



## NLYBS Rookie League Baseball and Softball Rules

- 1. General - Baseball:** With the exceptions below, the official rules of baseball apply.  
- **Softball:** All games will be played according to the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) except as amended herein. In case of conflict with the ASA rules, these amendments will be followed.
- 2. Uniform Requirements** - Players cannot wear steel spikes or loose jewelry such as earrings or chains. The only jewelry allowed is a watch or medic alert bracelet or necklace. Earring posts are allowed. Dangling earrings are not. Mouth guards are encouraged.
- 3. Playing Field** - The field will have 60' bases.  
The batters box is a 3' x 6' rectangle with its inner edge 4" from home plate. The batter's box shall extend 3' forward and 3' backward from the center of home plate. A double "safety base" will be used at 1st base. The orange part of the base placed to extend into foul territory is for the batter running from home to 1st base and no others. All other rules for 1st base apply only to the "normal" white part of the base.  
  
The pitching coach will be 35' from the back of home plate.
- 4. Coaching Staff** - The coaching staff can consist of three coaches. Parents are allowed to assist if needed. No use of tobacco in the dugouts or on the playing field is allowed.
- 5. Players' location** - All players must stay within the playing field or in the dugout area at all times during league games except with the permission of the coach.
- 6. Umpires** - Batting, base, and coaches in the field umpire the games, calling hits fair and foul, calling base runners safe or out and any other umpire ruling that must be made.
- 7. Player Equipment** - Catchers must wear full protective gear (i.e., helmet /mask with throat protector, chest protector, and shin guards) and locate themselves behind home plate so as to be in position to catch the ball on the fly from the pitching coach. If the batter is hitting from a tee, then the catcher should position themselves by the backstop behind and to the side of the batter. Any player on the offensive team who is outside of the dugout on the playing field must wear a batting helmet with ear protectors.
- 8. Regulation Bats** - Baseball: Any recognized baseball bat will be allowed. No softball bats will be permitted.  
Softball: Any recognized softball bat will be allowed. No baseball bats will be permitted.
- 9. Players in the game** - All players present are in the batting order. The infield has 7 players with two pitchers placed one on each side of the pitcher with all remaining players distributed across the outfield. Pitchers must be even with or behind and in reasonably close proximity (5') to the pitcher. None of the outfielders may start play in close so as to act as an additional infielder. All outfielders must start each pitch on the grass. Coaches are strongly encouraged to shift players around the fielding positions within the guidelines of maintaining player safety. A player that cannot catch or who has difficulty concentrating on the game should not be placed at defensive positions that could be dangerous to them (i.e., pitcher, first base, catcher). Within the constraints of safety, coaches are required to have all players play infield and outfield positions during the course of a game. A team may play regardless of how many players they have.
- 10. Game Length** - A complete game is 6 innings or 75 minutes (whichever comes first). The home team shall record the game starting time. No inning is to begin with less than ten minutes left in the game. A new inning is considered to have begun immediately after the third out is made in the preceding inning.
- 11. Weather** - The game will be considered complete if it is stopped due to darkness, time limit or bad weather. When lightening is seen the game will be delayed 20 minutes. If any lightening is seen after 10 minutes, the game will be called. See above for what constitutes a legal game.

**12. Batting Procedure** - Each batter is allowed to swing at 5 pitches from the coach. No bunting is allowed, but a “swinging” bunt that puts the ball in play is a legitimate hit. If the player has swung at none of the four pitches or if the player has swung at some of the four pitches, but has not put the ball into play, then the player is allowed to hit off a batting tee. The coach will place the tee on home plate, place the ball on the tee and announce so that the defense can hear that the ball is in play, get out of the way and let the batter swing. After the hit, the coach should hurry to move the batting tee away from home plate. The player hitting off a batting tee has three chances to hit the ball. If they do not put the ball in play with three swing opportunities they are called out. A foul ball on the third attempt is considered an out. If any ball put into play hits the pitching coach, this is considered the same as if the ball were to hit the pitching rubber: The

ball is in play, even if the rebounded ball goes into foul territory. Coaches must pitch overhand from at least a distance of 20’ from the back of home plate.

**13. Ending a play** - Play is NOT ended by getting the ball to the coach who is pitching. Play is ended by defensive efforts that stop base runners from advancing. When base runners are stopped. The ball can then be given to the coach at the pitching mound so that the next batter may hit.

