

A. OVERVIEW

The spirit of the Mentor Baseball League is to help youth play ball safely, while assisting them to learn about the game, team camaraderie, and good sportsmanship. Please encourage cooperation on and around the playing field, because this activity is conducted for the benefit and enjoyment of all participants: the players, managers, coaches, parents and fans.

Any injury during participation, other than a minor scratch or bruise, requires immediate treatment by a trained healthcare professional. Please call 911. The injuries need to also be reported to the commissioner and league president immediately.

The rules presented herein have been established by the Mentor Baseball League Board of Trustees, based upon recommendations presented by the commissioners and managers from each of the divisions. Revisions to these rules must be presented to the board for consideration, approval and inclusion. Agreements between managers and commissioners do not signify a legal rule change.

With the exceptions listed herein, the official ^{NFHS} High School rulebook will be used as the governing instrument for game officiating. Interpretation or clarification of any rule contained herein or in the official High School rulebook shall be made by the Mentor Baseball League Board of Trustees. The section numbers in these rules correspond to those found in the official major league baseball rulebook.

By the end of the season, the players should:

- Be able to name the positions.
 - Know what an out is, and how it happens.
 - Know what to do after the ball is hit, both offensively and defensively.
 - Understand team play and sportsmanship.
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- PERSONNEL
 - B.1.** Players in this league shall be 4 or 5 years of age as of May 1 of the current season.

C. CONDUCT

C.1. Players are not allowed to call to members of the opposing team in an attempt to distract them.

C.2. Managers are responsible for maintaining order, discipline and sportsmanship among the players, coaches, parents and fans.

C.3. Managers must have a copy of the rules with them during all games.

C.4. Alcohol and/or tobacco are not permitted on the playing field Or in the bench area before, during or after the game.

C.5 Turf usage Rules: No gum, seeds or food are permitted in the dugouts or in field perimeter.

C.6 No Metal or Rubber cleats allowed in Field Perimeter or dugouts

C.7 Only Tennis and Turf shoes are permitted on the turf fields.

C.8 Only Clear water is allowed in the dugout and field perimeter

D. CALL-UPS

There are no call-ups at this age level.

E. PLAY-OFFS

There are no play-offs in this division.

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1. PLAYING FIELDS AND EQUIPMENT

- Bases: The bases are set 45 feet apart. A mark should be made halfway between the bases with the exception of home and first base. (See Rule 7.6.)
- Pitcher's Mound: The pitcher shall be in the center of the infield and at least 30 feet from home plate when the batter hits the ball.
- Bat: There are no restrictions on the bat diameter and length-weight differential.
- Cleats: Metal Cleats are not permitted.
- 1.5 Turf usage Rules: No gum, seeds or food are permitted in the dugouts or in field perimeter.
- 1.6 No Metal or Rubber cleats allowed in Field Perimeter or dugouts
- 1.7 Only Tennis and Turf shoes are permitted on the turf fields.
- 1.8 Only Clear water is allowed in the dugout and field perimeter
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 - 1.9 Uniforms: Jerseys, caps and shorts must be worn during the games.
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2. DEFINITION OF TERMS

- Defensive Out: An out made by the defensive team after the ball has been hit
- Personal Out: A strike out, a thrown bat, or a runner struck by a batted ball
- Team Out: Any defensive out
- Umpire(s): The team managers or acting managers

3. GAME PRELIMINARIES

- A team must have at least seven players present.
- All players present will be in the batting order and will play in the field.
 - A player arriving after the start of the game will be added to the end of

the batting order.

- If a player leaves the game for any reason, the vacated spot is simply skipped with no penalty.
- If a player must leave the game for any justifiable reason and returns later, the player will resume in the same place in the batting order.
- A player may play the pitching position for only one inning per game.
- A player may play first base for only one inning per game.
- The players must rotate each inning and a rotation of the players between outfield and infield positions is strongly encouraged.

4. STARTING AND ENDING THE GAME – TIME LIMIT

- A regulation game is 5 innings or 1 ½ hours, whichever comes first. A new inning starts when the last out is made, the 5th run scores or each member of the team has batted. A new inning cannot begin after 1 ½ hours.
- A legal game lasts at least 3 full innings.
- There are no protests at this age level since standings are not kept. However, the Board should be informed if any manager, player or parent exhibits behavior not in the guidelines outlined in the OVERVIEW section.
- Coaches: The coaches must be adults
 - Defensive Coaches: There may be a maximum of three coaches in the field between the outfielders and infielders.
 - Base Coaches: There may be a coach at each of the three bases. The base coaches must be in the first or third base coaching boxes or behind second base and must avoid interference with a ball in play.

5. PUTTING THE BALL IN PLAY

- The end of a half inning will occur when one of the following first occurs:
 - Two (2) defensive outs are made. Personal outs are not counted in this total.
 - The team at bat scores 5 runs. It is recommended that any base runners behind the 5th run do not run home.
- Runners may not advance on an overthrow to a base.
- A player may not roll the ball underhand to a base or run the ball to a base if the base is covered by another defensive player. An attempt must be made to throw the ball overhand. If the ball is rolled, a defensive (team) out will not be recorded.
- A defensive player may not tag a base outside the normal range for the position they are currently playing. For example, a shortstop may not run to tag first base or an outfielder may not tag a base.
- The infield fly rule does not apply.
- The hidden ball trick is illegal in all divisions.

6. THE BATTER

- Batting helmets are not required in T-Ball

- The batter must stay in the batters box when striking the ball.
- The batter gets ten (10) swings to put the ball in play. The ball must go past the three-foot line from the tee to put the ball in play.
- A batter will be called out if they throw the bat after hitting the ball. This is a personal out, not a defensive (team) out.
- Only one player is allowed in the on-deck circle. The player must be wearing a league approved batting helmet while in the on-deck circle. The remaining offensive players should be on the bench.
- Bunting is not allowed.

7. THE RUNNER

- If a batted ball hits a runner, the runner returns to the bench, but it is counted as a personal out and NOT as a defensive out.
- Lead-offs and base stealing are prohibited.
- Batting helmets must be worn while running the bases.
- Interference will not be called unless it is deliberate and/or willful.
- If there is a play on the runner at any base, the runner must avoid contact. A play is when the defensive player is within 5 feet of the base either with the ball or in position to receive a thrown ball. If the runner does not avoid contact with the defensive player, the runner is called out (a defensive out). Deliberate barreling at any base will result in ejection from the game.
- The runner(s) must stop when the ball is thrown in the direction of the pitcher's circle or first base. If the runner(s) is less than halfway to the next base, they will return to the previous base. It is recommended that runners advance one base at a time when the ball is put into play.
- A player who has made an out cannot remain on base and must return to the bench.
- Advances on overthrows are not allowed.

8. THE PITCHER

- The player playing the pitcher position must be at least 30 feet from home plate when the batter is attempting to hit the ball.

9. THE UMPIRE

- The managers or acting managers will function as the umpires with all the duties and responsibilities of controlling unruly players, parents and/or fans.
- The managers will mutually determine the playability of the fields keeping the safety of the participants foremost in the decision making process.
- At the first sign of lightning or other hazardous condition, the managers will suspend play. If the conditions persist, the game must be cancelled.

10. THE OFFICIAL SCORER

- **10.1** Scores and standings are not kept for this league.