

RULES OF PLAY - PURPOSE - ALL MANAGERS MUST READ

The purpose of the following rules of play is to provide a structure for all games and to ensure uniformity of game conduct throughout the season. Additionally, these rules are provided to help managers and teams navigate through expected norms of behavior during the season. It is critical to keep in mind that in divisions with scoring and standings, though fair competition is encouraged, use or manipulation of the rules to obtain a specific competitive advantage is both frowned upon and antithetical to the spirit and purpose of PONY youth baseball both nationally and as conducted by the Newport Beach Baseball Association. Thus, every effort should be made to ensure fairness and these rules will be interpreted to maintain competitive balance and provide youth with the opportunity to maximize fair and equal playing opportunities.

PINTO NATIONAL (KID PITCH)

This is the first year that pre-season evaluations are held and players are drafted onto teams. This is the first division where kids pitch to each other and where scores and standings are kept. Kid Pitch is for more experienced players who are ready to learn to pitch and to hit pitched balls. All players wishing to play Kid Pitch must tryout. While the league is primarily for 8 year-olds, some 7 year-olds may try out if, in the judgment of the league and coaches, they are more advanced and ready to pitch. Pitching distance is 40 feet.

Pinto National Rules

The following Rules are in addition to the basic baseball rules as contained in the Pony League Rulebook and the PONY Pinto Division Rulebook. In the event of a conflict, THESE Rules control:

1. **GAME STARTS:**
 - A. The Manager or a Coach **MUST** have the team roster and the medical release forms for all players at each game.
 - B. The home team is responsible for setting up the field and supplying two (2) useable balls for each game.
 - C. The visiting team shall have ten minutes of on-field practice beginning 25 minutes before the game and the home team shall have ten minutes practice starting 15 minutes before game time. No pre-game batting practice on the field is permitted.
 - D. Teams will be limited to (11) players.

2. **UNIFORM:** No team shall make substantial changes to the league issued uniforms.

3. **EQUIPMENT:**
 - A. All players will use proper equipment, including: cups, cleats (Plastic or rubber

are okay; **NO METAL OR SPIKED CLEATS**; No tennis shoes), uniforms, gloves and full catcher's gear.

- B. Batters and base runners must wear helmets at all times on the field during play.
 - C. No players will be allowed on the field without the appropriate equipment
4. **FIELD DIMENSIONS:** Base distances are 60 feet. The pitching mound shall be 40 feet from home plate.
5. **COACHING:**
- A. All coaches shall be adults, over 18, including the Manager.
 - B. The offensive team shall have three coaches: one coach at 1st base; one coach at 3rd base; and one coach in the dugout. Only the manager and up to two coaches are permitted in the dugout. No other parent shall view the game from or be present in the dugout during the game. Parents are spectators and should watch the game from the stands or a location other than the dugout.
6. **BATTING ORDER:**
- A. The batting order shall contain the entire roster of players. Every player listed in the order will bat.
 - B. Teams will bat through their entire line-up regardless of any defensive player's turn to sit out during an inning.
 - C. A legal lineup is no less than eight (8) players ready and able to play at the start of the game. A team may begin and continue to play with eight (8) players without forfeiting the game but must take an out **EACH** and every time the 9th batter's spot would otherwise be up in the lineup. (Example: if two runners are on base and the eighth batter makes the second out of the inning, the inning then ends because the ninth spot in the lineup represents the third out). **A TEAM MUST HAVE AT LEAST EIGHT (8) PLAYERS AVAILABLE AT ALL TIMES DURING A GAME TO AVOID A FORFEIT. A TEAM THAT STARTS A GAME WITH EIGHT PLAYERS BUT LOSES ONE DURING THE GAME TO INJURY OR ANY OTHER CAUSE FORFEITS THE GAME. A TEAM WITHOUT AT LEAST EIGHT PLAYERS AVAILABLE AT THE ANNOUNCED START OF THE GAME FORFEITS EVEN IF A PLAYER SHOWS UP LATE CAUSING THE ROSTER TO INCREASE TO EIGHT PLAYERS.**
 - D. If a player leaves during the game or is injured resulting in the team having eight (8) players, then the team must take an out at that player's spot in the lineup for the NEXT at bat only. **If a player shows up late to a game (after the official line up has been exchanged) he is eligible to enter the lineup and must do so as the last batter. At no time is the player ineligible to enter the game.**
 - E. A player may not bat in the last position in the batting order in consecutive games.

