

Central Illinois House League Baseball 2026

General Rules Summary

1. Official IESA Baseball rules will apply unless otherwise stated in these Central Illinois House League. General CIHL rules will apply to all age groups. CIHL rules for a particular age group will apply only in that age group.
2. Players must be officially registered with the CIHL to participate in any CIHL sanctioned game. A player may be registered on only one team in the CIHL.
 - a) A player may be a substitute for a team above their rostered age division if that team is not able to compete because they are short players.
 - b) A player that has substituted up on any team and has played a total of 5 regular season games becomes officially rostered on the most recent team for which they substituted. They cannot play with their original team for the remainder of the season.
 - c) Participation in a CIHL tournament will count as 1 game toward the substitution limit of 5 games.
 - d) If a team needs an additional player to fill out a roster, that player must be from the same community and that player must play on a team in a lower division.
 - e) Rosters must be provided to the league coordinator before the annual coaches meeting before games begin. Rosters must contain the player's name and birth date.
3. A player may be rostered on a team below her age group under the following conditions:
 - a) The local organization determines that they should be at that age level because of her ability.
 - b) He is not more than 1 year past the limit for that age group. The CIHL board may grant exceptions to this under special circumstances. All players playing down must be declared on team rosters at the coaches meeting.
4. To pitch in a CIHL tournament, a player must be included in the pre-season roster, and he must have played in 5 regular season CIHL games. If requested, the coach must produce the team book as proof of games played.
5. Players should be taught how and encouraged to slide feet first any time there is going to be a close play on them; head first slides are not allowed. However, a runner is entitled to come into any base either standing or sliding and will not be called out for simply not sliding. If a runner is deemed to be maliciously running or sliding into a fielder at any time, they will be called out and ejected from the game. Umpires must use discretion when making this call but must keep the game safe.
6. A player must have possession of the ball to block any base on a tag out. The result of blocking a base without the ball is obstructed by the defensive player.
7. Unlimited substitutions are allowed, including the pitcher. Innings do not have to be consecutive.
8. All players rostered for each game will be listed on the game roster and will bat in that order regardless of whether they are playing in the field.
9. No changes will be made in the starting batting order other than adding players to the bottom of the roster.
10. Any player batting out of order is automatically out. However, an injured player may be removed from the game, their turn at bat skipped without penalty, and then returned later to their original batting position.
11. There should be no heated, verbal arguments on the field under any circumstances.
12. Traveling league players may not play on house league teams.

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GAMES

13. Game start times will vary based on the venue. A team not present within 20 minutes of the scheduled game time will forfeit the game.
14. The game should end with a final, unlimited scoring inning. The inning that starts after the time limit of play (varies by division) shall be the final, unlimited scoring inning unless:
 - a) The game has reached the max inning count for a complete game (varies by division).
 - b) The game has reached the CIHL or local time limit.
 - c) The local darkness limit has been reached, and the field does not have lights.
15. No inning will start after the set time per age division. In some cases, local rules may override the CIHL time limit, but only to shorten it. It is the home plate umpire's duty to note the starting time of the game.
16. In the case of a tie at the end of regulation play, play will continue with complete innings until the tie is broken or until the home plate umpire calls the game due to darkness or local time limits. Games in this case will result in a tie.
17. All schedule changes, except for weather, must be confirmed by both coaches 48 hours in advance.
18. A one-minute time limit will be allowed for a team to take the field and be prepared to play ball.
19. When a team plays a game shorthanded, or players are injured and cannot complete a game, no outs are charged.
20. Age description, division and game night table.

