

# Marlborough Youth Baseball Association

## 2026 Playing Rules (APPROVED – March 2026)



**Major League**

**[www.myba.org](http://www.myba.org)**

## **GOVERNING BODY**

This guide is provided as a common framework on Marlborough Youth Baseball Association program rules of play. The MYBA Board of Directors retains final decision making authority for all matters pertaining to the program and may rule on issues and provide remedies not described in this document. Decisions by the Board of Directors are final.

## **PURPOSE OF MYBA**

1. Foster the physical, mental, emotional growth of the youth of the community.
2. Develop an understanding and appreciation of sportsmanship and fair play.
3. Encourage citizenship and academic achievement.
4. Teach the fundamentals of baseball through qualified supervisors.
5. Provide worthwhile recreational activities to youths that may otherwise be denied the opportunity to participate in an organized baseball program.
6. Promote a spirit of self-reliance along with the spirit of teamwork.

## **MANAGING CONFLICT**

Common sense and courtesy will prevent most conflicts, but situations that cannot be resolved on site should be referred to the League Director. Code of Conduct document will be provided to all managers and coaches.

Refer to the following principles while resolving conflict:

- Foster the physical, mental, emotional growth of the youth of the community
- Develop an understanding and appreciation of sportsmanship and fair play
- The league is for kids to **PLAY** baseball. MYBA decisions will be resolved in a manner that require player safety and are biased towards player involvement and fun.

## **PLAYING RULES**

MYBA Local Rules supersede Cal Ripken Rules.

Cal Ripken Rules supersede “Official Baseball Rules”.

- “Cal Ripken Baseball Division – Special Base Running Rule”
- “Cal Ripken Division – Local League and Tournament Play Special Rules and Regulations”
- “Official Baseball Rules Not Applicable to the Cal Ripken Division”

Remaining interpretations are based on the “Official Baseball Rules”

## ***LEAGUE PLAYING RULES***

1. **Beginning a Game:** A team in the majors league must have at least 9 players to start the game. A team not having at least 9 players will have until 15 minutes after the scheduled start time to field a team of at least 9 players. If after 15 minutes a team does not have 9 players, the game will be recorded as a forfeit (score is to be recorded as 6-0). The coaches should make every attempt to use the players that are present to play a practice game. The umpire will not stay for this game. The coaches should umpire the game and organize the players as they see fit. Please note that only registered major league players or registered major prep league players (subject to call up rules) should be participating in these practice

games (meaning no older or younger siblings or friends that are not registered and rostered players in the MYBA major or minor league). Any pitching in these games will count towards weekly inning counts.

2. 2 Hour Rule. No **new** inning may be started later than two (2) hours after the start time subject to the following conditions. Please note that any game lasting 2 hours is an official game, regardless of the number of innings completed.
  - If the umpires are on the field at the scheduled start time, the 2 hour time limit will be as of the scheduled start time.
  - If the umpires are not on the field at the scheduled start time, the 2 hour time limit will be as of the time of the first pitch.
3. Substitution Rule. Free substitution between innings.
4. Batting Order. Fixed complete roster batting order. Late arrivals are placed at the bottom of the order.
5. Minimum Play Rule. All players have the right to play for a fair and reasonable amount of time during the regular season of play. Therefore, no player (in a single game) shall ever sit two innings in a row AND no player shall sit for a 2<sup>nd</sup> inning until ALL players have sat for at least 1 inning. This rule shall continue exponentially; i.e. no player shall sit for 3 innings in a game until all players have sat for 2 innings that game, etc. Innings that the player is absent (late arrival, early departure) may count towards the players minimum innings of sitting.

EXCEPTION: At the end of the regular season of play and entering into the playoff games, the rule shall adjust for a more competitive level of play. All players present must play a minimum of three innings AND no player shall sit two innings in a row. Innings that the player is absent (late arrival, early departure) may count towards the players 3 innings.
6. No Slashing. Players may not show bunt during the pitch to draw fielders in and then swing away at the ball. The pitcher does not need to be in his windup for this to be valid. The first offense is an out; a repeat offense will result in ejection from the game.
7. No Head First Slides. A running head first slide is not allowed, regardless if you are advancing to a base or returning to a base. Infraction of this rule is an automatic "out" of the player involved. If taking a lead, a player may dive back. However, this dive may be ruled a head -first slide if, in the umpire's judgment, a slide occurs.
8. No Metal Spikes: Players may wear plastic or rubber cleats. Metal spikes are not allowed.
9. Bat Rule: The Cal Ripken bat rules will remain in effect. All bats MUST display the USA baseball marking on the bat. If a player uses an illegal bat, they will be called out and all runners will return to their bases occupied at the time of the pitch.
10. Contact Rule: All runners shall **slide or avoid contact** on all tag plays or force plays.  
Penalty: Runner is out.

- a. There shall be no penalty for incidental contact. (umpire's discretion)
  - b. There shall be no penalty if there is no contact.
  - c. Runner will be ejected if the umpire rules the contact was malicious or with intent to dislodge the ball.
11. Official Game. – A game shall become official when 4 innings have been completed or 3.5 innings when the home team is winning.
12. Ineligible Players. Any team using any ineligible player or pitcher in a game will automatically forfeit that game. This rule is exempt from the time limit in protesting.
13. Base Running Clarification. When the pitcher is in possession of the ball within the dirt area of the mound, and runners are less than halfway towards the next base (umpire's discretion), the runners must return to the previous base. Once the runners have tagged their respective bases and the pitcher comes in contact with the rubber, they may proceed to take their leads and advance at their own risk.

