

DRIFTLESS YOUTH SPORTS

8U BASEBALL RULES

Updated: March 2026

Team & League Organization

1. If a community has multiple teams, they must be divided up as evenly as possible. This should be done based on skill level and not divided by 1st/2nd year or by grade, etc.
2. Players in the 8U age group are currently in 1st or 2nd grade.
3. A scheduling day will be held prior to the season for the coaches to schedule their own games.
4. League games will be scheduled beginning in the second week of May and continue through the month of June.

Equipment & Uniforms

1. Metal cleats are prohibited.
2. All players must wear matching shirts with a number on the back.
3. Pants are required.
4. Catchers are required to wear a mask, helmet, chest protection, and shin guards.
5. Batters & Base runners must wear a helmet.
6. No jewelry shall be worn. Earrings, necklaces, bracelets (soft or rigid) are prohibited. Note: For those who have newly pierced ears, studs must be taped.

Conduct

1. Drinking alcohol, smoking, chewing tobacco, or swearing on the field or in the dugout areas by the players or coaches is prohibited.
2. Cheering for your own team only. Disruptive actions or cheering against the other team is not allowed.

Umpires

1. Umpires are not required.
2. Coaches will work together to umpire the games.

General Game Rules

1. All play will follow WIAA rules if not otherwise stated.
2. Both teams should keep the 'book' (score and outs).
3. 1 or 2 Defensive coaches will be allowed to be in the outfield to instruct the defense and will help umpire 2nd base. The 1st and 3rd base coaches will umpire their respective bases.
4. Regular baseballs should be used, unless discussed in advance by the coaches.

Players

1. 10 players maximum (4 outfielders) on the field on defense.
2. All players present at the game must play. Coaches may bench a player for disciplinary reasons.

Pitching and Batting

1. Coaches will pitch to their own team. Coach should pitch from a knee or sit on a bucket to help reduce arm angle and make pitches more realistic.
2. If the pitching coach is hit by the ball or interferes with play, the play is 'dead' and counted as one of the 7 pitches.

3. Batter will receive 7 pitches to get a hit. No Strikeouts after 3 swinging strikes. A tee will be brought out after the 7 pitches.
4. If a batter fouls off the 7th pitch it will be counted as a foul ball and he will get another pitch.
5. All players present must bat in the lineup.
6. Players will receive one warning for a thrown bat; a second thrown bat will result in an out by the player.
7. No bunting.
8. Bat Rules: All bats are allowed. Both USA and USSSA. 2 5/8" and 2 3/4" bats are allowed with no restriction of length to weight ratio (drop). 2 1/4" bats will still be allowed if they too are stamped with the USA/USSSA Baseball stamp.

Base Running

1. Feet first sliding is allowed when a player is being played on. Head first sliding is not allowed unless diving back toward the player's original base.
2. Runners may advance as many bases at their own risk off a hit. If an overthrow leaves the playing field, a runner may advance 1 base at maximum.
3. If an overthrow at 1st base is made, runners may not advance. We want to teach the kids to make good hard throws to 1st base.
4. Coaches should use good baseball judgment on advancing runners and especially on scoring runners. It is not difficult to advance runners and score runs at this level. Our objective as coaches should be to teach the game of baseball. Excessive base running is not encouraged. Advancing two bases on balls hit deep into the outfield is acceptable - i.e. rounding first for second base or scoring from second base.
5. NO STEALING! NO LEADING OFF UNTIL THE BALL CROSSES THE PLATE; RUNNERS LEAVING EARLY WILL BE CALLED OUT AFTER A WARNING HAS BEEN ISSUED!
6. No runner may advance when the pitcher (player or coach) has the ball. Coach pitchers should use reasonable effort to help collect the ball if thrown to them. If the offensive base runner is over halfway to a base when the player or coach pitcher collects the ball, he may proceed. If under halfway, the player must return to the previous base. Coaches must use fair judgment.

Time Length

1. All games will be 6 innings OR a drop dead time of 1 hr 30 minutes. *No new innings after 1hr 15 minutes of game time. If the game is tied after the 6 innings or the time has expired, the game will end as a tie unless discussed by coaches PRIOR to game start. 5 run rule per inning, except the final (6th) inning which will be unlimited.

Additional Rules

1. Players must stay in the same position for the entire inning
2. Rotate players at least every 2 innings. Players must play at least 1 inning per game in the infield.
3. No infield fly rule.
4. The pitcher should remain even with the pitching coach and within 5 feet to the left or right of the rubber.
5. The infield needs to be in regular fielding positions. No shifting or "rover"
6. The outfield (4 players) must be on the outfield grass (unless the game is being played on a regulation baseball field).

Rule Review

1. Rules will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Driftless Youth Sports Committee. All recommendations for changes and/or clarification should be communicated to the Driftless Youth Sports Committee at the end of the year.