Age on August 31, 2025	Division	Typical game night
7-8	8U (coach pitch)	Monday / Wednesday
9-10	10U	Tuesday / Thursday
11-12	12U	Tuesday / Wednesday
13-15	15U	Varies

FIELDS

21. Fields shall be set up to the following specifications:

Division	Pitching distance	Base distance
8U	30 feet	60 feet
10U	44 feet	60 feet
12U	48 feet	70 feet
15U	54 feet	80 feet

EQUIPMENT

22. Home team will be required to provide a one-piece, half orange/half white, safety bag at first base for CIHL games. Failure to have one will cause the home team to forfeit.
23. Catchers must wear a mask, chest protector, shin guards, and protective helmet.
24. Base runners and batters must wear full protective helmets.
25. No steel spikes are allowed.
26. The home team will furnish 2 balls for each game.
27. All equipment must be in compliance with the Official IESA Baseball rule. (Baseballs, bats, helmets, etc.) ***Bat restrictions will only apply at the 15U level**

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Bat rules will be IESA rules found at: <https://iesa.org/activities/bbb/bats.asp>

Legal and Illegal Non-Wood Bats Without a USA Baseball Logo			
Len gth	Wei ght	Barrel Diameter	Status
31	28	2-5/8"	Legal assuming BBCOR labeled
28	18	2-5/8"	Illegal--Maximum barrel diameter for a 30" (or less) non-wood bat that has a greater than minus 3 differential is 2 1/4"
30	20	2-1/4"	Legal—BBCOR label not required
29	18	2-1/4"	Legal—BBCOR label not required
29	22	2-3/4"	Illegal--Maximum barrel diameter for a 30" (or less) non-wood bat that has a greater than minus 3 differential is 2 1/4"
31	20	2-1/4"	Illegal--A 31" bat must weigh at least 28 oz. and meet all other NFHS standards including a BBCOR label
28	19	2-1/4"	Legal—BBCOR label not required

31	28	2-3/4"	Illegal--Maximum barrel diameter for a non-wood bat is 2 5/8"
31	28	2-5/8"	Legal assuming BBCOR labeled
30	27	2-5/8"	Legal assuming BBCOR labeled
32	22	2-1/4"	Illegal--A 32" bat must weigh at least 29 oz. and all other NFHS standards including a BBCOR label
31	25	2-1/4"	Illegal--All 31" and over bats must meet the NFHS standards and include a BBCOR label
30	27	2-1/2"	Legal assuming BBCOR labeled
30	18	2-1/4"	Legal—BBCOR label not required
30	20	2-5/8"	Illegal—Bats 30" and under with a greater than -3 drop have a maximum barrel diameter of 2-1/4"
28	18	2-1/2"	Illegal—Bats 30" and under with a greater than -3 drop have a maximum barrel diameter of 2-1/4"

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Legal and Illegal Non-Wood Bats With a USA Baseball Logo			
Len gth	Wei ght	Barrel Diameter	Status
30	20	2-5/8"	Legal assuming USA Baseball Logo is silk screened on bat
31	20	2-5/8"	Illegal--All bats 31 inches and over for use in IESA must meet NFHS guidelines including BBCOR label
28	18	2-5/8"	Legal assuming USA Baseball Logo is silk screened on bat
26	16	2-1/4"	Legal assuming USA Baseball Logo is silk screened on bat
31	21	2-5/8"	Illegal--All bats 31 inches and over for use in IESA must meet NFHS guidelines including BBCOR label
32	22	2-5/8"	Illegal--All bats 31 inches and over for use in IESA must meet NFHS guidelines including BBCOR label
29	19	2-5/8"	Legal assuming USA Baseball Logo is silk screened on bat
28	18	2-1/2"	Legal assuming USA Baseball Logo is silk screened on bat

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SEVERE WEATHER POLICY

28. At the first sound of thunder or sight of lightning, games will be suspended for 30 minutes.
29. The 30-minute suspension of play restarts every time lightning is seen, or thunder is heard.