### ***Pitching (Rules 14 -20)***

14. Appearance Maximums:

- There is a 6 inning maximum per week
  - o The week goes from Monday through Sunday; inclusive
- There is a 3 inning maximum per game.
  - o If a pitcher pitches 2 innings or less, no rest is required.
  - o If a pitcher pitches 3 innings, he or she MUST have 2 calendar days rest (example: pitcher throws 3 innings on Monday, the pitcher would not be eligible to pitch until Thursday)
- The start of a new week DOES NOT supersede the rest rule.
- Penalty for any violation of these rules is a forfeit of the game where the violation took place.

15. A Single Pitch Constitutes an Inning: A player is charged with an inning pitched when one pitch is thrown to a batter (warm up pitches do not constitute an inning pitched).
16. Removal by Rule: A second trip to a pitcher during the same inning must result in player removal as pitcher. Injury trips do not count.
17. Re-appearance: Pitchers removed from the mound may not pitch again in the same game.
18. Hit Batters Rule: Any pitcher who hits 3 batters in one inning OR 4 batters in a game must be removed from pitching by rule.
19. Hidden Ball Trick: There will be no hidden ball trick in MYBA Major League games.
20. Trips to Mound: If the home plate umpire determines that he needs to instruct the pitcher to

prevent constant violations of the balk rule, he/she may summon the coach to the mound to help with instruction. This trip if initiated by the umpire shall NOT count as a trip to the mound for purposes of having to remove a pitcher.

21. Call-up Eligibility: Teams expecting 9 or fewer rostered players should call up from lower teams to complete rosters.
  - a. Call-ups may not pitch.
  - b. Call-ups are to be placed at the bottom of the batting line-up
  - c. Call-ups cannot start ahead of a rostered player
  - d. Call-ups cannot play more innings than a rostered player
  - e. Call-ups must play a minimum of 3-innings
  - f. A call-up player may only be called up a maximum of 5 times during the regular season.
  - g. Call-ups must be League age 10 or older
  
22. No Intentional Walks: If an umpire suspects an intentional walk has begun he shall rule the pitch a “no pitch” and give the manager and player a warning. If the intentional walk continues, all pitches shall be disallowed, the pitcher shall be removed from the mound and the manager ejected from the game.
  
23. No Breaking Balls:
  - a. Curve Balls and Sliders are not allowed.
  - b. The first offense will result in a warning from the umpire and the pitch will be called “No Pitch”
  - c. Second Offense Pitcher is removed from mound for the rest of the game and the pitch will be called “No Pitch”
  
24. No Additional Players in the Dugout during games: Only players who are listed on the official team roster are allowed in the dugout during a game. Bat boys and girls are also allowed and must have a helmet on at ALL TIMES. Managers are responsible for this.
  
25. Suspended Games: There shall be no suspended games during the regular season. Once the game becomes official (see rule #8 above), if the game must be stopped due to weather or time limit, the score will revert back to the last full inning. Any batting or pitching statistics will be recorded and any awards will be granted if such a game is ended. (In other words, players who hit home runs will count towards season statistics; any innings pitched will count towards total innings pitched.)
  
26. Postponed games: If a regular season game is ended for any reason before it becomes official (a postponed game), it shall be replayed in its entirety from the beginning at a later date. Any batting or pitching statistics (innings pitched, homeruns hit) will be recorded.
  
27. Repeat of Postponed Games: There will be a valid effort made to make up all regular season games in a reasonable time frame. However, if a regular season postponed game fails to be replayed after 2 attempts or cannot be scheduled by the end of the regular season that game shall be declared a tie and each team will be given 6 runs and 1 point in the standings.

28. Sportsmanship Rule: Any Major League game shall be terminated if one team is ahead by **12** or more runs after the **4<sup>th</sup>** inning (3 and a half innings if the home team is winning) or **8** runs after the **5<sup>th</sup>** inning (4 and a half innings if the home team is winning). A game shall be immediately terminated if the home team goes ahead by either of these amounts in the middle of their at bat.
29. No “Straight Stealing” of Home Plate or “Suicide Squeezes”: Players are not allowed to perform a “straight steal” of home plate. Players cannot lead more than 15 feet off 3<sup>rd</sup> base until the ball crosses home plate. Once the ball crosses home plate or is put in play runners are free to advance. If a “suicide squeeze” or “straight steal” of home plate occurs, time out should be called, the runner from 3<sup>rd</sup> shall be ruled out, all other runners shall return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch, and no pitch will be ruled.
30. AAU Coaches and Head Coaching at MYBA: Spring League Manager: It is encouraged that spring league town manager also NOT be the head coach of an AAU team as this creates a conflict of interest for time commitments during the season. These individuals would be encouraged to serve as an assistant in either capacity but not a manager for both organizations. IF a person desires to coach both, in addition to the normal approval process for a team manager at MYBA, special disclosure must be made for the MYBA Committee to make an educated decision on that coach’s ability to manage both an AAU as well as a MYBA team during the same season. That manager must be prepared to show how the conflict between the two teams is both manageable AND will not dramatically affect his ability to commit to managing at MYBA. Failure to disclose an AAU head coach position outside of MYBA may result in the termination of a coaching position and barring from future coaching opportunities at MYBA.