

# Major League Rulebook

BREMEN YOUTH BASEBALL

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**BREMEN**  
*Youth Baseball*

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## A. General

- a. This rulebook supersedes all other baseball rulebooks.
- b. All contested gameplay related rules not explicitly expressed in this rulebook shall be governed by Official Baseball Rules: 2021 Edition, found here: <https://img.mlbstatic.com/mlb-images/image/upload/mlb/atcizj9j7wrgvsm8wnjq.pdf>
- c. All in-game calls use umpire discretion. Umpires may call time to refer to the rulebook at any time. Umpire decisions are final.
- d. All discrepancies and questions regarding the rulebook shall be presented, after a game, in writing to one or more members of the Bremen Youth Baseball Board, to be discussed at the next board.
- e. The rulebook may be updated at any time during the season by a majority vote of the Bremen Youth Baseball Board.
- f. There shall be no mandatory Sunday practices.
- g. Coaches, players and/or spectators will not be allowed behind the batting screen.
- h. Time Limit: Each game is limited to 1 hour 45 minutes.
  - i. The clock starts at the first pitch.
  - ii. No inning can start at or after 1 hour 45 minutes.
  - iii. If tied after 1 hour 45 minutes, the game ends in a tie.
- i. Games with a scheduled start of 5:30 P.M. shall start promptly at 5:30 P.M.
- j. Games with a scheduled start of 7:30 P.M. shall start promptly at 7:30 P.M.
- k. Only coaches shall be permitted out of the dugout area during a game.
  - i. Only one (1) on-deck batter shall be permitted.
  - ii. All offensive players must wear helmets while on the playing field.
  - iii. No warm-up swings will be allowed outside the playing area.
- l. The home plate umpire and/or any board member can stop a game at any time if they feel the game is getting out of control.
- m. A game shall be considered complete if at minimum four full innings have been played, or three and a half innings if home team is winning
  - i. If one complete inning is not played, then the game will be rescheduled and the game will start over.
  - ii. Any game stopped, for any reason, prior to the minimum will result in re-scheduled game – starting where the game was stopped, with the exception if one complete inning is not played then the game will be started over.
- n. No coach, player, or parent shall smoke, chew tobacco, or have any alcohol or illegal drugs on their person. This is to include games, practices, umpiring, while using the batting cages or while standing at the fence surrounding the playing/practice fields.
- o. All players, coaches and parents will be required to sign a Code of Conduct policy. If one is not signed and on file, the child will not be allowed to participate in any games until one is signed and on file with the Bremen Little League board.
- p. Coach Background Check: To ensure a safe environment for all participants, Bremen Youth Baseball (Rookie, Minor, Major, and U14) requires an annual background check for all coaches. All prospective coaches/volunteers must agree to and pass a background check before the start of our season.

- i. Self Reporting: All coaches/volunteers also agree to self report any criminal convictions or charges to the league within 48 hours.
- ii. All background check information will be held in confidentiality.

## B. Weather

- a. Games will be halted for 30 minutes after a visible lightning bolt. If another lightning bolt appears within those 30 minutes, the 30-minute delay re-starts. Three lightning bolts within a one-hour time frame suspends or ends the game.
- b. Stoppage of play due to weather shall be at the discretion of the Home Plate Umpire and/or Board Member.
  - i. A complete game shall be considered complete if four complete innings have been played – otherwise the game shall be rescheduled.
  - ii. If one complete inning is not played, then the game will be played over.
  - iii. A complete game is a minimum of four innings, or 3 and ½ innings if the home team is winning, in the event of inclement weather at the discretion of home plate umpire or of any board member. Any game stopped prior to the minimum will result in a re-scheduled game – starting where the game ended, with the exception if one (1) complete inning is not played then the game will be played over, starting all over.

## C. Eligibility

### a. Players

- i. Eligibility shall be determined on a calendar year basis as follows:
- ii. Major League players must be eleven (11) by May 1st, and not thirteen (13) by May 1st.
- iii. Eligibility is subject to change on a case-to-case basis, or on a year-to-year basis upon approval of the Little League board of directors.
- iv. Any player eligible to play can play any position.

### b. Batboys

- i. A batboy must be ten years old and be on a Minor League team roster.
- ii. A Major League coach must have parent's permission for a batboy to play on the team.
- iii. A batboy cannot play if there is a player on that team's roster on the bench.
- iv. Batboys shall play on a game-by-game basis and are not tied to a specific team for an entire season.
- v. Batboys are required to play an outfield position only and they must bat last in the batting order.
  1. If the coach wants to play the bat boy at an infield position he/she must get permission from the opposing coach before the game. The opposing coach has the ability to deny this request. **(NEW 2026)**

## D. Game Play

### a. General

- i. All calls are subject to the umpire's discretion.

