



**WESTGATE-WESTSIDE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION  
8U DIVISION BASEBALL RULES  
Revised February 2026**

**8U Division In-House Specific Rules**

**1. Game Duration (Time Limit)**

1.1. Scheduled game duration is **1 hour and 15** . No new inning shall begin after 1 hour and 10 minutes.

**2. Scoring & Innings**

2.1. **Score will be kept. Each team will be responsible for keeping score in GameChanger.**

2.2. Teams will switch from hitting to fielding after three (3) outs **OR** when a **team scores 5 runs.**

**3. Pitching & Batting**

3.1 **All innings will be kid pitch. During an at bat, if four balls are pitched to a batter, the coach will begin to pitch. If the current pitch count has 2 strikes, the pitch count will change to 1 strike. This gives the coach at least 2 chances to throw a hittable pitch. Strikeouts can be swinging or a called third strike by the umpire.**

3.2. If a Kid pitcher hits a batter, the coach will come in and pitch the rest of the count. However, if 3 strikes are made the batter is not out and is instead awarded first base. If the batter hits the ball and the defense makes an out on the batter or other runner then it is an out. (The objective being to get the batter to hit the ball so that it is live and in play.)

**Coaches are required to pitch from a knee (no buckets should be on the field) to provide their hitters better pitches to hit on the proper plane. The pitch must be thrown using an overhand motion. All coach pitchers must be in contact with pitching rubber**

3.3. A third strike shall be considered an out, even if the catcher drops the pitch.

3.4. An at-bat will consist of a maximum of 4 balls or 3 strikes, unless the player is hit by a Kid pitch. Third strike shall be considered a strike, even if the catcher drops the pitch.

- 3.5. All batters shall wear a helmet with face guard.
- 3.6. The entire roster of players present for the game will bat in rotation.
- 3.7. No bunting is allowed.

## 4. Base Running

- 4.1. **All runners and batter may advance one base at their own risk on an overthrow, but cannot advance any further than that one base regardless of how the remainder of the live action transpires on that play, i.e. there can be only one overthrow per ball in play. If the overthrow is at 3rd base the player may NOT advance home.**
- 4.2. All base runners shall wear a helmet with face guard.
- 4.3. Running into a catcher or a fielder is not allowed.
- 4.4. Players must slide when necessary. A player is never to come in standing on a close play.
- 4.5. Lead-offs and stealing is NOT allowed.

## 5. Other

- 5.1. 60' between bases, kid pitch 40' front edge of pitcher's rubber to back point of plate.
- 5.2. Play should move as rapidly as possible to maximize enjoyment of the kids. In order to speed play, players should hustle on and off the field, be ready to bat, and ready to take the field. Coaches need to know where kids will play prior to the game and be able to communicate that to other coaches so that they can be quickly positioned.
- 5.3. Coaches may play a max of 10 players in the field (6 infield and 4 outfield all in fair territory except the catcher).
  - a. If there are more than 10 kids on a team, you may sit kids each inning making sure to rotate so that no kid sits twice in one game.
  - b. All players should be able to play every position at least once during the season. (Not all kids have to actually pitch if they are not able to. See rule 5.5)
- 5.4. Teams should report to the fields at **least 15 minutes** in advance of their scheduled game time and be warmed up and ready to play at their scheduled game time.
- 5.5. The pitcher and catcher are skilled positions. A pitcher who cannot throw close to the strike zone slows the game, can become frustrated, and causes other players to lose interest. Catchers who do not have the ability to catch pitches while remaining out of the way of the batters pose a safety hazard to themselves. While it is evident that at all children want a chance to play these positions, it is paramount to keep the players safe and important to keep the game interesting. Coaches need to incorporate practice time for teaching pitching and catching positions. It is important that the players in these positions are prepared prior to game time. Parents are encouraged to practice with their children at home.

**5.6. There will be a paid umpire behind home plate at each game. Adult coaches (up to 2) may be stationed in the playing field beyond the baseline to provide verbal instructions to the defensive team. They may not interfere with a live play in play at any time. There should be a coach or parent in the dugout to make sure players know who is up to bat to keep the game running smoothly.**

5.7. Players should wear baseball pants during games for safety reasons (e.g., sliding). Wearing a protective cup is also highly recommended at this age.

5.8. It is suggested that if a team has only one game scheduled during a week, an additional practice should be scheduled for that week. It is important to schedule practices throughout the year to work on fundamentals to improve overall player skill levels. Additional practices can be coordinated through the league scheduler or board.

5.9. The “Home” team occupies the 3<sup>rd</sup> base dugout and is in the field first. The “Visitor” team occupies the 1<sup>st</sup> base dugout and bats first.

5.10. Players will shake hands after each game.

5.11. There will NOT be a post-season tournament.

5.12. The use of training or warm up equipment (i.e. hit sticks, nets, or other) can be used prior to game time and off the playing field. They should NOT be used during the games. Batting donuts are fine.

# **WESTGATE-WESTSIDE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION 8U BASEBALL DIVISION**

## **Goals and Expectations**

### **Key Instructional/Coaching Objectives:**

- Be prepared. Have a plan for every practice and game
- Provide a safe, fun and organized environment where players can continue building confidence
- Reinforce the fundamentals learned at younger levels while gradually introducing game situations
- Continue teaching and reinforcing the following fundamental skills:

### **Throwing / Pitching**

- Continue the throwing progression regularly to build arm strength and proper mechanics
- Introduce simple pitching concepts such as balance, breathe, and backspin
- Emphasize throwing strikes and staying under control on the mound
- Focus on proper mechanics rather than velocity
- Begin incorporating long toss as players develop arm strength

### **Catching**

- Teach a comfortable and balanced catching stance
- Present the glove as a target for the pitcher
- Focus on receiving the ball out in front of the body
- Introduce basic blocking techniques and keeping the ball in front
- Begin practicing glove-to-hand transfer and throwing mechanics to bases
- Rotate players through the position so multiple athletes gain experience

### **Hitting**

- Reinforce proper grip, stance, and swing mechanics
- Continue using tee work, soft toss, and batting practice to build consistent contact
- Emphasize balanced swings and finishing under control
- Encourage a confident and aggressive mindset at the plate while still learning strike zone awareness

### **Defense / Fielding**

- Continue developing proper ready position and defensive awareness
- Focus on footwork and lateral movement while fielding ground balls
- Reinforce proper mechanics for ground balls and fly balls
- Teach players how to get under pop-ups and communicate when calling the ball
- Begin incorporating simple game situations with baserunners to challenge decision making

### **Base Running**

- Reinforce running hard through first base
- Teach proper rounding of bases and awareness of coaches
- Begin introducing situational base running
- Encourage aggressive but controlled base running decisions

### **Terms and Game Awareness**

- Continue reinforcing baseball terminology and rules
- Teach players where to throw the ball in common situations
- Begin developing awareness of outs, base runners, and defensive responsibilities