



THE OFFICIAL HOME OF

# ALEXANDRIA YOUTH BASEBALL ASSOCIATION

## Northwoods Instructional League Rules

(Updated March 2024)

<b>Behavior and Conduct</b>	<b>2</b>
Unsportsmanlike Conduct	2
Tobacco, Alcohol or Other Drugs	2
League Rules and Regulations	2
<b>Coaches &amp; Players</b>	<b>3</b>
Coaches	3
Player Eligibility	4
Dress Code (Uniforms)	4
Pitchers	4
Catchers	5
Batters	6
Base Runners	6
League Property	7
<b>League Games</b>	<b>7</b>
General	7
Schedule	7
Teams	7
The Game	8
Run Limits Per Inning	8
Injuries	8
House Tournament	9

# 1. Behavior and Conduct

## 1.1. Unsportsmanlike Conduct

- 1.1.1. This league strives to promote good sportsmanship by its players, coaches, umpires, and fans. Any unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated. Occurrences can result in the suspension of a player or coach at the discretion of the AYBA board.
- 1.1.2. Foul language or unsportsmanlike conduct will not be permitted. If a player or coach is heard using it, they will be reprimanded and warned by the umpire. If a second offense occurs during the same game, the player or coach will be ejected from that game. Continued use of foul language or unsportsmanlike conduct during league play by that person shall receive appropriate discipline from the director of the league.
- 1.1.3. There will be no unnecessary throwing of bats or other equipment at any time for any reason during the game. The first violation will result in a warning to that player by the umpire. The second violation during the same game will result in AUTOMATIC ejection from that game. Two AUTOMATIC ejections during a season will result in that player forfeiting his/her playing eligibility for the balance of the season. An umpire will make these calls. A gross violation will result in AUTOMATIC ejection. The director of the league may also make these calls.
- 1.1.4. If a coach or player is ejected from a game (exception rule 1.1.3) they will receive a one game suspension. If a second violation occurs they will be suspended for the season.
- 1.1.5. Badgering (direct or indirect) of the opposing teams players (such as a pitcher) will not be tolerated. Example: Making loud comments to your batter that the pitcher can't throw strikes and that once he walks someone, he will be rattled enough to start walking everyone.

## 1.2. Tobacco, Alcohol or Other Drugs

- 1.2.1. There shall be no use of tobacco, alcohol or other drugs on the field by fans, coaches or players. The offender shall be removed from the game. A second violation will result in termination from the league for that year. Note: This rule applies to fans, as such substances are not allowed on school grounds.

## 1.3. League Rules and Regulations

- 1.3.1. Rules and regulations are not to be changed during the regular playing season. However, suggestions for the modifications or revisions of these rules for future years are welcome if submitted in writing along with the reasons for the proposed change(s). In the event that temporary emergency changes must be made, they must have Board approval and

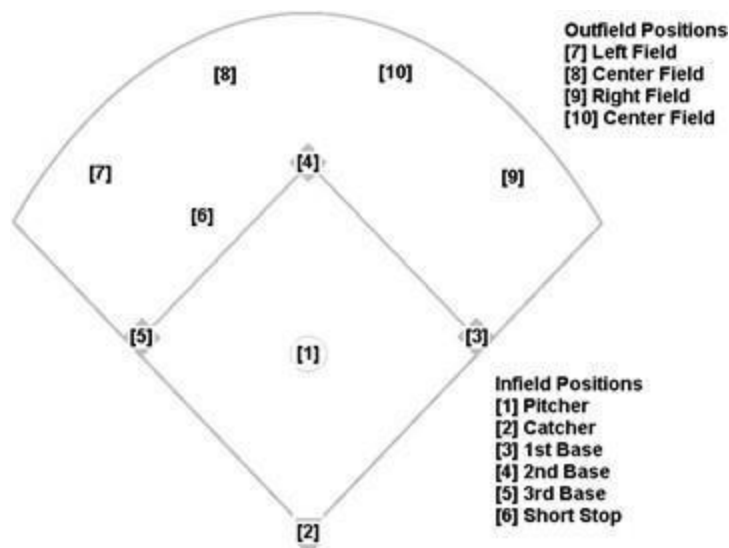
written notification will be given to the managers involved one week prior to their enforcement.

- 1.3.2. When not clarified, the association will default to the national high school rules governing baseball prior to making a ruling / interpretation.