7. **SIDE RETIRED/END HALF INNING:** Three outs or 5 runs, whichever occurs first, except in the sixth inning or the declared "last inning" in which case the run count is unlimited.

8. **REGULATION GAME:**
 - A. Each game will be six (6) innings, unless extended by extra innings, subject to the time restriction set forth in Rule 8(B), or shortened as a result of Rule 8(E).
 - B. There is no outside time limit on a game, but no new innings will start after one hour and forty-five minutes (1:45).
 - C. Game length is measured from the actual start time of a game and not from the scheduled start time.
 - D. **RUNS PER INNING LIMITS:** A maximum of five (5) runs per each half inning of play may be scored by any team at bat through the conclusion of the fifth inning or any inning prior to the umpire announcing or declaring the "last inning." It shall be the responsibility of the umpire to declare and advise managers of the "last inning" if, in the umpire's sole discretion and judgment, a sixth inning will not be played. Even if an additional inning could have been played after the declaration by the umpire of the "last inning," the umpire's decision and judgment is final and shall stand.
 - E. There is a 10 run mercy rule in effect after the losing team has had a minimum of four turns at bat. This means if the visiting team trails by 10 runs at the conclusion of three innings, it must score at least one run in its next at bat or the game is over.
 - F. In the event of a tie after 6 innings, additional innings will be played until a winner is declared, unless the 'No new inning' rule comes into play, in which case the game result will be recorded as a tie. Tied games will NOT be completed at a later date.

9. **SCORE KEEPING:**
 - A. The home team is required to provide a scorekeeper who will score the game in a NBBA supplied score book. The home scorekeeper will be the official scorekeeper for the game. The home team also is responsible for operating the scoreboard.
 - B. The home team's manager is responsible for ensuring the input and uploading of scores and pitching statistics to the league's website. All scores and pitching statistics should be posted as quickly as possible following the completion of each game, but in any event, **MUST be posted no later than 2:00 p.m. the day following completion of a game.** Because the failure to post pitch counts may adversely impact the pitching staff of the team that in a previous game had been the visiting team, any manager of a team that was the home team who fails to post pitch counts within the specified time frame, will be subject to discipline and any player who pitched in the game for which pitch counts are not posted on time will not be eligible to pitch in the team's next game regardless of the number of pitches

the player threw and days of rest in between games.

10. **FIELDERS:** Each team may play up to a maximum of ten (10) players in the field, as follows: pitcher, catcher, 1st Base, 2nd Base, shortstop, 3rd Base and four (4) outfielders.

11. **MANDATORY PLAYING TIME:**

- A. **NO** player shall sit on the bench more than one (1) inning per game.
- B. **ALL** players, including manager/coaches' children, shall rotate through all positions during the season, including sitting on the bench.* All players must play a minimum of two (2) innings in the infield in each game, subject to the following: each player shall play at least one inning in the infield and one inning in the outfield per three inning game and at least two innings in the infield and two innings in the outfield in every game of four innings or more. Managers should set lineups for each game assuming only four innings will be played in order to ensure compliance with this rule. ***NOTE: This is a player development rule. It is the manager's responsibility throughout the season to ensure that all players are given an opportunity to play all positions. While no child should be forced to play a position if the child refuses to play it or if there are legitimate safety concerns, every effort should be made by the manager to encourage each player to at least try the positions and this effort by the manager should continue throughout the season even in the face of some player resistance.**
- C. Any player not starting a game must start in the next scheduled game. The only allowable exceptions are for injury, illness or discipline.

12. **BUNTING:** Bunting is permitted.