UMPIRES

30. The home team shall furnish umpire(s) for each game.
31. Home plate umpires must wear a protective face mask and chest protector.
32. It will be each community's responsibility to review the CIHL rules with their umpires.
33. The umpires shall meet with both coaches before the game to discuss any concerns and set clear guidelines on how they will be umpiring the game.
34. Home team maintains the official score book and they are charged with confirming the score and upcoming batting order with the visiting team each half inning.
35. Any concerns brought to the umpires' attention should be discussed in the presence of both umpires and head coaches
36. Judgment decisions by the umpires are final and protests regarding rule interpretations must be brought to the attention of a Board Member. If no one is present, play on and we will attempt to develop a better understanding by the next game.

Suggestions for a successful and enjoyable league:

- Communities should make an effort to make teams equal. No stacking the deck to make a strong team and weaker teams. No club teams, no "old team" and "young team", etc.

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8U Rookies Division Rules

TEAMS

1. Any player who turned 9 years old on or before August 31st of the current year is not eligible to compete.
2. A team shall consist of 10 players, the tenth player being an outfielder who will play 10 feet behind the baselines. A team must field at least 7 players or forfeit the game.
3. The pitcher (who is an adult) must not interfere when the ball is hit.
4. Two coaches on the defensive team may be on the field but cannot interfere with the ball.
5. Only a pitcher, catcher, and four infielders will be allowed to play in the infield at any one time.

GAMES

6. Game length: no inning shall start after 1 hour and 15 minutes into the game. At this point, the current inning will be the final inning of the game.
7. A normal game will consist of 6 innings.
8. A maximum of 5 runs per team shall be allowed in one inning. The 6th inning and any inning after that shall be open innings with no limit on the number of runs scored.
9. The ten-run rule will apply after the 4th inning. Example: If the home team is at least 10 runs ahead after 3 1/2 innings, the game is over. If the visiting team is at least 10 runs ahead after the 4th inning, the game is over.
10. In case of rain, 3 complete innings constitute a game. Any incomplete games are completely replayed.
11. The use of umpires during regular season games will be at the hosting team's discretion. If an umpire is present, they must be at least 12 years old and must stand behind the pitcher.

BATTING

12. The coach pitching to their team batting must pitch overhand at a minimum of 30 ft starting from the mound.
13. No player will be walked. The batter is out after 3 strikes whether the catcher catches the ball or not. No "called" strikes. The maximum pitch count to a batter is 10.
14. No intentional bunting is allowed. (Umpire's discretion.)
15. The infield fly rule will not be applied.

BASE RUNNING

16. When a ball that has been in play is returned from the outfield to the infield's diamond square, the umpire will call the play over when a player has control of the ball. All base runners may continue to the base they were headed for when play was called.
17. There will be no base stealing. Runners may not leave base until the ball is hit into play.
18. Batter cannot advance on an overthrow at first or any other base, even if played on.
19. Runner(s) can only advance as far as the batter advances as a result of their hit.

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10U Minors Division Rules

TEAMS

1. Any player who turned 11 on or before August 31st of the current year is not eligible to compete.
2. A team shall consist of 9 players; a team must field at least 7 players or forfeit the game; no outs for players short of 9.
3. Only a pitcher, catcher, and four infielders will be allowed to play in the infield at any one time.
4. Free substitution shall apply with the exception that once a pitcher is replaced; he may not return to pitch in that game.

GAMES

5. A normal game will consist of 6 innings. No inning shall start after 1 hour and 30 minutes into the game. At this point, the current inning will be the final inning of the game.
6. A maximum of 5 runs per team shall be allowed in one inning. The 6th inning and any after that shall be open innings with no limit on the number of runs scored.
7. The fifteen-run rule will apply after the 5th inning. Example: If the home team is at least 15 runs ahead after 4 1/2 innings, the game is over. If the visiting team is at least 10 runs ahead after the 4th inning, the game is over.
8. In case of rain, 4 complete innings constitute a game. Any incomplete games are completely replayed.
9. Plate umpires must be at least 15 years old. Base umpires must be at least 12 years old.