## 2. Coaches & Players

### 2.1. Coaches

- 2.1.1. Dugout personnel shall consist of not more than: 1 manager, 2 coaches, 1 scorekeeper, and 1 bat person.
- 2.1.2. No delay tactics will be tolerated; i.e. throwing the ball around the horn or taking infield after designated start time. It is the responsibility of the umpire and coaches to keep the game moving. Any attempt to delay a game shall be considered unsportsmanlike.
- 2.1.3. Do not pitch with sore-armed pitchers. No game this season is worth a lifetime injury.
- 2.1.4. No player may sit more than one inning unless all players have sat at least one inning (exception being an injury or illness).
- 2.1.5. Soft toss (a training method used during batting practice) utilizing baseballs while having your players hitting into the fencing is no longer permitted. This association will no longer contribute to the fencing being damaged as a result of this activity when using baseballs.
- 2.1.6. It is required that all players play at least one inning per game in both the infield and outfield; unless, due to a parental request or player request that the player's safety would be compromised.
- 2.1.7. All players will play at least one infield and one outfield inning by the 4th inning of each game.
- 2.1.8. The association enforces a zero tolerance policy in addressing any outbursts, confrontations, or other forms of intimidation being employed by our participants within the league (which includes our fans). These kinds of actions negatively affect the AYBA as a whole and as such, the coaches are asked to keep this "in check".



**NOTE:** Players in the pitching and catching positions are to be considered playing infield positions.

## 2.2. Player Eligibility

- 2.2.1. Players should notify their coach if they are going to miss a game or practice. If notice is not given, the coach may choose not to play that player at the next game. This is totally at the coaches' discretion. This is the only circumstance where the "everybody plays" rule may be lifted. If this is to be done during a play-off game, the director of the league shall first be notified.
- 2.2.2. If a player makes a AAA travel team, the parent/player is given the option to play up a league within in-house, however this must be approved by the travel director.

## 2.3. Dress Code (Uniforms)

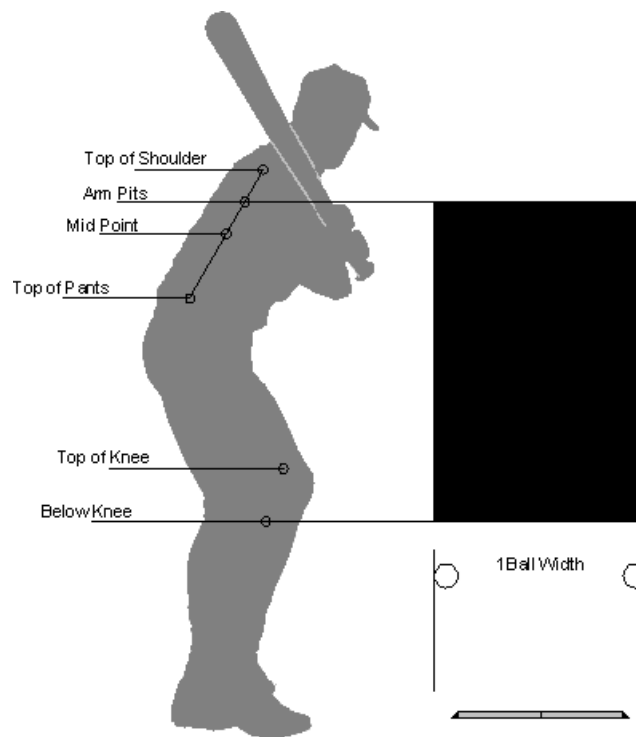
- 2.3.1. Full uniforms are required at all times during the game. If a uniform has been issued and is not being worn, the player will not play.
- 2.3.2. Uniforms will include proper caps during games; travel team hats are not allowed.
- 2.3.3. Earrings, necklaces, or bracelets will not be allowed.
- 2.3.4. Players may not wear metal spikes.
- 2.3.5. The league recommends that all players wear a protective cup.

## 2.4. Pitchers

- 2.4.1. The league strongly encourages prospective pitchers to attend all league sponsored pitching clinics.
- 2.4.2. Pitchers will not be allowed to wear a long sleeve white shirt on their throwing arm nor will they be allowed to wear sunglasses while pitching.
- 2.4.3. The pitching mound will be 46 feet from the apex of home plate, as arranged

by the groundskeeper.