13. **STRIKE OUTS/WALKS:**

- A. Strike outs are recorded outs and a batter is awarded first base following a walk.
- B. In order to encourage hitting and swinging at pitches, the strike zone will be enlarged during the beginning of the season from one ball outside of home plate to one ball inside of home plate, and from the shoulders to the knees.
- C. The strike zone will condense to a more traditional strike zone as the season progresses.
- D. All runners advance via walks. Intentional walks are NOT permitted.

14. **HIT BY PITCH/HIT BATTERS:**

- A. A batter hit by a pitched ball shall be awarded first base.
- B. If a single pitcher hits three (3) batters during a game the pitcher must be removed from the mound.

15. **HIT BY A BATTED BALL:** If base runner is hit by a batted ball, the base runner will

be called OUT; all other advancing base runners will continue to the nearest base and the play called dead.

16. **INFIELD FLY RULE:** The infield fly rule will **NOT** be enforced.
17. **THROWING THE BAT:** Any player who, after one warning, throws the bat while batting shall be called out. Any player who has been called out twice in one game for this offense shall lose their remaining turns at bat in that game.
18. **BASE RUNNERS:**
 - A. There are **NO** leadoffs. Base runners **MUST** stay in contact with the base until the pitched ball crosses home plate.
 - B. Players must touch all bases in order when running and not pass another base runner while doing so. Failure to touch a base or passing another base runner will result in an out.
19. **BASE STEALING:**
 - A. Stealing is permitted on a passed ball or wild pitch that the catcher does **NOT** **BLOCK** and keep in front of him. Bases may be stolen on the third strike recorded against a batter that the catcher does not block; however, the batter is out. (While what is a passed ball may be open to some interpretation, the goal of this rule is to teach catchers to block balls in the dirt or keep errant pitches in general from going to backstop). Only one (1) base may be stolen on a wild pitch or passed ball. This rule applies even if the ball thrown by the catcher who is attempting to make a play on the runner, is overthrown or reaches the outfield.
 - B. If it is clear that a base runner has left a base before the ball crosses the plate, the base runner shall return to the previous base and warned of the rule. If the infraction continues, the base runner shall be declared OUT. [Note: it is not the intent of the NBBA that this rule be applied punitively, but rather only in cases where the infraction is obvious].
 - C. There will be no stealing home under any circumstances. A player may advance from third only on a batted ball or walk.
20. **OUT OF PLAY:** Only one base will be allowed on an overthrow that leaves the playing area. Out of play is 10-15 feet beyond the first and third baselines.
21. **FAKE TAGS:** There will be no fake tags. A player who makes a fake tag shall be given one warning. A subsequent occurrence shall result in the player's ejection.
22. **PLAYER EJECTION:** Players shall be ejected from the game and receive an additional game suspension for the following conduct:
 - A. Forearming or tripping runners;

- B. Intentionally running into fielders; or
- C. Poor sportsmanship, such as taunting or ridiculing other players.

23. **PROTESTS AND FORFEITS:** No post-game protests shall be allowed. Any issues or concerns over interpretation of these rules shall be determined in game and first shall be directed to the umpire. If resolution cannot be obtained through the umpire, the Division Coordinator shall be consulted. If the Division Coordinator cannot resolve the issue or is unavailable, then the issue shall be directed to the Rules Chairman. If the Rules Chairman cannot resolve the issue or is unavailable, then the league president shall be consulted. In no case will the time of any game be extended in order to deal with a question of interpretation of these rules. Game results are final. Forfeits are as described in these rules.

24. **UMPIRES:**

- A. NBBA will provide umpires to call the games as the league budget permits.
- B. The appointed umpire shall be positioned behind the pitcher and will call balls and strikes as well as defensive plays in the field.
- C. There will be **no** arguing or disputing any calls made by the umpire (especially Junior Umpires).
- D. In the event umpires are unavailable, the home team shall be responsible for designating an umpire.

