



WHEATON YOUTH BASEBALL INSTRUCTIONAL BASEBALL LEAGUE SUPPLEMENTARY RULES

Revised & Approved: January 2024

The Instructional League has been established as an intermediate step between T-Ball and the Rookie League for the purpose of introducing players to the fundamentals of baseball and the pitched ball. The league is limited to those players currently in the first grade at the start of the season.

This league, like T-Ball, is considered to be an introduction to organized baseball. League standings will not be kept, and All-Star Day and Championship Day are not applicable at this level.

League play will be governed by PONY League Baseball Rules unless otherwise stated in these supplementary rules. The intent of Wheaton Youth Baseball is to teach the rules of the game, develop skills, provide an opportunity for fun, and to teach teamwork and sportsmanship.

**MANAGERS AND UMPIRES HAVE NO AUTHORITY TO WAIVE ANY
RULES SET FORTH IN THESE SUPPLEMENTARY RULES OR ANY OTHER
REFERENCED DOCUMENTS OR RULES.**

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Coaching Youth Sports (CYS) has been adopted for use by the Wheaton Park District Youth Baseball/Softball Board of Control (Board of Control). The Wheaton Park District will provide CYC class prior to the start of the spring season. New managers are encouraged to complete this class within one year of entering the program. CYC managers will be given first priority in team assignments throughout all levels of this program.

It is the responsibility of each manager or their replacement to see to the proper conduct of themselves, their coaches, players and team fans. Failure to carry out this responsibility may result in game forfeiture, and/or disciplinary action, including removal from the baseball program.

Every effort will be made to limit the number of players per team to a maximum of 12.

II. THE GAME

- A. The home team is responsible for setting up the field prior to the game and also making sure the equipment is put back into the equipment box following the game.

**Please remember to lock the equipment box prior to leaving the field.
Inform the league VP of any problems or missing equipment at the field.**

- Bases are located 50 feet apart
 - Pitching rubber is 36 feet from home plate (the back point of the plate)
- B. The home team will bat last and use the third base side dugout (bench).
- C. Before game time, the home team and the visiting team shall exchange their respective batting orders. Each team's lineup card shall list the players first and last name, and a uniform number if available.
- D. There are no umpires assigned or scheduled at this level of the program. It is the responsibility of the managers and their assistants or selected parents to officiate the game.
- E. Games are scheduled to begin at 6:00 p.m. on weekdays. If a team is unable to field at least eight (8) players by 6:15 p.m., the game shall be forfeited, and the coaches shall make up two (2) teams and play a practice game.
- F. Game duration will be four innings unless time restraints prohibit the completion. The game should last approximately 1 ½ hours (90 minutes). No new inning should be started that cannot be reasonably completed within the 90-minute time limit on a weeknight or by the 90 minute time limit from the start of a Saturday game.
- G. Bad weather or field conditions may result in the postponement of a game. Having no league official in attendance, the home team manager will make the final decision. In the event of lightning or thunder, all games and practices must be held up until safe conditions are apparent (refer to storm policy). The Park District asks coaches to reschedule games if the field is too wet, rather than cause serious damage to the infield and turf areas (refer to the ball field use guidelines). Canceled games are to be rescheduled through the league vice-president as soon as possible.
- H. Players, managers, coaches or spectators are not allowed to stand behind the backstop in the area directly behind home plate. It is the responsibility of both managers to keep this area clear.
- I. Any player who has a bleeding injury **must** leave the field immediately. A player may return once the bleeding has been contained. This rule must be followed to ensure the safety of all players and officials.

III. EQUIPMENT

- A. Batting helmets must be worn by the batter at the plate, and all base runners.
- B. Baseball bats in excess of $2^{5/8}$ inches in diameter are prohibited.
- C. The catcher must wear the protective gear provided. (Helmet and face mask, chest protector, and shin guards). Athletic supporters and cups are recommended for all players.

IV. PITCHING

- A. During the first half of the season the manager or an adult coach from the team at bat will pitch to his team. No underhand pitching will be allowed. Pitcher (adult coaches) must stand ON the rubber when delivering the pitch. Overhand pitches should not be thrown with excessive arc. During the second half of the season kid pitch shall occur.
- B. Each batter will have a maximum of six (6) pitches to put the ball into play, before returning to the bench. There are no strike outs.
- C. Prior to the sixth pitch, the coach-pitcher will call out to the playing field, "last pitch".
- D. On the sixth pitch, the batter will be called out if the ball is not put into play. If the last pitch is fouled off, the batter will continue to bat until he/she misses the ball, does not swing or hits the ball into play.
- E. There shall be no walks.
- F. The defensive pitcher (player) must be positioned so as not to interfere with the coach-pitcher but may not be in front of the pitching rubber.
- G. When the ball is hit, the coach-pitcher will not interfere with the defensive players. He should crouch down at the mound or leave the playing field.
- H. The coach-pitcher forfeits his right to coach his base runners while his team is at bat.

