

2023 Neobaseball League Rules

Revised 1/13/23



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1. Official Game(s):

- a. **Any items not addressed within these rules will revert to current Official Major League Rules**
- b. **Please review the respective Supplemental Rules for the Tee-ball, Coach-Pitch and Farm/8U classifications**
- c. Required Innings:
 - i. Games are six innings for 12U and younger divisions (13/14U games will be seven innings).
 - ii. If both managers agree, additional full inning(s) can be played if the 6th inning ends in a tie (7th for 13/14U)
 - iii. A game can end at any point beyond 3 completed innings and still be official if both acting team managers agree
 - iv. Do NOT revert to a previous inning's score once a new inning has started (can't undo game play).
- d. Suspended Games:
 - i. If a game is suspended due to darkness, rain/inclement weather, field conditions, etc. and can't resume within 1 hour of the delay then the game can be ruled official if four or more innings have been completed with same number of at bats (minimum of five complete innings for 13/14U), or a minimum of 3 ½ innings if the home team is ahead (4 ½ if home team is ahead in 13/14U)
 1. DO NOT revert to a previous inning's score if an inning is partially completed.
 2. 9U-12U End-of-Season Tournament games must play a full 6 innings (Full 7 innings for 13/14U).
 3. 8U and younger Championship games must play a full 6 innings
 - ii. All other games (even if due to inclement weather) will be considered suspended/incomplete
 - iii. Suspended games should resume at the exact point the game left off
 1. Due to roster batter requirements, any additional rostered players should be inserted in the bottom of the batting order if available when the game resumes even if they weren't present initially. If a player is not available for the rescheduled game, an out will NOT be recorded unless the team drops to 8 players.
 2. The total maximum number of allowable innings pitched per player per game and the no re-entry rule are still recognized (the # of days rest required is based on the most recent game).
 3. If managers agree (an ump declared) prior to the start of an inning that it would be the final inning due to darkness/inclement weather/etc. AND the game is suspended prior to the end of the declared final inning, then only that inning needs to finish when the game resumes for it to be official (Not applicable at tournaments).
- e. Mercy Rule:
 - i. 12U and younger, an official game shall be declared if at the end of four (or more) full innings, the visiting team is ahead by 10 or more runs, or if at the end of 3 ½ innings (or more) the home team is ahead by 10 or more runs, the game shall be official and can end
 - ii. 13/14U mercy rule is 15 runs or more after four complete innings (3 ½ innings if home team is ahead) or 10 or more runs after five innings (4 ½ innings if home team is ahead)
 - iii. Teams can continue to play past the mercy rule, but the game is officially complete once mercy limit is met (no further scores will be recorded if game continues to play)
- f. Run Limit:
 - i. There shall be a maximum of 5 runs per inning per team for 10U and younger through the 5th inning (There are unlimited runs in the 6th inning & additional, and/or the inning declared as final by the umpire prior to the start of the inning due to weather and/or darkness)
 - ii. There shall be a maximum of 7 runs per inning per team for 11U & 12U through the 5th inning (Unlimited runs in the 6th inning & additional, and/or the inning declared as final by the umpire prior to the start of the inning due to weather and/or darkness)
- g. Time Limit:
 - i. **9U** and younger age divisions: No new inning shall start after 2 hours of gameplay (official start time shall be when umpire declares "play ball"/first pitch to when the 3rd out is recorded). **10U-14U** no new inning shall start after **2 hours 15 minutes**.
 - ii. The time limit rule supersedes the required # of innings rule (but there should be at least 3 completed innings)

2. Substitution(s):

- a. All attending players must play a minimum of two innings in the field by the 4th inning (free substitutions). Exception: Player does not have to play two innings if being disciplined, but the opposing coach should be notified prior.
- b. 12u and younger - each player available for a game will be inserted into the batting order and will bat even though he may not be playing in the field (continuous batting order for regular season games). 13/14U can choose to match batting during season or the team manager can choose to bat the entire roster (normal substitution rules apply if batting less than full roster).
- c. 9U and older TOURNAMENTS ONLY: If the team with the higher # of players matches the opposing team's # of batters available, subs are linked in the batting order - SEE BATTING SECTION.