**14. Run Limits** - An inning continues until 5 runs or 3 outs have been recorded.

**15. Batting Lineups** - All players in attendance are in the batting order.

**16. Batting Order** - Coaches are encouraged to shuffle their batting orders from game to game so that players have the opportunity to bat at different positions in the order. If a player arrives within the first 30 minutes of the start of the game, they will be added to the bottom of the batting order. If the player arrives after the first 30 minutes of the game, they are not eligible to play in that game.

**17. Bat Throwing** - No bat throwing is allowed. On the first occasion, the coach will warn the player and instruct them on how to properly drop the bat after hitting. On subsequent occasions, the player will be called out and base runners will return to their base in preparation of the next batter up.

**18. Sliding** - Base runners must avoid contact when running bases and infielders must avoid contact with the base runner. Any flagrant attempt by a base runner to collide with a fielder (including the catcher) will result in the runner being called out. Coaches of players who exhibit these behaviors should remove these players from the game.

**19. On base rule** - Base Runners must start with one foot touching the base and may not run until the ball is hit.

**20. No Stealing:**

There shall be no stealing of bases in rookie level. Players may only advance the bases on batted balls in play.

**21. Rounding first base** - Base runners are encouraged to turn right (toward the fence) after crossing first base.

**22. Player Expulsion** - Any player who is expelled from a game will need to pick up an expulsion letter from the concession stand. They must have it signed by one of their parents or guardians and returned to the concession stand before that player will be allowed to participate in future games.

**23. Coach Interference** - Base coaches may not touch players when the ball is in play. Coach interference results in the runner being called out. No defensive coaches may be on the field of play when the ball is in play.

**24. Defensive Interference** - Defensive players without the ball must yield right of way to base runners.

**25. Rules that are not applicable** - Last Inning, tie games, balks, dropped third strike and infield fly rules are not applicable in the Rookie League. Players cannot be walked.

**26. Game Results** - Game scores are not kept.

**27. Taunting or chanting:** A player, coach or team may never taunt another player or team. To do so would be considered unsportsmanlike conduct and the player or team doing the taunting will be warned and possibly ejected from the game if repeated. If a player is being taunted then the player may be given an extra base. Chants are allowed from a team as long as they are not derogatory or directed towards an individual player. Chants are not allowed once a pitcher has started his or her wind-up or stretch.

**28. Spectators:** All spectators are expected to follow the same rules as the coach. Spectators shall never critique or taunt the umpires. They shall also not engage in any way except for positive cheering for the players. Any spectator may be ejected by the commissioner or an NLYBS Board Member if warranted. Then they need to follow rule #27 for “Coaches or spectator expulsion” for reinstatement back into the league.

**29. Eligible Players:**

Under no circumstance is a player who is not currently registered with NLYBS allowed to play or participate in any NLYBS game. This rule is applicable regardless of any agreement between the coaches of any particular teams. This rule does not affect the ability of a team to “borrow” a registered player from another team to meet the minimum player requirements for a game, so long as the opponent’s coach does not object and is given adequate notice prior to the commencement of that game.

**30. Double Headers:** Early games: 5:30-6:45 (75 minutes). Late games: 7:00-8:15 (75 minutes). Teams in early games must vacate the dugout immediately following the game (post game talks outside fences). When an early and a late game are scheduled, no new inning beginning 60 minutes after the game start time.

**31. Player Pitching:**

During all Rookie Ball games played in May, coaches will pitch to all batters in Rookie ball. Each “coach pitcher” is allowed **five pitches** to each batter. If at the conclusion of those five “coach pitches” the at bat is not concluded, the batter shall hit off a tee.

During all Rookie Ball games played in June or July, players who were in third grade may pitch to opposing batters. Each “player pitcher” may only pitch one inning per game. Each “player pitcher” shall be allowed no more than **three pitches** to each batter, regardless of the status of the pitch (i.e.: ball, strike, foul tip, ball in play). If at the conclusion of those three “player pitcher” pitches, the at bat is not concluded, the “coach pitcher” shall have no more than **three pitches** to the batter. If at the conclusion of those three “coach pitches” the at bat is not concluded, the batter shall hit off the tee.

*At all times that a player-pitcher is on the field, the coach-pitcher needs to be positioned to protect the player-pitcher from any batted balls; this is particularly the case when the player-pitcher is engaged in the activity of pitching to a batter.*

**32. Dropped Third Strike Rule:** Dropped Third Strike Rule is not valid for this league.

**Any questions or concerns should be directed to the NLYBS Rookie Baseball or Softball Commissioners.**