- 2.4.4. There shall be no walks. All batters need to be pitched to.
- 2.4.5. Breaking balls are not permitted unless perceived to be a form of natural delivery.
- 2.4.6. The maximum number of warm-up pitches allowed between innings is five (5) unless, at the sole discretion of the umpire, additional warm-ups are warranted due to weather or other conditions.
- 2.4.7. Pitchers may not pitch to more than 6 batters in one game. If a team utilizes all pitchers, then the remainder of the game will be coach/adult pitch. A batter is allowed 5 pitches from the player pitcher, at which point the coach will pitch 4 pitches. After 9 pitches the batter will be out. The batter may strike out on the first 5 pitches from the player pitcher
- 2.4.8. Intention of Northwoods League is to encourage pitchers to develop proper form & technique with coach's guidance.
- 2.4.9. A pitcher that has already pitched to 6 batters in a game may not reenter that game in a pitching position.
- 2.4.10. The Strike Zone:



## 2.5. Catchers

- 2.5.1. Catchers are required to wear masks, chest protectors, shin guards, protective headgear, throat protector and a protective cup. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**
- 2.5.2. Any player warming up a pitcher shall wear a mask if on the playing field and in a crouched position.

## 2.6. Batters

- 2.6.1. At the start of the season, utilizing coach/adult pitch, each team will bat through their entire lineup. After 3 outs, the fielding team will rotate positions.
- 2.6.2. Batters are required to wear protective headgear, which will include facemasks. Failure to do so results in an automatic out.
- 2.6.3. All players will be in the batting order. Batting order will rotate for each game. Lineup will start with the next hitter following previous games last out/hitter.
- 2.6.4. Bats must be compliant with the USSSA or USA and have the appropriate stamp.
- 2.6.5. The diameter of the bat may not exceed 2 3/4 inches. Any bat that does not comply with this rule is prohibited.
- 2.6.6. No souvenir wood bats are allowed.
- 2.6.7. Any illegal bat used will be an automatic out. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**
- 2.6.8. A batter is allowed 5 pitches from the player pitcher, at which point the coach will pitch 4 pitches. After 9 pitches the batter will be out. The batter may strike out on the first 5 pitches from the player pitcher.
- 2.6.9. There will be no unnecessary throwing of bats or other equipment at any time for any reason during the game (see rule 1.1.3 regarding unsportsmanlike conduct).

## 2.7. Base Runners

- 2.7.1. Base runners are required to wear protective headgear, which will include facemasks. Failure to do so results in an automatic out.
- 2.7.2. A ball being thrown back to the pitcher by the catcher is a dead ball.
- 2.7.3. No base stealing is allowed.
- 2.7.4. Base runners will receive 1 base on an overthrow; regardless of whether the ball is in play or out of play. The play will be called dead and runners will be advanced by the umpire. This call is the umpires discretion and the call is final.
- 2.7.5. During a close play at 2nd, 3rd, or home plate the base runner must avoid contact. Any runner that does not avoid contact and creates or potentially causes a safety concern may be called out at the discretion of the umpire. Intentionally sliding head first is not allowed.

- 2.7.6. Base runners missing a base shall be called "out" only after the opposing coach makes an appeal. This appeal must be made before the next play is commenced.
- 2.7.7. To help keep the game moving, a courtesy runner is encouraged for the next innings catcher when there are 2 outs. The courtesy runner shall be the player making the last out.

## 2.8. League Property

- 2.8.1. If league property is not returned by player or parent when personally contacted, a registered letter will be sent requesting return of equipment or payment for it.

# 3. League Games

## 3.1. General

- 3.1.1. All players are required to stay in the dugout or outside the fenced area unless they are on defense, at bat, or in the on deck circle. There will be no running in and out of the field area or standing by the fence during play.
- 3.1.2. Non-rostered players will not be allowed to compete in official scheduled games.

## 3.2. Schedule

- 3.2.1. All games and practices will be played as per the schedule.
- 3.2.2. The league may provide makeup dates for games that were canceled due to inclement weather. Those dates will be communicated at the beginning of the season.
- 3.2.3. The director of the league will reschedule make-up games if deemed necessary.
- 3.2.4. Games shall begin promptly as scheduled. If a team has at least eight players present but is not ready to play at the time the umpire announces "Play Ball", the umpire shall impose a penalty on the offending teaming by calling either "ball" or "strike" (as appropriate) for each 15 seconds which elapses after the game is to have started. Note: If a first game has run late so that the second game cannot start as scheduled, the second game shall start five minutes after the conclusion of the first game.
- 3.2.5. Inclement weather related concerns. Prior to the start of the game, the director of the league (or board member) will be responsible for suspending or postponing a scheduled game due to inclement weather or premature darkness. After the start of a game, this becomes the responsibility of the coaches and umpire to suspend or postpone the game immediately upon inclement weather or premature darkness.