- ii. Any live ball that bounces over or rolls under the fence shall be declared a ground rule double.
- iii. Any ball that clears the outfield fence on the fly, hits the top of the fence railing, and carries over the fence, or hits the light pole above the fence line shall be declared a home run.
- iv. If the catcher drops the ball on the third strike, then the batter shall be called out.
- v. Lineup cards will be given to the opposing coach five (5) minutes prior to game time.

## b. Baserunning

### i. General

1. The play continues until a dead ball is declared when the pitcher has the ball in the dirt area surrounding the mound or player calls for time.
2. The responsibility to avoid contact lies with the runner.
3. A runner must slide into every base, except first, if play is being made at that base. If the runner does not slide, the runner is called out.
  - a. Ex) the ball is thrown to a base that a runner is attempting to take.
  - b. Ex) a fielder is running toward a base with the intent of getting the runner out.
4. Any runner purposely interfering with an attempted play on the ball by the fielder will be ruled out and a dead ball shall be declared.
5. If a batted ball hits the runner, the runner is called out. Any other runners and batter may still advance at their own risk.
6. Headfirst slides are not allowed except when a runner is returning to a base. If a headfirst slide occurs other than on a return to a base, then the runner is to be called out.
7. Leading off is only allowed after the pitched ball has crossed home plate. If a runner leads off.
  - a. The umpire shall declare an out and a dead ball called with all runners returning to their original base if a runner leaves the base prior to the ball crossing home plate.
8. Coaches cannot touch a runner on base to help him either advance or return to his base unless time is called.
  - a. If contact occurs then a dead ball shall be declared, the base runner shall be declared out with other runners returning to their last base. Does not include incidental contact.

### ii. Stealing

1. Stealing shall be allowed in the Major Leagues for second base, third base, and home.
2. Runners can steal home:
  - a. After an overthrow of a base or pitcher
  - b. After the ball crosses home plate, and the ball gets away from the catcher.
3. Runners must slide if a play is made at the base or be called out at the umpire's discretion.
4. No head first slides. If they slide headfirst, they will be called out. NO WARNINGS.
5. A courtesy runner for the catcher is allowed with 2 outs. The player who made the last out would be the pitch runner.

### c. Pitching

- i. Pitch counts will determine a pitcher's eligibility across all leagues (Rec and All-Stars).
- ii. We are following the pitching guidelines of "Boys of Summer."
  1. Pitchers may throw a maximum of **85 pitches in a single day**, they must have 4 days rest before pitching again..
  2. If a pitcher throws 66 or more pitches, they must have 4 days rest before pitching again.
  3. If a pitcher throws 51-65, they must have 3 days rest before pitching again.
  4. If a pitcher throws 36-50, they must have 2 days rest before pitching again.
  5. If a pitcher throws 21-35, they must have 1 day rest before pitching again.
  6. If a pitcher throws 1-20, they are not required to rest before pitching again.
  7. When a pitcher reaches their pitch count limit in the middle of an at bat, the pitcher may finish the at bat.
    - a. The first pitch to a pitcher's last batter is the last pitch that needs to be recorded.
      - i. EX. The pitcher starts a batter with pitch 49, and after 7 pitches gets the batter out. The final pitch count for this pitcher is 49. **(NEW 2026)**
      - b. After each half inning of pitching, a coach must report the pitch count of his pitcher before the team bats. **(NEW 2026)**
        - i. If a team disputes a pitch count, they are to appeal the pitch count total immediately to the home plate umpire. **(NEW 2026)**
          1. NOTE: neither plate or field umpire is responsible for keeping track of the pitch count.
          2. NOTE: by regularly reporting the pitch count, we are hoping to avoid any discrepancies.
  - iii. Pitches in all leagues count towards a pitcher's pitch count.
  - iv. Once a pitcher is removed from the mound and replaced with another pitcher the pitcher removed cannot re-enter as a pitcher.
  - v. Only fastballs and changeups will be allowed as determined by the umpire.
    1. The first violation shall be a warning to the coach with a ball called.
    2. The second violation in the same game shall result in the pitcher being removed from the mound and a ball being called.
    3. Three violations within the same season shall result in the pitcher not being allowed to pitch for the remainder of the season.
  - vi. A dead ball shall be called when the pitcher has the ball in the dirt area surrounding the pitching rubber.
  - vii. A team shall be allowed to intentionally walk only two batters from the opposing team during the game.
    1. The same batter cannot be intentionally walked twice in the same game.

### d. Run Rule/Mercy Rule

- i. Run Limits Per Inning
  1. 7 runs per inning (1st -4th)
  2. 10 run limit for innings 5 and 6. **(NEW 2026)**
- ii. A ten-run rule will be in place after four complete innings.
  1. Once a game is called due to the ten-run rule the game will be considered final.

