

A League Rules

Revised 1.4.2017

General Rules of Play

1. **“A League” baseball is an instructional league and everyone should always remember that the game is for the kids!!**
2. There is no final score or winner/loser at the A level. Keeping track of runs is only handled by coaches for the purpose of ending an inning as stated in Batting/Base Running Rule 4 below.
3. No inning may start after 8 PM. The game may also be called before 8 PM due to darkness or adverse weather/player safety.
4. A half inning is completed when a team scores (6) runs, bats through their order (regardless of number of players), or the defense completes 3 outs, whichever comes first.
5. The coach of the team who is up to bat is the only umpire, and resolves all disputes.
6. Play stops when the ball enters the infield and is returned to the pitcher with the intention of stopping play. However, if the defensive player chooses to make an additional play, play continues. The coach/umpire should use discretion in favor of the defense (eg, close plays do not “go to the runner” but rather should be ruled in favor of the defense).
7. Please have coaches call the Dover Park and Recreation office for cancellation information. The information will usually be posted on the DSYBS website. Coaches are responsible for notifying the players if the information is not on the website.
8. Coaches can suggest temporary rule changes to the League Director, and if there is consensus among the coaches, the League Director can request permission (from the Commissioner) for a temporary rule change.

Batting/Base Running

1. The batting order will include all players, no switching.
2. An “at-bat” is generally completed after 4 swings, 6 pitches through the strike zone, or a ball put in play, whichever comes first. If the ball is not put in play, the batter is out. However, after 4 swings or 6 strikes, the coach may elect to continue the at-bat (rather than call the batter out) at his or her discretion (the coach should weigh the pace of the game with the particular developmental needs of the batter when making the decision to continue an at-bat beyond 4 swings or 6 strikes).
3. There are no walks.
4. Any ball hit within the baselines is fair.

5. On any overthrow that goes out of play (i.e., hits the fence, in the woods, etc.), the runner may take only 1 base. When the ball is in play, the runner may keep running.
6. Base-running ties go the fielding team, not the runner.
7. Bunting, stealing or leading are not allowed.
8. The only player that should have a bat in hand is the current batter. The on-deck hitter and other players should not have a bat in hand.

Fielding

1. All players play defensively (regardless of number of players), with all extra players in the outfield. The infield cannot be loaded with more players than normal infield positions.
2. Both outfielders and infielders shall not move too far in (no matter who the batter is). Outfielders must stay on the outfield grass until the ball is hit. Infielders must stay on the infield dirt until the ball is hit. A defensive player may not stand in front of the coach who is in the field acting as umpire.
3. One defensive player (the pitcher) may stand within three feet of either side of the pitchers mound when a coach is pitching.
4. No one player can play any one position for more than two innings, and players should be rotated as equally as possible among infield and outfield positions. Throughout the year, all players should be given the chance to play every position.
5. All teams will field a player in the catcher position. Catchers must wear protective cups and appropriate catching equipment. Assistant coaches can speed-up the game by backing up the catcher and throwing the ball back to the pitcher or the pitching coach.

Pitching

Note - “A League” pitching rules have been designed to allow young players to have an opportunity to pitch and gain the confidence needed to go forward in the game of baseball. It is important that A League players pitch (and see live pitching rather than coach pitching) for their development, to prepare them for AA League play, and for summer baseball leagues (which begin after the 2nd grade). These pitching rules have also been implemented to allow for a reasonable “pace of game”.

The purpose of the pitcher in “A League” is to allow the batter to put the ball into play, not to strike out the batter. However, four swing and misses or six strikes generally ends the at-bat as a strike out. The coach may elect to continue the at-bat, weighing the pace of play with the developmental needs of the player.

It is strongly recommended that coaches *clearly explain these rules to all player pitchers*. The commissioners support the introduction of pitching at the A League level, but are sensitive to a player's self confidence and positive development.

1. Every at-bat will begin with a player pitcher throwing pitches (not the coach). The coach of the team that is up to bat will stand behind or next to the pitcher, will function as the umpire for that half inning, and will call balls and strikes on his or her own team.
2. Player pitchers may only pitch a maximum of 6 pitches **per batter**. If the batter has not put the ball in play after the sixth pitch, and the player up to bat has not struck out (4 swings and misses or 6 pitches through the strike zone), then the coach will finish pitching the "at-bat" to his or her own player. (The player pitcher can return to pitching after the at bat is finished.)
3. Player pitchers may only pitch 2 innings maximum per game. Games take place on Friday evenings; if a make-up game is needed because of a prior cancellation due to weather, there may need to be two games in a single week. If this is the case, a player may pitch three innings in a week (two in one game and one in the other).
4. The following rules always apply: no player is allowed to throw more than 50 pitches in a single day; no player is allowed to throw more than 65 pitches in a given week (Monday-Sunday); a player who throws 21-35 pitches in a game cannot pitch the next day (if a make-up game is scheduled) – one calendar day of rest is required; a player who throws 36-50 pitches in a game must have at least two calendar days of rest.
5. A player pitcher who hits 2 batters during a game will be replaced by the coach who can finish pitching the inning.
6. Player pitchers will pitch from 3 feet in front of the fixed pitching rubber.

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