### 3.3. Teams

- 3.3.1. It is the intention of this league to field teams composed of 11 to 12 players. The league board reserves the right to modify the quantity of teams being fielded in an effort to provide the most positive playing experience for the players and create the most functional organization possible. Maximum number of players on a team is 13.
- 3.3.2. Home team is the 2nd team listed on the league schedule & home team will occupy the 3rd base dugout. After the last game of the night, both teams will rake/drag the field before leaving and place tarps over home plate and pitcher's mound if tarps are present.
- 3.3.3. Teams must be able to field eight rostered players or utilize extra players from the opposing team.

### 3.4. The Game

- 3.4.1. Games shall be 5 innings or hard stop at 1 hour and 45 minutes from scheduled start time.
- 3.4.2. If an inning cannot be completed due to time, the game will revert back to the last full inning if the game.
  - NOTE - If the home team has taken the lead at the end of 1 hr and 45 minutes the game will conclude with the home team as the winner.
- 3.4.3. It is the responsibility of the coaches and umpires to suspend or postpone the game immediately upon inclement weather or premature darkness. Continuing to play in light rain is acceptable (umpire & coaches discretion) pending the conditions of the field.
- 3.4.4. Waiting at least 15 minutes after the last lightning flash or sound of thunder is expected. Each time lightning is seen or thunder is heard the 15-minute clock should be reset. The safety of our players, parents, coaches and spectators is of utmost importance. After two 15 minute attempts, games/practices will be canceled.
- 3.4.5. If an inning cannot be completed due to darkness or weather, the game will revert back to the last full inning if the game is rescheduled.
- 3.4.6. Should a game be "called" due to weather or premature darkness, a minimum of 3 ½ - 4 innings shall constitute a full game. Example: If the home team were currently in the lead after 3 ½ innings, then the game would be called a completed game without having to play the bottom of the inning. Games called earlier than 3 ½ innings must be replayed as a new game (see rule 3.2.2 regarding rescheduling of make-up games).
- 3.4.7. If the game is tied at the end of 6 innings or a duly "called" game, it shall remain tied (see rule 3.8.2 regarding tiebreakers).

### 3.5. Run Limits Per Inning

- 3.5.1. The umpire will call the game after 4 innings on a 12 run spread and 5 innings on a 10 run spread. (This is not at the discretion of the coaches).
- 3.5.2. There will be a 5 run limit per inning, per team for the first 5 innings.



## 3.6. Injuries

- 3.6.1. In the event of an injury incurred after the start of the game which (temporarily) prevents a player from running the bases, a courtesy runner may be used.
- 3.6.2. The courtesy runner shall be the player making the team's last previous out, or if no outs have been recorded in the game, it shall be the last player in the batting order.
- 3.6.3. Each player may be run for only once during the game. If a player is unable to play in the field or run the bases in subsequent opportunities in the same game, the player shall be removed from the game. No other use of a courtesy runner shall be allowed.
- 3.6.4. If during the game a player is injured and cannot return to play the game, the game can continue if the team can still field 8 players or utilize extra players from the opposing team.

## 3.7. House Playoff Tournament

- 3.7.1. Regular season rules will be used with the below exceptions.
- 3.7.2. There is a hard stop at 1 hour and 45 minutes during pool play. Bracket play will be a 5 inning game.
- 3.7.3. There shall be no tie games during bracket play (tie games allowed during pool play). Games will continue into extra innings.
- 3.7.4. Tied games that are called because of weather or premature darkness shall be played out from the point play was suspended at a time scheduled by the director of the league. Resumed games shall play until the end of 5 innings or a duly "called" game.
- 3.7.5. The 12/10 run rule is in effect during the tournament (see section 3.5 regarding run limits per inning).
- 3.7.6. Pitchers will be allowed to pitch 2 innings per game, 4 innings per day, and 6 innings for the tournament. An inning pitched constitutes as little as 1 ball pitched to a batter in an inning.
- 3.7.7. Innings pitched must be recorded with the tournament headquarters at the conclusion of each game.
- 3.7.8. The starting pitcher can return to the mound during the same game as long as they still have innings left to pitch.