### e. Infield Fly

- i. The infield fly rule shall apply to Major League play.
  1. An infield fly is a fair fly ball (not including a line drive nor an attempted bunt) that can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort, when first and second, or first, second and third bases are occupied, before two are out.
  2. The pitcher, catcher, and any outfielder that stations him in the infield on the play shall be considered infielders for the purpose of this rule.
  3. When it seems apparent that a batted ball will be an infield fly, the Umpire shall immediately declare, "infield fly" for the benefit of the runners. If the ball is near the baselines, the Umpire shall declare "infield fly – if fair". The ball is alive, and runners may advance at the risk of the ball being caught, or retouch and advance after the ball is touched, the same as on any fly ball. If the hit becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul. If a declared infield fly is allowed to fall untouched to the ground, and bounces foul before passing first or third base, it is a foul ball.
  4. If a declared infield fly falls untouched to the ground outside the baseline, and bounces fair before passing first or third base, it is an infield fly.
  5. On the infield fly rule, the umpire is to rule whether the ball could ordinarily have been handled by an infielder – not by some arbitrary limitation such as the grass or the base lines.
  6. The umpire must also rule that a ball is an infield fly, even if handled by an outfielder if, in the Umpire's judgment, the ball could have been easily handled by an infielder.
  7. The infield fly is in no sense to be considered an appeal play. The Umpire's judgment must govern, and the decision should be made immediately.
  8. When an infield fly rule is called, runners may advance at their own risk.
  9. If on an infield fly rule, the infielder intentionally drops a fair ball, the ball remains in play despite the provisions of Rule 6.05 (L). The infield fly rule takes precedence. "In flight" describes a batted, thrown, or pitched ball that has not yet touched the ground or some object other than a fielder.

## E. Rosters

- a. If a Coach disciplines a player, the player must be disciplined both for batting and fielding.
- b. No player shall be permitted to play if they are wearing a "plaster" (or like substance) cast without exception.
- c. Jewelry is not permitted to be worn by any player during the game. Earrings must be protected with a covering (i.e., Band-Aid, etc).
- d. Courtesy runners may be used for the catcher when the catcher is a base runner with two outs.
  - i. The courtesy runner must be a player on the team's roster who has made the last out.
- e. If a player is hurt and unable to continue to play, a batboy may enter in the hurt player's position only if there is not a player from the team's roster on the bench. If no batboy or player is available, then the batting rotation shall have the hurt player's position deleted (not out). If the player can return to the game, they must re-enter in for the same person. If a runner is hurt, then the player who made the last out before him must take his place.
- f. All players shall bat in the batting order while only fielding nine players.

- g. All players must play a minimum of two consecutive innings in the field, otherwise a forfeit shall be declared.
- h. Teams must field a minimum of seven players to start a game otherwise a forfeit shall be declared.

## F. Equipment

### a. General

- i. No metal cleats permitted for the safety of others.
- ii. All players must have their shirt tucked in and wear a hat during the game.
- iii. All equipment must be kept in the dugout or in the bat rack.

### b. Catchers

- i. Catchers must wear a catcher's mitt, catcher's helmet, catcher's mask and protective cup at all games and practices.
  - 1. Each team will be provided one protective cup, but it is recommended that each catcher have his or her own.
  - 2. All players must wear a catcher's mask while warming up the pitcher.
  - 3. Coaches can warm up a pitcher without a mask.

### c. Bats

- i. All metal bats must be stamped or printed with ***USA Baseball*** logo.
- ii. All wood bats must be approved by the board prior to the opening day Jamboree.

## G. Field Prep/Maintenance

### a. Setup Responsibilities

- i. The Home team of the first game is responsible for chalking the field, and installing the bases.
- ii. Second Game Responsibilities (if necessary)
  - a. The Home team is responsible for rechalking the lines (if necessary)

### b. Conclusion of the last game of the night

- i. The AWAY team's responsibility is to put away the bases, raking the field, and pitcher's mound. Do not forget to replace the plugs in the base holes. The bases belong in the appropriate field's tower.

### c. Trash Removal

- i. Each team is responsible for taking the trash out of their individual dugouts after each game.

## H. Sportsmanship

- a. Throwing a bat or helmet or abusing equipment shall not be tolerated.
  - i. 1st time: warning
  - ii. 2 or more times: the player will be called out.
- b. Digging holes in the playing surface with spikes shall not be tolerated.
- c. Unsportsmanlike conduct shall not be tolerated by a player, coach, or fan.
- d. Cursing or abusive language shall not be tolerated by a player, coach, or fan.
- e. Arguing strikes or balls shall not be tolerated by a player, coach, or fan.

- f. The Home Plate Umpire and/or Board Member shall have the right to remove a player, coach, or fan from the park for violation of items one (1) through five (5) listed above.
- g. No chatter shall be allowed during the game. (i.e., "hey, batter-batter...swing...". In the event chatter occurs a warning shall be given, with the second occurrence resulting in a dead ball being called and the offending person being ejected from the game.
- h. A Coach may discipline a player by keeping him out of the game. This must be reported to the opposing Coach and Home Plate Umpire along with the reason and number of innings the player is going to be disciplined. The disciplined player must be listed on the line-up batting order along with the number of innings he will not be playing.