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3. Pitching:

- a. Pitching Distance:
 - i. Shall be 40' for the 8U player-pitchers
 - ii. Shall be 46' for 9U & 10U
 - iii. Shall be 50' for 11U & 12U
 - iv. Shall be 54' for 13/14U
- b. Pitching Limits:
 - i. **8U (Farm) – 55 pitches per day or 6 outs (2 innings) per game, whichever occurs first**
 - ii. **9U & 10U – 65 pitches per day or 9 outs (3 innings) per game, whichever occurs first**
 - iii. **11U & 12U – 75 pitches per day or 9 outs (3 innings) per game, whichever occurs first**
 - iv. **13U/14U – 85 pitches per day or 12 outs (4 innings) per game, whichever occurs first**
 - v. Tracking Outs/Innings Pitched:
 1. A pitcher shall be charged with pitching a complete inning if run limit is scored before three outs are made
 2. If not all 3 outs are made (if the team gave up the run limit, etc.):
 - a. If more than 2 pitchers are used in an inning, that pitcher who pitched to the greatest number of batters shall be charged with 2/3 of an inning, and the lesser 1/3
 - b. If 3 pitchers are used, then each pitcher shall be charged with 1/3 of an inning
 - vi. Pitchers can only exceed the daily pitch limit if they are finishing a batter, but the total day(s) rest shall be based on the total number of actual pitches thrown (regardless if finishing a batter or not)
- c. No Re-entry Rule: Once a player-pitcher is removed from the mound, they can't re-enter as a pitcher at later innings of the same game
- d. Day/s Rest:
 - i. 1-25 pitches: (0) calendar days rest (players can pitch next game and/or day without penalty)
 - ii. 26-40 pitches: (1) full calendar days rest (players can pitch in another game in two days)
 - iii. 41-55 pitches: (2) full calendar days rest (players can pitch in another game in three days)
 - iv. 56-70 pitches: (3) full calendar days rest (players can pitch in another game in four days)
 - v. 71 or more pitches: (4) full calendar days rest (players can pitch in another game in five days)
- e. **EACH PLAYER'S PITCH COUNT MUST BE ENTERED ONLINE PRIOR TO THE START OF THE FOLLOWING GAME or the following game can result in a forfeit, if protested prior to the start of the following game.**
- f. Age exception players are NOT permitted to pitch (they can still catch and play other positions if applicable).
- g. Balks should be discussed at pregame ground rules with managers & umpire (balks will be called at umpire discretion for 11U to 14U divisions)
 - i. 11U and 12U balks should be called after one warning per pitcher (12U balks will be called in tournaments first violation)
 - ii. If managers agree, 13/14U balks can be called after one warning per team for approx. the first half of season (umpire discretion).
NOTE: 13/14U balks should be called on first violation the second half of season and in tournaments.
- h. The pitcher must be removed from the mound at 2nd charged coach's trip to the mound in the same inning.
- i. 8U-14U: If a pitcher hits 3 batters in an inning, they must be removed from the mound (the umpire still has the discretion to remove a pitcher at any point if they believe there is a safety concern).
- j. Intentional walks will only be permitted by announcement from pitcher, catcher, or team manager (no pitching required)

4. Batting/Playing Requirements:

- a. All players present for a game must be inserted into the batting order (Roster batting - No Matching Rosters regular season 12U and younger). All available players should participate in the field (defensively) a minimum of 2 innings (inserted into the field by the 3rd inning so they get their minimum 2 innings of playing time by the end of the 4th inning).
 - i. For tournaments only (and 13/14U throughout season), the team with more players can match the team with less players
 1. Remaining players must be substituted by the 3rd inning (2 inning minimum playing requirement rule still applies)
 2. Only one re-entry per player, per game
 3. Once subbed, those two players are linked at that position in the batting order and can't bat in another position
- b. If players are removed from the game due to injury, illness, or discipline no out will be recorded at their position in the batting order (unless the total # of participating players drops to 8)

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- c. Teams are permitted to play a game if only 8 players are available (An out will be declared in the 9th position of the batting order) – if a team has 7 or less players at any point, the game will result in a forfeit.
- d. Players that are removed from the batting order (skipped) due to injury cannot reenter the same game.