25. **PITCHING**

- A. **ONLY** kids pitch. No coach is allowed to pitch. No agreement may be made by coaches to allow them to pitch to their teams.
- B. No player shall be permitted to pitch more than six (6) outs per game, regardless of pitch count eligibility. Once removed from the mound, a player may not return to pitch again in a single game.
- C. No balks will be called.
- D. Dropped third strikes are dead balls as to the batter and the batter is out.
- E. If a pitcher hits three (3) batters within a game the pitcher must be removed.

NBBA has adopted the following for pitch counts as it pertains to days of rest:

If a player pitches 66 or more pitches in a day, four (4) calendar days of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches 51 - 65 pitches in a day, three (3) calendar days of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches 36 - 50 pitches in a day, two (2) calendar days of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches 21 - 35 pitches in a day, one (1) calendar day of rest must be observed.

If a player pitches 1 - 20 pitches in a day, no calendar day of rest is required.

A pitcher may finish pitching to a given batter before going into next calendar day of rest threshold. For example, if the pitcher starts the batter with 33 pitches and finishes that same batter with 38 pitches, then his threshold reverts back to 35 pitches and the player would be

required to observe 1 calendar day of rest.

THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PITCHES FOR ALL PLAYERS IN THE PINTO NATIONAL DIVISION IS 35 UNTIL APRIL 1, EXCEPT FOR SIX YEAR OLDS WHO MAY PITCH 20 PITCHES THROUGH APRIL 1 AND A MAXIMUM OF 35 THEREAFTER.

Maximum number of pitches by age group (Apr 1 and after):

- 6 year olds - 35 pitch max, may finish batter
- 7 and 8 yr olds - 50 pitch max - may finish batter
- 9 yr olds - 55 pitch max- may finish batter
- 10 yr olds - 65 pitch max- may finish batter
- 11 yr olds - 75 pitch max- may finish batter
- 12 yr old and older - 85 pitch max- may finish batter

MANAGERS PLEASE NOTE: WHEN DETERMINING A PLAYER'S AGE FOR PURPOSES OF PITCH COUNT, USE THE *ACTUAL AGE* OF YOUR PITCHER, NOT THE LEAGUE AGE. [Example: Player whose birthday is April 20, 2010 is an 8 year old for pitch count purposes until April 20, 2010 when he is a 9 year old.]

Pitcher to catcher ban: any pitcher who delivers at least 41 pitches in a game may not then play catcher for the remainder of the day. This is a hard stop. The pitcher reaching the 40th pitch who wishes to catch cannot finish the batter in this circumstance.

Any catcher who catches into his 4th inning will not be permitted to pitch. For purposes of this rule the catcher has started to catch into a fourth inning when the first pitch of the inning is delivered.

Once removed from the pitching position, a player cannot re-enter the game at the pitching position.

Managers who break any pitching rule, regardless of intent, will be subject to discipline at the discretion of the Division Coordinator and the affected pitcher(s) may be ruled ineligible. Managers: DO NOT mess this up for your players or your teams.

26. WEEKLY EVENTS

- A. There shall be no more than three (3) mandatory events per week. Events are games or practices at which a coach and more than three team members are present.
- B. Rule 26(A) will not apply during the playoffs. During the playoffs, it is possible that more than three (3) events in a week may occur, based on playoff and game

scheduling.

- C. There will be **NO** mandatory events on Sunday.

27. **RAINOUTS:** Rainouts will not be rescheduled at this level

28. **PLAYOFFS:** The higher seed gets choice of home or visitor for first game only. Thereafter, a coin toss determines home or visitor.

REGULATION GAME DURING PLAYOFFS: Each game shall be six (6) innings in duration with **NO TIME LIMIT**. There is a 10 run mercy rule in effect after the losing team has had a minimum of 4 at bats. In the event of a tie after 6 innings, additional innings will be played until a winner is determined. Any game which cannot be completed due to darkness/weather will resume (most likely the following day) with the same score, conditions, etc. This means that no pitcher previously removed from the mound can re-enter the game as pitcher. Teams must use the same batting order and the same number of players. A player who was present and in the lineup at the start of the game on the previous day who is absent on the day the suspended game is continued may be withdrawn from the lineup, but if the player's absence causes the player's team to have less than 9 eligible players, it will be treated like an injured player and the team will take an out only for the missing player's next turn at bat. Both managers shall be responsible for agreeing on the conditions existing at the time a game is suspended and documenting the conditions and advising the Division Coordinator as soon as possible following the suspension of the game.