BATTING

10. Batter is out after 3 strikes. No advancement on a dropped 3rd strike.
11. Infield fly rule will not be applied.
12. Balk rule will not be applied.
13. No intentional walks.
14. No intentional bunting is allowed.

BASE RUNNING - HOME IS CLOSED

15. A player can score only if the ball is HIT into play or forced in by a Walk. Cannot Steal Home in any way.
16. Batter and runner(s) can only advance one base (at risk of being put out) as a result of an overthrow at first base, even if a play is attempted at second base.
17. Lead-offs and stealing are allowed. Runners may not leave the base until the ball reaches the plate (does not need to be a passed ball or wild pitch for a runner to steal a base). 1st violation-Runner goes back with team warning. 2nd violation, runner is out.
18. In the case of an overthrow off of the playing field, the ball is dead, and all runners advance one base. The playing field is defined by the home team ground rules.
19. Batter may advance as far as 3rd base on a walk due to overthrows at any base.
20. A base runner cannot score on a passed ball, a throw-back from the catcher to the pitcher, or an overthrow on an attempted steal at any base.
21. Once the pitcher possesses the ball in the middle of the infield, a runner may not advance beyond the base they were heading to unless a play is made on the runner at the base.

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HYBRID COACH/PLAYER PITCH

22. There are no walks in this division. However, if the kid pitcher does hit the batter, the batter will be awarded first base.
23. If a player-pitcher delivers 4 balls before the ball is put in play or 3 swinging strikes (batter is out), the Coach Pitcher will finish the at bat for the batter.
24. The batter will maintain his strike count when the Coach Pitcher takes over the at bat.
25. Coach Pitcher will deliver a maximum of 5 pitches, until 3 swinging strikes, or the ball is put into play.
26. A Foul Ball on the 5th pitch will grant the batter another pitch but they must swing or will be called out.
27. **Coach Rescue rules will be enforced based on the following timeline:**
 - Start of the season – May 31: Full Coach Rescue "no walks" through the end of May. Hitting team's coach finishes the at bat inheriting the number of strikes on the batter.
 - June 1-12: 2 walk limit per inning per pitcher. Coach rescue will be used starting with the 3rd walk of the inning.
 - June 13 - end of season (including tournament even if before June 13th): No Coaches rescue. Player pitch only with applicable run rules per inning.

PITCHING

28. No pitcher may pitch more than 6 innings per week total and 3 innings per game, (only league games count). Midnight Saturday starts week. One pitch constitutes one inning. Be aware that some pitchers are throwing on weekends, even though the innings do not count toward the week (Think of their health)
29. Pitchers will pitch from a flat rubber plate. No elevated mound will be used at this age.
30. Warm-up pitches are limited to 4 for returning pitchers. 7 for new pitchers.
31. All other pitching regulations are covered by IESA Baseball rules.

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12U Majors Division Rules

TEAMS

1. Any player who turned 13 on or before August 31st of the current year is not eligible to compete.
2. A team shall consist of 9 players; a team must field at least 7 players or forfeit the game; no outs for players short of 9. A team may pull laterally from another team, as long as the roster does not exceed 10 players. Any player pulled laterally may not pitch or catch and must bat at the end of the order. This does not apply to players pulled up. All late arrival additions must be announced and recognized by both teams.
3. Only a pitcher, catcher, and four infielders will be allowed to play in the infield at any one time.
4. Free substitution shall apply with the exception that once a pitcher is replaced; he may not return to pitch in that game.

GAMES

5. A normal game will consist of 7 innings. No inning shall start after 1 hour and 30 minutes into the game. At this point, the current inning will be the final inning of the game.
6. A maximum of 5 runs per team shall be allowed in one inning. The 7th inning and any after that shall be open innings with no limit on the number of runs scored.
7. Games ending in a tie can go extra innings provided both coaches are in agreement, the field is available and proper lighting exists (we need to keep kids safe).
8. The fifteen-run rule will apply after the 5th inning. Example: If the home team is at least 15 runs ahead after 4 1/2 innings, the game is over. If the visiting team is at least 15 runs ahead after the 4th inning, the game is over.
9. In case of rain, 4 complete innings constitute a game. Any incomplete games are completely replayed.
10. Plate umpires must be at least 15 years old. Base umpires must be at least 14 years old.

