

Marlborough Youth Baseball Association

2026 Playing Rules (APPROVED – March 2026)



Minor League
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 minor 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 minor league players or registered AAA 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 minors or AAA 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 umpire is on the field at the scheduled start time, the 2-hour time limit will be as of the scheduled start time.
 - If the umpire is 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 2nd 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 the playoff games, the rule shall adjust for a more competitive level of play. All present players 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 minimum 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 Headfirst Slides. A running headfirst slide is not allowed, regardless of 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. 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.
9. Official Game. – A game shall become official when 4 innings have been completed or 3.5 innings when the home team is winning.

10. 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.
11. Base Running Clarification. When all runners have stopped their advance (**even if they continue to bounce around**), the pitcher is in possession of the ball and is **ON THE MOUND**, all runners must return to their respective bases. Note: As long as any runner continues his **advance (moving towards the next base)** the play is alive, and runners do not have to return. It shall be the umpire's judgment whether the runners have stopped their advance.
12. Stolen Base Clarification: To encourage proper technique for advancing base runners and encouraging catchers to practice throw downs to 2nd and 3rd base, for the first half of the season's games (rounded down), the maximum numbers of bases that can be advanced will be limited to **ONE**. This would prevent a base runner from taking more than one base on an error and allow the fielders / catchers an opportunity to work through throw downs and coverage live during the beginning of the season games. (example: runner advances to 2nd base from 1st base on an overthrown ball at home plate; the catcher throws down to second and the ball flies into the outfield; the runner stops at 2nd base after advancing the maximum one base allowed). Once the first half of the games are completed, the runner would be allowed to advance and take additional bases at their own risk. All coaches will be reminded of the rule change mid-season, so teams are all playing at an equal level.
NOTE: The maximum of 2 runs scored per inning while advancing to home rule is still in effect.

Pitching (Rules 12 -16)

13. Appearance Maximums:

- There is a 6-inning maximum per week
 - o The week goes from Monday through Sunday; inclusive.
- There is a 2-inning maximum per game.
- Penalty for any violation of these rules is a forfeit of the game where the violation took place.

14. 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).

15. 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.

16. Re-appearance: Pitchers removed from the mound may not pitch again in the same game.

17. 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.

18. 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 **8** or older. IF no 8 YEAR OLDS ARE AVAILABLE, 7 YEAR OLDS CAN BE CALLED UP but all efforts must be taken to secure a league 8 player.

19. 11 & 12-Year-Old Minor League Player: 12-year-olds are traditionally not allowed to play in MINORS. Majority Board approval is needed for any 12-year-olds to play in MINORS and is designed for extenuating circumstances. Any 11-year-olds that are playing are allowed to pitch, catch, and play without restrictions.

20. 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.

21. 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.”

22. 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 ALWAYS have a helmet on. Managers are responsible for policing this rule.

23. 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 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. (Players who hit home runs will count towards season statistics; any innings pitched will count towards total innings pitched.)

24. 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 determined later date. Any batting or pitching statistics (innings pitched, homeruns hit) will be recorded.

25. 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.

26. Batter/Runner Cannot Steal on Walk: The batter/runner is limited to 1st base on a walk. Other base runners may advance at their own peril.
27. Stealing Home: Runners may steal home or advance to home up to a maximum of two runs scored per inning. If a 3rd run is attempted to be stolen at home during that inning, the umpire shall direct the baserunner back to 3rd base, remind the 3rd base coach of the rule, and restart play. After two runs are scored by stealing home, runners may only score on a batted ball or when forced in on a walk/HBP for the remainder of that inning.
28. Pickoff Rule: **NOTE: When the “Stealing Home” rule is still in effect (i.e. the ability to score up to two runs by stealing home per inning) all runners are at risk of being picked off.** Once a team has exhausted its ability to steal home for 2 runs per innings, base runners without the possibility to advance are **not** at risk of being picked off. Runners on third cannot be picked off, because they are not allowed to advance to home except by batted ball or force. When third is occupied, a runner cannot be picked of at second or third, and when second and third are occupied no runners can be picked off. After the maximum 2 runs are scored per inning, coaches should make every attempt to keep runners from leading off 3rd base in an effort to keep games moving as runner cannot advance or be put out.
29. Maximum Runs per Inning - 5 Run Rule: There will be a maximum of 5 runs allowed in any one inning. Once the offensive team scores the 5th run, the inning is immediately over and the teams switch, no matter how many outs there are. It is not possible to score more than 5 runs (Example - offensive team has scored 4 runs and has the bases loaded and the batter hits the ball to the outfield, only one run can score on that play as inning is over when 5th run touches home plate).
30. Sportsmanship Rule: Any Minor League game shall be terminated if one team is ahead by **11** or more runs after the 4th inning (3 and a half innings if the home team is winning) or 6 runs after the 5th 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.
31. 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.