

WARRIOR BASEBALL ASSOCIATION – UMPIRE QUICK REFERENCE SHEET

Majors Division (Kid Pitch age 12)

This sheet references the most common rules issues for the Majors division

The full rules are available online on the website at www.warriorbaseball.org. Go to Home → Rules and then click on Local Rules. Local Rules take precedence over USSSA Rules. Items not addressed in either should be enforced based on the Official Baseball Rules.

Game Time: 85 minutes. Clock starts on first pitch

No Maximum Runs Per Inning

Game is over when:

- 6 innings completed (5 and ½ if home team leading)
- 15 run lead after 3 innings, 10 run lead after 4 innings

New Inning: There is no more “under 5-minute” rule...all leagues play to 0 on the clock! Do not start a new inning after the clock has expired (shows 0 or is blank).

INFIELD FLY RULE IN EFFECT! – Runners at 1st and 2nd or bases loaded and less than 2 outs, batter is out on an infield fly. Call the infield fly as soon as it is clear an infielder should catch ball with ordinary effort. Runners may advance at own risk, no force play in effect (runners must tag up properly if ball is caught).

Throwing Bat: Player slinging bat in dangerous manner receives warning, next time for that player is an out, runners return to positions at time of pitch

Runners on base: Baserunners may lead off/steal as in MLB/NFHS.

Mound Visits: One visit per pitcher per inning, no maximum per game.

Balks: MLB Balk rules apply:

- Fake to third from pitching rubber is a balk (MLB rules). Only 2nd base fake allowed
- Early in the season, a warning is appropriate for balks such as not coming set, turning shoulders, stepping off from wind-up (if called consistently for both teams). Use discretion in blowout games with inexperienced pitchers.
- Egregious balks (e.g. dropping ball on rubber or starting motion and then stopping) should be called.
- Enforce balks more strictly later in season and post season tournament. Warning for subtle balks may be appropriate if consistent across teams.
- The offensive team cannot induce a balk (e.g. timing a cheer to induce a balk). Reset play
- If a pitcher balks as a result of a batter calling for time and/or stepping out of the box, the balk will be ignored and play reset. This is also the case for a balk due to an on-deck batter or other team member going behind the plate area while pitcher is on the rubber.
- Balk is a DELAYED DEAD BALL (MLB Rules). You can kill the play; however, if the defensive team throws ball away prior to any call, allow the play to continue, and if all runners advance, permit the advance and then ‘warn’ the pitcher regarding the balk if necessary.
- Runner may not be retired on a balk move (enforce or reset and warn). For pitched balls, ignore the balk if the batter reaches base and all runners advance at least one base, otherwise it is a “no pitch” and enforce the balk.

Dropped 3rd Strike: MLB/High School Rules.

- Note: the batter is permitted to advance (2 outs or if there is no runner on first base) if the ball strikes the dirt before the catcher catches the ball.
- The batter is out for failure to advance when he leaves the dirt circle (10-15 foot area around the plate) or reaches the grass area in front of his dugout or enters his dugout, whichever is closer on the field. Until such point he may decide to advance. A batter who takes 2-3 steps towards the dugout should not be called out for abandonment in this situation (the batter-runner must observe base path rules on tag *attempt*).

Foul Tip: A foul tip is a ball which goes sharply and directly off the bat into the catcher's glove; this is a LIVE BALL strike. Baserunners may advance and should not be sent back to their starting base as this is NOT a dead ball. This is a strike, and if strike 3, batter is out. This would be a regular foul ball/dead ball if it is dropped by catcher, at-bat continues.

Warm-Up Period: 2 minutes or 8 pitches. Do not allow pitchers to take 3-5 or more minutes between innings. A coach should warm up pitcher until catcher is prepared.

- Teams and any new pitcher must throw 1 warm-up pitch but may then declare themselves ready to play. The batter must be ready within 30 seconds of the fielding team declaring themselves ready for play in this situation.

Delay Tactics: Do not allow obvious and excessive delay tactics to run out the clock. This would include things such as:

- Multiple time-outs during an at-bat by either team (defensive conferences, coach-player conferences, etc.). A single stoppage is not excessive but should not be excessively long.
- Excessively long mound visits or warm up periods before inning
- Penalty: Add time to the clock as appropriate to nullify the delay
- Tournament: Clock stops on time-out or pitching change when clock is below 10 minutes.

Scoring Runs:

- No runs score on a play that results in a force out for the 3rd out at any base, regardless of timing
- Runs scored *before* a tag play as the third out do count (except if batter is tagged out before 1st base).
- If the third out is an appeal play (e.g. leaving early on fly ball), any following runners do not score, but runners in front of the player called out may score.

Slide at 2nd base: On a force play at 2nd, the player in vicinity of base must a) slide OR b) get out of the way (clearly peel off) of any potential throw that could retire the batter. Violation of this results in that player AND batter being called out.

- A runner only half-way to 2nd is not interfering unless they deliberately do so (i.e. sticking out hand to catch the throw). The runner must be at least in the vicinity of the base to be able to interfere.
- The fielder cannot go out of the way to be interfered with by a runner who clearly peeled off of the play.
- The fielder does not have to throw the ball but the interference must have prevented a play that had a chance to retire the batter.
- There must be a play at second base for this rule to apply. A runner who reaches second base standing up well before any force play must not deliberately interfere with the fielder but is not required to vacate his base to avoid the fielder.
- These rules apply similarly at any base for a force play where there is a potential double play opportunity.

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Obstruction/Interference/Baseline

Obstruction is called on the *defense*.

Interference is called on the *offence*.

Obstruction: A fielder without the ball impedes a runner

- Can happen anytime during a play
- If a play is being made on the obstructed runner, dead ball and the runner is awarded the next base
- Otherwise, continue play, and protect the runner to the base he would have gotten without the obstruction.
 - Example: If he was protected to 2nd base but continued and was thrown out at 3rd, there is no call and the runner is out.
 - Example: If he was protected to 3rd and thrown out at 3rd, call time and place the runner at 3rd.

Interference: A runner interferes with fielder being able to field the ball

- Usually only happens on batted balls (unless runner deliberately deflects thrown ball)
- Dead ball immediately, runner is out. Unless the batter is the one interfering, the batter gets 1st base and any forced runners advance. If batter is interfering, no runners advance.
- Where the runner is in terms of the base path/base line is irrelevant to this call. The Runner CANNOT interfere regardless of where the interference occurs. He must go around/avoid the fielder.
- Only one fielder is protected if two fielders go to the ball. If umpire determines the 3rd baseman was protected and fielding the ball but the runner runs into SS, that would be obstruction on defense, not interference.
- Deflected ball that hits runner is not an out; however, on a deflected ball the runner must still give way to a player who can make a play on the ball.

Base path: The base path is only established when a fielder attempts to make a tag play on a runner and is a straight line from the runner's position at that time to the base he is trying to reach.

- If he goes out of the established base path by more than 3 feet the runner is out.
- A runner can take any route he or she wants to the base unless there is a play being made.
- On a rundown, each time the ball is thrown a new base path is established when the fielder attempts to make a new play on the runner. Watch for base path violations and for obstruction on defenders once they have thrown the ball if they impede the runner.