BATTING

11. Batter can advance to first on a dropped 3rd strike when first base is unoccupied with less than 2 outs. The base is occupied if there is a runner on first base prior to the pitch. If there are 2 outs it does not matter if first base is occupied or not. A player must record the final out as the ball is live. The batter is not out until he enters the dugout.
12. Infield fly rule is in effect.
13. No intentional walks.
14. Bunting is allowed.

BASE RUNNING

15. Leading off is permitted.
16. Stealing is permitted; home plate is open.

PITCHING

17. 1 Balk warning per pitcher per game; after a warning all runners will advance one base on a called balk.
18. Pitchers are allowed 7 warm-up pitches at first and 5 pitches between innings.

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19. Pitchers are limited to 4 innings per game and 8 innings per week. One pitch constitutes an inning. Midnight Saturday starts week. One pitch constitutes one inning (only league games count). Be aware that some pitchers are throwing on weekends, even though the innings do not count toward the week (Think of their health)

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15U Pony Division Rules

TEAMS

1. Any player who turned 16 or before August 31st of the current year is not eligible to compete.
2. A team shall consist of 9 players. A team must field at least 7 players or forfeit the game; 8th and 9th players will be counted as outs. Any late arrivals must be recognized by both teams.
3. Free substitution shall apply with the exception that once a pitcher is replaced; he may not return to pitch in that game.

GAMES

4. A normal game will consist of 7 innings.
5. A maximum of 5 runs per team shall be allowed in one inning. The 7th inning and any after that shall be open innings with no limit on the number of runs scored.
6. Games ending in a tie can go extra innings provided both coaches agree, the field is available and proper lighting exists (we need to keep kids safe).
7. The fifteen-run rule will apply after the 5th inning. Example: If the home team is at least 15 runs ahead after 4 1/2 innings, the game is over. If the visiting team is at least 15 runs ahead after the 4th inning, the game is over.
8. In case of rain, 4 complete innings constitute a game. Any incomplete games are completely replayed.
9. Patched Umpires do not have to be used unless it is a Championship game of tournament.
10. Umpires must be at least 16 years old.

BATTING

21. Batter can advance to first on a dropped 3rd strike when first base is unoccupied with less than 2 outs. The base is occupied if there is a runner on first base prior to the pitch. If there are 2 outs it does not matter if first base is occupied or not. A player must record the final out as the ball is live. The batter is not out until he enters the dugout.
22. Infield fly rule is in effect.
23. No intentional walks.
24. Bunting is allowed.

BASE RUNNING

25. Leading off is permitted.
26. Stealing is permitted; home plate is open.

PITCHING

27. 1 Balk warning per pitcher per game; after a warning all runners will advance one base on a called balk.
28. Pitchers are allowed 7 warm-up pitches at first and 5 pitches between innings.
29. Pitchers are limited to the pitch count chart below.

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<u>Regular Season Pitching Guidelines</u>						
Age	Daily Max (Pitches)	Required Rest (Pitches)				
		0 Days	1 Day	2 Days	3 Days	4 Days
13-14	95	0-20	21-35	36-50	51-65	66+
<u>Tournament Pitching Rules</u>						
Age	Daily Max (Pitches)	Required Rest (Pitches)				
		0 Days	1 Day	2 Days		
13-14	95	0-35	35-65	66+		

Pitching Guidline Clarification: A pitchers rest day(s) start on the day following his pitch day. Ex.) If a pitcher throws 38 pitches on a Monday(any time of day), he is required 2 rest days before pitching again. Therefore, his first rest day would be on Tuesday and he would not be eligible to pitch until Thursday of that week.