5. Baserunner(s):

- a. No malicious contact rule is in effect (umpire's discretion). However, defensive players must position themselves to receive the ball as not to impede the runner's progress. Malicious Contact Penalty: runner is out (if deemed flagrant, player can be removed from game). Malicious Contact and Fielder Obstruction are umpire judgment calls
- b. Leadoffs:
 - i. Leadoffs are permitted in 11U-14U divisions (No leadoffs for 10U and younger divisions)
 - ii. 9U-10U divisions:
 - 1. Stealing is only permitted after the ball reaches home plate when thrown by pitcher
 - 2. Runners must return to base once pitcher has control of ball at or near the mound
 - 3. Overthrow of pitcher and/or throw to a base from catcher is played as a live ball
 - 4. 9U only: Runners can't advance home on a passed ball
- c. Courtesy Runner:
 - i. Can be used at any time for the catcher
 - ii. Should be the player that was the last out recorded or run last scored if out not recorded (or the linked substitute player, if applicable)

6. Equipment:

- a. Bats:
 - i. 12U and younger: Bats shall be a maximum of 2 ¾ inches barrel, no drop size limit
 - ii. 13/14U shall be -5 maximum differential (can't exceed -5 drop limit)
 - iii. Authorized USSSA 1.15BPF or USA certification is required for composite or alloy baseball bats (BBCOR certification is also acceptable for 13/14U)
 - iv. Only solid, one-piece wood baseball bats are permitted without above certification
- b. Game Ball(s):
 - i. Diamond (D-OB, DOL-1, DOL-2, DOL-A, etc.) or Rawlings (RLLB, ROLB, or similar) baseballs shall only be used at 8U-14U
 - ii. Each team shall provide 1 new game ball and 1 good used ball (For regular season games, the home team is responsible to supply additional game balls, if needed)
- c. All offensive (batting) players must have a helmet on while in the field of play
- d. Teams must wear full matching uniforms with the player's number clearly visible on the shirt
- e. No metal spikes for 12U and younger divisions (13/14U - metal spikes are permitted)
- f. Reflective sunglasses are not permitted (umpire discretion)
- g. Catchers must be properly equipped
- h. Coaches must wear proper attire, and have closed-toe shoes if within the field of play
- i. No jewelry is permitted to be worn by players in the game or dugout
- j. Any pertinent medical equipment/devices should be discussed in ground rules

7. Field(s):

- a. Field Preparation:
 - i. Home team is responsible for field preparation/lining prior to game (1/2 hour or more prior is preferable)
 - ii. Tournament game fields will be prepped/lined by the hosting community
- b. Base Path Distances:
 - i. 10U and younger shall be 60' bases
 - ii. 11U & 12U shall be 70' bases
 - iii. 13/14U shall be 80' bases
- c. Managers should agree on infield practice, allowing for equal time for both teams prior to the game.

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8. Umpires:

- a. Home team is responsible to schedule and pay for an experienced umpire for regular season games (for tournaments, each team shall pay half the total umpire fee prior to game)
- b. Home plate umpires should be a minimum of 14-yrs-old for the 8U division, 15 for 9/10U, 16 for 11/12U, and 17 for 13/14U division.
- c. Umpires should have proper umpire attire, protective gear, etc.

9. General Rules:

- a. Rule Changes:
 - i. Changes/modifications to rules can be proposed and voted on by participating community representatives at the regularly scheduled representative meeting/s after season (See Schedule of Events)
 - ii. One vote per local association
- b. Strike Zone:
 - i. Shall be the umpire's discretion (younger divisions should have a larger strike zone than the older divisions)
 - ii. Can't be appealed
- c. Ejection Rule:
 - i. First time ejection of coaches/players/etc. could result 0-2 game suspension depending on the situation and severity.
 - ii. 2nd ejection in one season will result in a minimum of a 2-game suspension.
 - iii. Coach/player will be removed for remainder of season if ejected 3 times.
- d. Dropped Third Strike:
 - i. Drop Third Strike will apply to the 10U-14U divisions only
 - ii. No dropped third strike rule at 9U and younger (Batter is out 3rd strike whether the catcher drops the ball or not)
- e. Infield Fly Rule:
 - i. Infield Fly Rule is in effect for 10U-14U, which will be called at the umpire's discretion
 - ii. No infield fly rule for 9U and younger divisions
- f. Ball Out of Play:
 - i. Each runner including the batter-runner may, without liability to be put out, advance:
 1. Two bases, if a fair ball bounces or is deflected into the stands outside the first or third base foul lines; or if it goes through or under a field fence
 2. Two bases when a thrown ball goes into the stands, or into a bench, or over or under or through a field fence. The ball is dead. When such wild throw is the first play by an infielder, the umpire, in awarding such bases, shall be governed by the position of the runners at the time the ball was pitched; in all other cases the umpire shall be governed by the position of the runners at the time the wild throw was made.
 3. One base, if a ball, pitched to the batter, or thrown by the pitcher from his position on the pitcher's plate to a base to catch a runner, goes into a stand or a bench, or over or through a field fence or backstop. The ball is dead. If, however, the pitched or thrown ball goes through or by the catcher or through the fielder, and remains on the playing field, and is subsequently kicked or deflected into the dugout, stands or other area where the ball is dead, the awarding of bases shall be two bases from position of runners at the time of the pitch or throw
- g. Lighting/Thunder:
 - i. In cases of lightning, game play should be stopped, players should be removed from field of play and seek shelter
 - ii. Game can resume 30 minutes after last occurrence