29. **PONY - NBBA BAT RULES:**

- A. 2-5/8" barrel bats and 2-1/4" bats are **LEGAL**. If a 2-5/8" bat is a -3, it must be BBCOR certified. All other minus factor bats, whether 2-5/8" or 2-1/4" barrel, (-5, -7, -9, etc.), must be YBBCOR certified with the USA Bat licensing stamp on the bat in order to be used for league and all-star play. **All bats without the USA Bat stamp are illegal and not eligible for use during league play.**
- B. 2-3/4" barrel bats are **ILLEGAL**
- C. Wood bats are **LEGAL** with a barrel no larger than 2-5/8"

If an ineligible bat is used or is deemed illegal, **IT IS AN AUTOMATIC OUT.**

30. **FREE AGENCY PLAYER POOL:** NBBA seeks to ensure that scheduled games go forward and that forfeitures, such as those occasioned by a lack of available players, are minimized. Additionally, NBBA seeks to provide opportunities for players to experience higher levels of competition where appropriate, for example, in a division with older players. Accordingly, each team is permitted to designate players from the division immediately below to be called upon for the purpose of filling vacancies on a team roster for a given game (the "Free Agency Pool Players"). The purpose of the available pool of players is to ensure that a team is not forced to forfeit a game because it does not have a full lineup of at least eight or

nine players. Each Division Coordinator will keep a master list of all players who agree to be part of the Free Agency Pool which will be shared with all divisional managers. To the extent Free Agency Pool Players will be playing in leagues with older players, a parent or legal guardian of a Free Agency Pool Player must, prior to submission by any Manager of his/her designated pool, execute a Special Consent to permit participation by the player in the Free Agency Pool, whereby the parent or guardian acknowledges the increased risks and hazards of playing with older players and waives any and all claims arising from same. All Special Consents shall be provided to the Division Coordinators no later than the first game of the season for any given division. Special Consents shall be kept and held by the Division Coordinators who will be responsible for forwarding the Special Consents to the NBBA Safety Officer.

Players will be selected by managers, as needed, on a first come, first served basis and managers must notify the Division Coordinator prior to the game in which the player(s) is/are to appear. **Up to a maximum of three Pool Players can be called upon to play for one team in any particular game and must be present or approved for play by the start of the game. A Pool Player may not enter the game once it has begun unless the Pool Player was present at the announced start of the game or approved by the Division Coordinator prior to the start of the game.**

Free Agency Pool Players may not participate in playoff games. In addition, there will be no conflict with a Free Agency Pool Player's permanent team. **Free Agency Pool Players may not pitch or catch.** The Division Coordinator must approve the use and eligibility of a Free Agency Pool Player. Pool Players shall NOT be used to the exclusion of normally rostered players or to reduce their playing time. *Violations of this rule will result in managerial suspension which may include multiple games.*

31. **MANAGER CODE OF CONDUCT:** The Code of Conduct for Managers is a part of these rules. **ALL** Managers must be familiar with the rules contained in the Code of Conduct

Each Manager, regardless of playing level, ultimately IS FULLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CONDUCT OF THE TEAM'S FANS AND PARENTS AND WILL BE HELD BY THE LEAGUE AND GAME OFFICIALS TO ACCOUNT for that conduct. Thus, it is expected that each Manager will explain the Parent Code of Conduct to all parents at any initial meeting or practice and will remind the team's fans regarding appropriate and inappropriate behavior throughout the season. If parents/fans of a given team are determined in the judgment of the umpire or a league official to be acting inappropriately, the parents/fans may be ejected ALONG WITH THE MANAGER, who may also be subject to further discipline by the league. Absolutely no "baiting" or "taunting" of opposing players will be tolerated.