeknight games will begin at 6:00pm (playoff 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.
5. DIAMOND DIMENSIONS: Pitcher's rubber/ pitching machine will be 42' from home plate, and the bases will be 60' from one to the next.

EQUIPMENT:

1. BATS...Any youth baseball bat that is USA baseball approved (has USA baseball sticker on it) is legal.
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. All present players must be put in the batting order for their team.
2. A team will field 10 players in their defensive lineup (unless they only have 9 players present – see forfeit rules below for more info)

Defensive playing requirements:

Scenario #1 - If a team has 11 or fewer players, no player will sit more than one defensive inning.

Scenario #2- If a team has 12 players, every player will sit exactly one defensive inning (and no more than two innings if extra innings occur).

Scenario #3 - If a team has 13 players, every player must sit at least one defensive inning and no more than two innings

3. Infield Fly rule is **not** in effect.
4. Dropped Third Strike rule is **not** in effect.
5. Stealing is **not** allowed.
6. Baserunners may leave the base when the pitch crosses the plate.
7. Intentional walks are **not** allowed.
8. Bunting is **not** allowed
9. Non-collision rule **is** in effect. All base runners must avoid contact with fielders. Incidental/legal contact will be left to the discretion of the umpire. This is not a must-slide rule!
10. No fielder may block/shield any base unless the player has possession of the ball.
11. Base runners may **not** slide head-first into any base. "Dive-backs" into bases are allowed. Head first slides will result in the runner being called out.

PITCHING RULES:

1. The **first** inning will be designated for live pitching by a player.
2. Please note that one player may only pitch one inning per week – which will promote development of multiple pitchers.
*If there are 3 or 4 games during playoff week, no pitcher can pitch consecutive games, but can pitch more than once during the week.

During the live pitching inning (first inning only):

- There are walks unless a bases loaded walk occurs. If a bases loaded walk occurs, one coach from the hitting team will come in to assume the count on a batter that has reached a 4 ball count with the bases loaded. This batter may not walk and will remain up to the plate until he puts the ball in play or strikes out. The coach must be in contact with the pitching rubber while throwing overhand pitches to their respective batters.
- If a player pitcher hits a batter with a pitch and the bases are loaded, it will be ruled a HIT BY PITCH and the batter will be awarded first base, and the run will count.
- Pitchers must wear a batting helmet during WARMUPS, but not during the game.

During the use of the pitching machine (beginning in the 2nd inning for the rest of the game):

- * The player who is playing the "pitcher position" must wear a batting helmet, and must be positioned with at least one foot touching the pitcher's mound area (dirt) until the ball is hit by a batter. Umpire will monitor and rule on compliance.
- * Each hitter will receive 5 pitches to either put a batted ball in play or strike out. If the umpire deems any pitch "no pitch", that pitch will not count against the hitter's 5 pitches. A batter can see more than 5 pitches if he/ she hits foul balls on or after the 5th pitch.
- * There are no walks. Batters will complete an at bat vs. the pitching machine with a batted ball or a strike out..
- * If a batter is HIT BY PITCH during machine pitch, the batter will be awarded first base, if the batter made an attempt to get out of the way of the pitch.

DEAD BALL RULES:

*A Dead Ball will be declared once a natural baseball play is made and the ball is secured in the infield/ field of play by any defensive player (discretion of the umpire).

*Advancement of Bases on a hit in the infield: Runners may advance at their own risk until the natural conclusion of a play in the infield.

*Advancement of Bases on a hit to the outfield, runners may advance at their own risk until the ball is possessed by any defensive player in the infield (possession and one foot on the infield dirt).

Additionally: a chalked hash mark will be placed halfway between first base & second base, second base & third base, and third base & home plate. If a runner has not reached the hash mark at the moment the ball is possessed in the infield, the umpire will call a dead ball and send that runner back to the base he/ she previously reached.

*Overthrows...

a. 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.

b. 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. If this happens, baserunners may only advance one base (2nd or 3rd) at their own risk, **BUT MAY NOT ADVANCE HOME ON AN IN-PLAY OVERTHROW.**

DEFENSIVE ON-FIELD COACHES:

7-8 baseball is still considered a developmental division. With that in mind, one coach per team is permitted to be in the outfield with his defensive players during games in the regular season. Coaches electing to use this coaching tool must maintain a distance far enough **BEHIND THE PLAYERS** so not to interfere with the play of the game.

COACHES & UMPIRES:

Only the head coach (identified prior to each game) may speak with the umpire regarding any disputes, rule questions, etc. **NO EXCEPTIONS!!!**

FORFEIT RULE:

If a team has at least 8 roster players available for a game, the HEAD COACH must attempt to call players up for that game to bring the team to the minimum of 10 players for the game.

Game Day Forfeits: Each team will be given a 10 minute grace period if they have **8 or less players.**

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

MERCY RULE:

- **INNING...**6 run maximum per team/ per at-bat, with the exception of the 6th inning and 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).

CALL UP PLAYER RULE:

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

- Coaches should contact families of **6 year olds** from the HJBSL Coed Developmental 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.

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.

TRAVEL PLAYER GAME MINIMUM: 8U Hamburg Dawgs travel players are required to play in a minimum of 80% of their house league games and 80% of practices. If found to be in violation of this rule, travel players will be deemed ineligible to participate in travel games, tournaments and practices indefinitely, pending a review by the HJBSL Advisory Board. **EXCEPTION...**if a travel player misses travel team functions as well as house league functions during the same time frame, this rule is waived (injury, vacation, etc.)