10. Reschedule(s):

- a. Only "rain-out" games or games lacking players due to school related functions can be rescheduled
- b. Postponed/Suspended games (rainouts) must be rescheduled within 48 hours to be played within 14 days of the original game date (and/or prior to tournament seeding, whichever is first)
- c. Reschedule Policy:
 - i. Home team shall provide three dates that the rescheduled game can be played, and the visiting team shall choose one of the dates provided
 - ii. If the visiting team is not able to commit to playing one of the dates provided, then the home team shall contact a NeoBaseball representative immediately so they can set a date for the rescheduled game

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- iii. If the home team does not have a suitable field available within 14 days of the original game date, the game shall be rescheduled to be played at the visiting team's field or a neutral facility. (Note: The home and away teams shall remain as originally scheduled)
- iv. Failure to play the game as scheduled may result in a forfeit
- v. It is the home team manager's responsibility to contact the Assignor to cancel/request the Umpire

11. Player/Team Eligibility:

- a. Team Registration:
 - i. Team registration & fees are due at the scheduled registration meeting (See Schedule of Events)
 - ii. All team fees are non-refundable
- b. Roster:
 - i. Must be entered by the roster cutoff date prior to season (See Schedule of Events)
 - ii. Must include all participating players and managers/coaches (see Managers/Coaches requirements). Teams may be removed from games and/or tournaments for rule violations.
- c. Age Cutoff:
 - i. April 30th age cutoff (player's age on April 30th is their roster age) - For example, a child who is 10 years old before May 1 cannot be on a 9U team, but can be on 10U team or 11U team
 - ii. Exception: With approval, up to two "age exceptions" permitted per team
 - 1. Age exception players can be no more than 1 year older than the rostered age division
 - 2. Age exception players are not permitted to pitch
- d. Age Verification:
 - i. The manager should have legible copies all players' birth certificates on hand prior to start of season
 - ii. If player eligibility verification is requested, the team manager (or community representative) must produce a legible copy of the player's birth certificate within 24 hours
- e. Residency/School Rule:
 - i. Teams shall consist of players from within the community and/or school system
 - ii. No more than **one** player per team shall be from another school system and/or community (local association) participating within the league
 - iii. An authorized *Player Release and Disclosure* is required prior to roster approval for all out of area players
 - iv. Any exceptions (multiple player releases from a community when no team is available) must have written approval from Neobaseball. Unapproved/Violation of these rules shall result in 1–2-year(s) suspensions of coach(es) and/or representative.
- f. No less than 10 players and no more than 18 players shall be permitted on a team roster
- g. Players can be rostered in two different age divisions only, but they can only pitch in ONE of the divisions. (If double rostered, it must be immediately adjacent divisions. For example: Can be both 8U & 9U, but can't be 8U and 10U), **DBL ROSTERED PLAYERS SHOULD NOT BE ROSTERED ON TWO TEAMS IN THE SAME AGE DIVISION.**
- h. Communities with more than one team at an age group should attempt to create fair and balanced teams (draft when possible) – Stacked/hand-picked teams are against the intent of the recreational community-based league structure
- i. Travel and/or Select Players are not permitted to participate in recreational league and/or tournament games (players can participate in similar type recreational leagues and/or local All-Star type tournaments, but not compete in "travel" level competition).
- j. Regular season teams can participate in games verse travel teams if it's at community-based tournaments, but not complete in tournaments advertised specifically as being geared towards travel teams (open roster).
- k. Illegal/Ineligible Player Penalty: 1st offense - Team will forfeit all games the illegal/ineligible player(s) participated. 2nd offense – team will be removed from remaining game schedule