V. OFFENSE

- A. The batting rotation shall consist of all team players in attendance at the game. This means that if twelve (12) players are in attendance, all twelve must bat in order before the first player comes to bat again. All players arriving late to a game must be inserted at the bottom of the batting order as it was at the beginning of the game and shall bat the first time that position comes up.

- B. All players in attendance will bat in each inning regardless of the number of outs recorded. Batter or runners ruled out, are to return to the bench.
- C. There will be no "on deck circle" for practice swings either inside or outside the field fencing. All practice swings will be done at home plate. This is a safety issue due to the number of siblings and small children who attend the games.
- D. A batter must take a regular full swing at the ball, with an automatic out occurring if the ball is intentionally bunted.
- E. A batter who throws the bat, even accidentally, shall be given a warning. Subsequent offenses by the same batter shall result in an automatic out and all base runners must return to their original bases.
- F. A batter may safely get a double (two base hit max), if the ball is hit into the outfield. There will be no extra base given on an error. Most hits at this level will be singles.
- G. Base stealing is not allowed. Base runners must be in contact with the base at the time the ball is hit. Leaving a base too soon shall result in an automatic out for the runner and all action being replayed.
- H. Runners have three options to avoid a collision: slide into the base they are going to, step around a fielder, or pull up and allow themselves to be tagged.
 - 1) A collision that occurs when an errant throw draws a defensive player into the path of a runner is considered to be incidental contact. It is not interference, and no penalty will be imposed to either the defensive or offensive player.
 - 2) Conversely, a fielder while not in possession of the ball, not about to field a batted ball or about to receive a thrown ball, may not impede the progress of a runner who is legally running bases.
- I. Adult coaches are allowed at first and third base. These coaches must remain at least three (3) feet from the base line. Any physical contact with the runner(s) during a play will result in the automatic out of that runner(s).

VI. DEFENSE

- A. A team may play a maximum of ten (10) players and a minimum of eight (8) players on the field. All defensive players shall generally play regular baseball positions, except that the tenth player may play at any location on the field. The tenth player is allowed to rotate his position on the field during the inning, providing such rotating does not delay the normal process of the game. The tenth player is the only player allowed to change defensive position during an inning.
- B. No defensive player, except the pitcher and the catcher shall be closer than forty-five (45)

feet to the batter when the ball is hit. The player in the pitcher's position shall remain behind the pitching rubber until the ball is hit.

C. **Definitions:**

"Possession" is defined as having the ball in one's hand or glove.

"Infield area" is defined as the imaginary rectangle formed by the extension of the backstop to a point five (5) feet beyond first and third base and turning at 90-degree angles to intersect approximately seven (7) feet behind second base. The "outfield area" is the area beyond the "infield area" and within the imaginary extension of the backstop.

"Going to" is defined as being definitely on the way to the next base. Simply being past the previous base does not automatically qualify the runner as being on the way to the next base. It is important to note that a runner is eligible to be thrown out even if they are not entitled to the base they are attempting to advance to. If a player has advanced safely to a base beyond which they are entitled, the runner is awarded a safe return to the prior base once the ball is dead and the play over.

D. Teaching the fielders to make basic baseball plays without fear of the impact of potential failure is important to the development of the defensive player. Therefore, the following rules apply to what base a runner is entitled to as a result of a hit fair ball:

1. A hit fair ball initially retrieved in the **"infield area"**: The runner(s) is only entitled to the base they are going to at the time of retrieval by any player, regardless of whether the retrieved ball is held or thrown. No extra bases will be allowed for overthrows.

2. A hit fair ball initially retrieved in the **"outfield area"**: The runner(s) is entitled to the base they are going to at the time the ball has been returned to the possession of any player, infielder or outfielder, who is in the **"infield area"**.

E. Time out shall not be called until the ball is considered "dead".

F. Free substitution is permitted on defense, except that such substitutions can take place only between innings. During an inning a player cannot be brought off the bench to play except in the event of an injury. Players cannot change positions during an inning with the exception of the tenth player as described in rule A.

G. All attending players shall receive equal playing time and must play defense at least three (3) innings per game. No player shall sit out two consecutive innings. It is recommended that managers rotate all players rather than simply platoon the lesser defensive players.

H. No player shall play the same position more than one (1) inning in any game.

I. A maximum of two (2) adult (at least 18 years old) defensive coaches may be positioned

in the "outfield area" for the purpose of giving placement and throwing advice to the defensive players on the field.

VII. EQUIPMENT RETURNS

All equipment is to be returned in accordance with the Equipment Managers published schedule. Managers who fail to do so may not be allowed to manage the next season.