12. Managers/Coaches:

- a. All managers/coaches must have approved national background screenings/checks (NCSI), concussion awareness training certificates (NFHSLearn and/or CDC), and complete Lindsay's Law: Sudden Cardiac Arrest requirements.
- b. Shall be required to adhere to current Ohio Health Department mandates for baseball regarding COVID-19
- c. No more than 1 team manager and 4 assistant coaches (5 total) are permitted in the dugout and/or on the field per game
- d. A representative from each team must attend the pre-season coaches & scheduling meeting/s
- e. Winning team should enter the game score within 24 hours of completion (player pitch count should be entered by both teams)
 - i. If roster, game results, and/or pitch count are not entered in the proposed timeframe, then the following game may result in forfeit if protested.

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ii. PLEASE REPORT YOUR PITCH COUNTS, GAME RESULTS, & ENTER YOUR ROSTER.

13. Regular/Spring Season:

- a. Regular (spring) season shall consist of around 14 game
- b. Shall run from mid-April to late June
- c. Teams must complete at least 78% of the scheduled games to compete in end-of-season tournament

14. End-of-season Tournaments:

- a. Single elimination tourney shall take place at the end of June to beginning of July (see schedule of events)
- b. Shall be seeded based on points
 - i. 3 for win, 2 for tie, 1 for loss, and no points awarded for games not played (and incomplete game)
 - ii. Run differential or blind draw shall be used as the points tie breaker if head-to-head is not available
- c. Higher seed is considered home team and will bat 2nd
- d. Shall be hosted by areas/communities within the league (see hosting requirements document)
- e. Age classifications with 16 or more teams will generally have gold & silver brackets

15. Sportsmanship/Behavior:

- a. Teams are responsible to complete all games as scheduled - Failure to play the games will result in a forfeit, and possible removal of the team from the tournament and/or league.
- b. Noisemakers and/or excessive noise (particularly intended to distract pitcher/s) will not be permitted.
- c. Coaches, players, parents, spectators, etc. shall be removed and/or shall be banned from future events for inappropriate activities (ie. Use of drugs/alcohol at games, use of profanity, unsportsmanlike conduct, any type of harassment, etc.)

16. Protests/Appeals:

- a. A protest/appeals committee (of up to four) shall be chaired and appointed by the league president yearly, prior to start of season, to assist in addressing regular season rules, questions, protests, and appeals.
- b. Games may be played "under protest" and completed if declared to the umpire immediately upon the disputed rule infraction. Notify U-I-C and/or Neobaseball president immediately (or within 2 hours of the game's completion if it's a game ending ruling)

17. All-Star Game/s:

- a. After the end-of-season tournament, an All-Star game MAY be held for each of the 9U, 10U, 11U, and 12U age divisions (see the current All-Star Games document and Schedule of Events for complete details)
- b. If held, each team will have the option to send two players to participate in the All-Star game, unless otherwise noted

18. Insurance:

- a. All teams/participants must have liability insurance (minimum of \$1 million per occurrence) in place with secondary medical coverage (minimum of \$100,00 participant accidental medical limit)
- b. Coverage may be available on a NeoBaseball League policy for an additional fee, or teams/areas can purchase coverage elsewhere (Neobaseball must be listed as certificate holder and additionally insured)
- c. Participation in league related events is consent for any necessary medical treatment required

19. Waiver:

- a. Physical activities & sports include potential risk of physical injury, and most in-person events increase risk of infection/spread of COVID-19 and other illnesses. Parents/guardians, managers/coaches, participants, spectators, etc. agree to assume the risk of injury to their child/participant, or to them, resulting from their attendance and/or the child's participation in this program.
- b. Participation and/or attendance is acknowledgment that all league related claims shall be waived and released.
- c. The waiver and release extend not only to Neobaseball, local communities, and any other league/parent organization, but all sponsors, volunteers, officers, owners, occupiers of land upon which the activities may take place.
- d. All fees are non-refundable (even if players/coaches/team are removed for behavior, rule violation, and/or other reasons).